

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

WHAT

Based on a topic guide and a set of questions, a semi-structured interview is used to explore a research domain and specific research question by gathering focused, qualitative and contextual data with stakeholders and experts.

WHY

A semi-structured interview is an open process that provides all the flexibility needed to gain insights, improve domain understanding and learn about personal experiences of interviewees. This format focuses on having a game plan while also exploring valuable insight from opportunities as they present themselves during an interview.

PHASE

Exploration

LENGTH

± 45 - 75 minutes

STEPS

1. Create a list of expected interviewees.
2. Develop short open-ended questions with general and easy to understand terms that will allow for an open discussion.
3. Share the list of questions with the interviewee at least 2 to 3 days in advance.
4. During the interview start with a simple question and move to those more complex.
5. Listen carefully for unexpected answers and feel free to ask for further explanations or to shift the interview to unexpected topics.
6. After the interview, do a roundtable with your colleagues to share notes and insights on what went well, what went wrong, and how you can improve for the next interview.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Ben McCammon, Design Research Techniques: Semi-Structured Interviews

<http://designresearchtechniques.com/casestudies/semi-structured-interviews/>

Wikipedia, Semi-structured interview

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-structured_interview

