

“EXTREME USER” INTERVIEW

WHAT

An “extreme user” interview is a tool used to understand how people outside the mainstream experience the system of interest.

WHY

“Extreme user” interviews are useful for identifying ways that the system of interest fails to meet the distinct needs of different groups (e.g., seeking to learn from early adopters in user interface design). These interviews support the design of more inclusive solutions and can improve solutions by providing insight on needs that are present but less evident in the mainstream.

PHASE

Exploration and
Prototyping

LENGTH

± 30 - 60 minutes

STEPS

1. List different facets the system or proposed solution that you would like to explore further.
2. Identify relevant groups outside the mainstream, with a focus on those likely to have very different experiences of the system of interest.
3. Prepare questions that will help to figure out how these people may interact with the system of interest and how it does or doesn't meet their needs.
4. After the interview, organize a roundtable with your colleagues to share notes on what went well, what went wrong, and what ways the dialogue could be improved.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

DesignKit, Extremes and Mainstreams

<http://www.designkit.org/methods/45>

Dschool, Extreme Users

<https://dschool-old.stanford.edu/wp-content/themes/dschool/method-cards/extreme-users.pdf>