

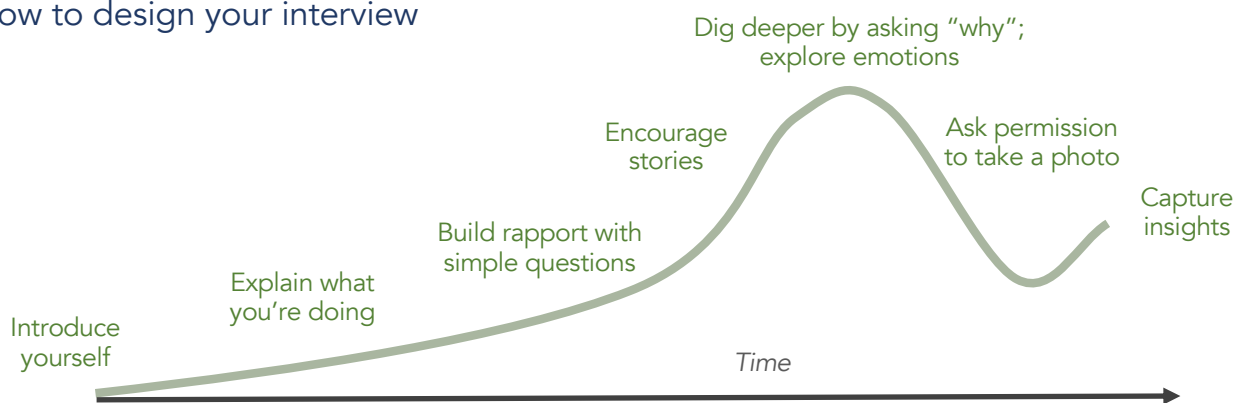


Your goal: discover insights, surprises, and opportunities by talking to real people.

### Why interview?

Before we're able to create truly innovative solutions for real people we first have to learn to empathize with their unique worldview. What experiences have shaped them? What do they value the most? What frustrates them? Empathy allows us to explore meaningful solutions to address their needs.

### How to design your interview



#### ***Start with simple questions....***

#### ***... then dig deeper.***

*For example:*

*How do you start your day?  
What's your favorite hobby?  
What's your major?*

*For example:*

*What makes you nervous?  
What do you want to be remembered for?  
Why do you think you feel that way?*

### THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- Shed your own assumptions and embrace a beginner's mindset.
- Suspend your judgments. Keep an open mind. Never offer an opinion.
- Be fully present and attentive. Show your interviewee they are interesting to you.
- Interview in pairs when possible. One can ask questions whilst the other takes notes.

### **TIP: ASK "WHY"** (again and again...)

- "I'm always late for my first class."  
"Why?"
- "I'm just not a morning person."  
"Why?"
- "Because I'm always tired."  
"Why?"
- "Because I stay up too late."  
"Why?"
- "It's the only time I can talk to my family in different time zones."

### **TIP: STAY NEUTRAL**

- It's not your job to have an opinion. Make sure you don't reveal your point-of-view in your body language, tone of voice, or questions.

### **TIP: EMBRACE SILENCE**

- Our instinct is to fill awkward silence. Resist! Silence can often inspire the interviewee to reveal new details/

### **TIP: ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**

- "Tell me about a time..."
- "How do you usually..."
- "What's your favorite way to..."
- "What do you do when..."

### **TIP: WATCH NON-VERBAL CUES**

- Did they lean in, nod, cross-their arms, sigh, rub their head, avoid eye-contact? Body language helps us discover how an interviewee feels.

## **OTHER TOOLS FOR GAINING EMPATHY**

### **Observation**

Watch your interviewee in action. Observe their physical actions, their habits, the products they use, and how they interact with people and things in their environment. Pay special attention to any work-arounds (adaptations or accommodations) they may have developed. These are often signs of unarticulated needs.

### **Shadowing**

Get your hands dirty! Ask your interviewee if you can go through their actions yourself.

### **Research**

Go to the library for help discovering first-hand accounts of stories and experiences.

Capture your findings!

Don't forget to record what you've learned in as many different ways as possible.

- 1) Write down memorable quotes
- 2) Draw important objects or scenes
- 3) Record your observations and initial hunches
- 4) Take pictures (with permission)