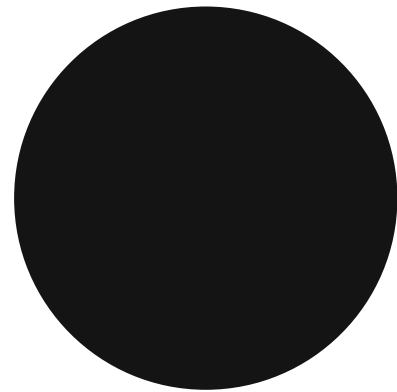


Structured Interviews



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In a structured interview, you ask participants to answer a list of questions. To get a valid result, you should ask all participants identical questions. In a structured interview, your questions could be open-ended or closed-ended questions, or a combination.

Structured Interviews

Interviews can be formally structured, semi-structured, or not structured at all. The style of interviewing you choose will depend on the kind of result you're looking for.

What is it?

In a highly structured interview, you simply ask participants to answer a list of questions. To get a valid result, you should ask all participants identical questions. So you need to have a script and stick to it. In a structured interview, your questions could be open-ended or closed-ended questions, or a combination. Open questions prompt explanation and cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no", or with a specific piece of information. Open questions allow the person being interviewed to give the information that seems to them to be appropriate.

Structured interviews can be done face-to-face, on the phone or by email.

Plan and prepare

Think about how you will introduce yourself. Prepare your information and consent form. Plan your questions. Write them down.

If you are recording your interview, make sure you have the technology ready and you have chosen a quiet place to conduct the interview. Make sure the location is comfortable for both you and your participant. Pause and check you are recording. Your participant won't mind and it is best to be sure.

Relax and listen

Let your participant know that you value their opinion (and explain why) and then listen attentively. Allow them to think about their answers. Don't rush.

Be as engaged as you can be by making eye contact and being responsive.

Say thank you

Your participant has given you their time, information, and insight into themselves. Participants are always grateful for this.

Analyse

Your interview is your raw data. Remember that you will need time to analyse what has been said. You may need to return to your participant with follow up questions. Listening back to your interview can help you improve your technique for next time.