

User Research Basics

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Facilitation Script

User Research Basics

Category: Research | Duration: 2 days | Participants: 6-12

Workshop Overview

Learn how to talk to users and get useful feedback. We cover interview techniques, survey design, and how to analyze what people tell you.

Workshop Objectives

You'll know how to plan user research, conduct interviews, and turn insights into actionable next steps for your product.

Learning Outcomes

- Deep understanding of user needs, behaviors, and pain points - Actionable research insights documented and prioritized - Research-backed recommendations for product decisions - Master structured design processes for efficient problem-solving - Practice collaborative ideation and concept development techniques - Learn to validate assumptions through rapid user testing and feedback - Develop cross-functional collaboration and communication skills - Create testable prototypes that communicate design concepts effectively

Materials Required

Notebook, pen, voice recorder (optional), sample interview questions we provide.

Pre-Workshop Checklist

- Room setup complete with tables arranged for group work
- All materials prepared and distributed
- Technology tested (projector, slides, timer)
- Participant list and name tags ready
- Refreshments arranged (if applicable)
- Backup activities prepared in case of time adjustments
- Emergency contacts and room information noted

Workshop Agenda

| Time | Duration | Activity | Facilitator Notes |
|---------|----------|----------|--|
| 9:00 AM | 30 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 9:30 AM | 15 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |

| | | | |
|----------|--------|-----------------|---|
| 9:45 AM | 10 min | Activity | Start and end sessions mindfully with brief personal sharing. Check-ins help people arrive mentally ... |
| 9:55 AM | 45 min | Activity | Research without objectives wastes time. Research Objective Setting defines what you need to learn b... |
| 10:40 AM | 15 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 10:55 AM | 50 min | Activity | Research Plan Creation is a structured exercise that transforms vague research intentions into actio... |
| 11:45 AM | 45 min | Activity | Good interviews require structured scripts. Interview Script Development creates question guides bal... |
| 12:30 PM | 60 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 1:30 PM | 45 min | Activity | A structured framework for conducting user interviews that ensures consistent data collection while ... |
| 2:15 PM | 15 min | Activity | Practice interviewing under pressure. Five minutes forces you to cut the fluff and ask questions tha... |
| 2:30 PM | 15 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 2:45 PM | 50 min | Activity | Stakeholder and User Interviews are semi-structured conversations with people who have direct knowle... |
| 3:35 PM | 45 min | Activity | Card sorting reveals how people actually think about information—not how you think they should. Yo... |
| 4:20 PM | 10 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |

Day 2

| | | | |
|----------|--------|-----------------|---|
| 9:00 AM | 30 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 9:30 AM | 10 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 9:40 AM | 50 min | Activity | Contextual Inquiry takes research out of the lab and into the real world. Instead of asking people w... |
| 10:30 AM | 15 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 10:45 AM | 50 min | Activity | Coding Qualitative Data is the systematic process of tagging and organizing research findings to ide... |
| 11:35 AM | 40 min | Activity | Organize insights, ideas, or observations into meaningful patterns and themes. Transform chaotic inf... |
| 12:15 PM | 60 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 1:15 PM | 60 min | Activity | You've done the research. Now you're staring at 200 sticky notes, 15 interview transcripts, and a si... |
| 2:15 PM | 15 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |
| 2:30 PM | 45 min | Activity | Create representative user archetypes based on research patterns. Synthesize user research into memo... |
| 3:15 PM | 45 min | Activity | User needs analysis strips away what people say they want and gets at what they actually need. There... |
| 4:00 PM | 30 min | Activity | Encourage networking. Have refreshments ready. |

Opening (5-10 minutes)

SAY:

"Welcome everyone to the **User Research Basics**. I'm excited to have you here today. Over the next 2 days, we'll be working together to [main objective]."

"Before we begin, let's go around and do quick introductions - your name, role, and one thing you're hoping to take away from today."

Facilitator Tip: Arrive 15-30 minutes early to set up the space and greet early arrivers. This builds rapport and helps participants feel comfortable.

Setting Expectations

SAY:

"Let me share a few ground rules for our time together:

- Every idea is valid - there are no bad ideas in brainstorming
- Build on each other's ideas - use 'Yes, and...' thinking
- Stay present - phones away unless for an emergency
- Timebox discussions - I'll keep us on track
- Have fun - the best ideas come when we're relaxed and engaged

Any questions before we dive in?"

Core Activities

IDEO - Interview Planning & Practice

75 minutes

Complete interview preparation

FACILITATION APPROACH:

1. Introduce the activity and explain the purpose
2. Demonstrate or give an example if needed
3. Set the timer and let participants work
4. Give time warnings (halfway, 2 minutes left)
5. Facilitate sharing and discussion

IDEO - Five Whys

15 minutes

Dig deeper to uncover root motivations

FACILITATION APPROACH:

1. Introduce the activity and explain the purpose
2. Demonstrate or give an example if needed
3. Set the timer and let participants work
4. Give time warnings (halfway, 2 minutes left)
5. Facilitate sharing and discussion

Research Plan

60 minutes

Plan systematic user research

FACILITATION APPROACH:

1. Introduce the activity and explain the purpose
2. Demonstrate or give an example if needed
3. Set the timer and let participants work
4. Give time warnings (halfway, 2 minutes left)
5. Facilitate sharing and discussion

Empathy Mapping

60 minutes

Synthesize user insights visually

FACILITATION APPROACH:

1. Introduce the activity and explain the purpose
2. Demonstrate or give an example if needed
3. Set the timer and let participants work
4. Give time warnings (halfway, 2 minutes left)
5. Facilitate sharing and discussion

Closing & Next Steps (10-15 minutes)

SAY:

"As we wrap up, let's take a moment to reflect on what we've accomplished today."

"I'd like each person to share one key insight or takeaway from our session."

Facilitator Tip: Capture action items on a flip chart or shared document. Assign owners and due dates for each action item before ending.

Post-Workshop Actions

- Send thank you email with workshop summary within 24 hours
- Share photos of artifacts (sticky notes, sketches, etc.)
- Distribute any promised resources or templates
- Schedule follow-up if needed
- Collect feedback via survey
- Document learnings for future workshops

Troubleshooting Guide

If Participants Are Quiet

- Use round-robin techniques to ensure everyone speaks
- Try silent writing exercises before group discussion
- Break into smaller groups of 2-3 people
- Ask specific individuals for their perspective

If Discussion Goes Off-Track

- Acknowledge the point and park it in a "Parking Lot"

- Redirect: "That's interesting - let's capture that and return to our focus area"
- Reference the agenda and time remaining

If Running Behind Schedule

- Shorten break times (but don't eliminate them)
- Combine related activities
- Move detailed discussions to follow-up sessions
- Be transparent with participants about time constraints

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This script is a guide - adapt it to your audience and context