

METHOD

INTERVIEW PREPARATION



WHY prepare for an interview

Time with users is precious; you need to make the most of it! While you must always allow room for the spontaneous, blissful serendipity of a user-guided conversation, you should never abdicate your responsibility to prepare for interviews. Especially in following up with users (after testing, etc.), it is imperative to plan your interviews. You may not get to every question you prepare, but you should come in with a plan for engagement.

HOW to prepare for an interview

Brainstorm questions

Write down all of the potential questions your team can generate. Try to build on one another's ideas in order to flesh out meaningful subject areas.

Identify and order themes

Similar to "grouping" in synthesis, have your team identify themes or subject areas into which most questions fall; once you've identified the themes of your question-pool, determine the order that would allow the conversation to flow most naturally. This will enable you to structure the flow of your interview, decreasing the potential for hosting a seemingly-scattershot interaction with your user.

Refine questions

Once you have all the questions grouped by theme and order, you may find that there are some redundant areas of conversation, or questions that seem strangely out of place. Take a few moments to make sure that you leave room in your planning to ask plenty of "why?" questions, plenty of "tell me about the last time you ___?" questions, and plenty of questions that are directed at how the user FEELS.