

Interview Guide

Interviewing people is about uncovering their deep experience of your design challenge. Think about it as uncovering the “why”. Here’s what you need to know about conducting interviews.

SET UP MEETINGS

Contact the specific people that you would like to engage to set up a time for a meeting. Give a quick elevator pitch (a concise and persuasive summary) about your project to give them background on why you’d like to learn from them. Let them know ahead of time how many people will be attending, and whether you are planning to record them in any way, including using a voice recorder or camera.

DEVELOP INTERVIEW GUIDES

Interviewing is about listening actively so you can ask the right questions. Being present in the conversation and asking follow up questions will yield more thoughtful answers. Develop a semi-structured question list that will help guide you during your interviews, but allow for other interesting topics to arise.

PREPARE USER SELF-DOCUMENTATION ACTIVITIES (IF NEEDED)

User self-documentation activities act as a supplement to an interview - almost like homework for the conversation.

If your team chooses to incorporate self-documentation activities, think about what you would want to learn:

- For behaviors, habits, and routines, try a journaling activity
- For attitudes, beliefs, and emotions, try a collaging exercise where participants choose images that represent how they feel about something (e.g. What images describe what’s important to you about teaching?)

Make sure the instructions are clear, and check in with the person to make sure they have completed the activity before your interview.

PREP FOR INTERVIEWS

For each interview, designate one person to lead the conversation and another to take notes. If you intend to take photos or video, you may need a third team member to do this. Having 2-3 people in each session ensures that your team is supported without overwhelming the person you are engaging. Alternatively, splitting up for interviews will allow you to cover more ground; just make sure you take good notes or record the interview to share with others.

Crafting Interview Questions

Like methods, there are various types of questions you can use to get at different aspects of a challenge or experience. Use the following framework to craft your conversation.

Type of questioning	Example
Task	Can you show me how you would create a lesson plan?
Demonstration	Show me how you would advise someone to use this web tool.
Role-playing	I'll be the student and you be the advisor; show me how you would respond.
Sequence	Walk me through a typical day at your school.
Specific example	What did you change based on your last assessment?
Peer comparison	How do other teachers do it?
Project ahead / Look back	What do you think teaching will be like in 5 years? How has it changed from a year ago?
Exhaustive list	What are all the things you use when you create a lesson plan?

Remember to avoid closed-ended questions that only allow for two responses - yes and no. Open-ended questions give the person the opportunity to provide a lengthier and more thoughtful response.

Closed-ended questions	Open-ended questions
Do you collaborate with other teachers?	How do you collaborate with other teachers?
When you're giving feedback to students, do you like to use online tools like Edmodo or do you use other websites or...?	When you're giving feedback to students, what methods, approaches, or tools do you use?
3. Would you say Blackboard is better than this other online tool?	What do you like about Blackboard? What could be better?

Examples of User Self-Documentation

User self-documentation -- such as journaling or collaging -- allows users to frame and record their own experiences for you. They are a great supplement to an interview when you can't interview or observe them directly. For instance, you can track their behaviors, thoughts, or feelings over a period of time or during potentially intrusive moments (at home, getting ready for gym class, during medical exams, etc.).

Here are a few examples:

JOURNALING

MONDAY

Morning	Afternoon
What time did you wake up? <input type="text"/>	What did you have for lunch? <input type="text"/>
How did you sleep? <input type="text"/>	Who did you eat with? <input type="text"/>
What did you eat for breakfast? <input type="text"/>	How are you feeling? <input type="text"/>
Who did you eat with? <input type="text"/>	
How are you feeling? <input type="text"/>	

Evening

What did you have for dinner? <input type="text"/>	How are you feeling? <input type="text"/>
Who did you eat with? <input type="text"/>	What time did you go to bed? <input type="text"/>
What did you do after school or work? <input type="text"/>	Did you have any health troubles today? <input type="text"/>

OVER THE COURSE OF THE WEEK...

What were 3 things that made your body feel good?

What were 3 things that made your body feel not-so-good?

What were 3 things that made you feel good about yourself?

What were 3 things that made you feel not-so-good about yourself?

Examples of User Self-Documentation

COLLAGING

COLLAGING ACTIVITY

We want to understand what's important to you when it comes to your health and wellbeing. This is your chance to tell us your thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, support systems and habits that make you feel good. We have provided some words and images that might help you describe what's important to you.

To get started, please refer to the directions below. We have also provided some examples on the next page.

o Think about it

Think about what health and wellbeing means to you and how it affects your own life. Look over the words and images and see if any jump out at you right away. Don't use all the stickers... only use words and images that make sense to you. We will be asking about what you created, so choose ones that you could explain and tell a story about. Remember that this is your unique experience so everyone's will be different.

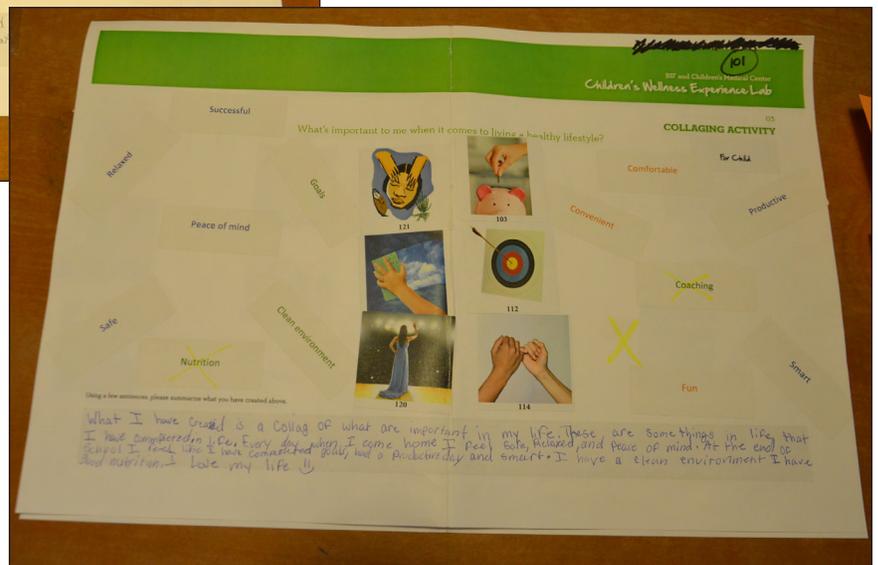
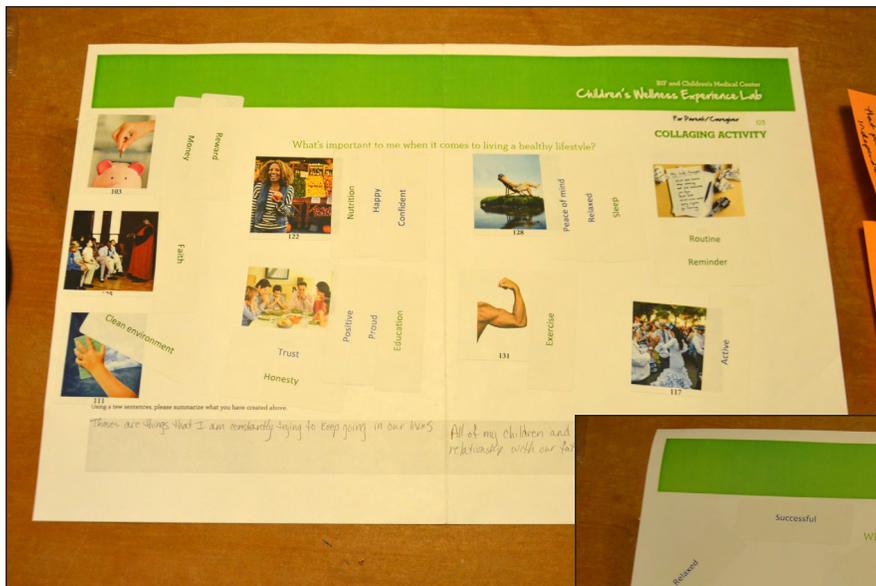
o Is anything missing?

Is something missing out of your own experience or life? If you feel there's something important to your health and wellbeing that isn't in the collage, feel free to write or draw it in.

THINK ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU

What are the people, places, things, ideas, or experiences that are important to me to **keep my body healthy?**

What are the people, places, things, ideas, or experiences that are important to me to **keep my mind, feelings and emotions healthy?**



Interviewing People

You're ready to go out and learn! In design thinking, we call this "going into the field." Below are a few tips for what to think about when you are conducting your interviews. After each interview, you should take 15 minutes to write up the key takeaways while they are fresh in your mind. You can use the debrief sheet we've provided on the next page.

Dos:

- Build rapport with your interviewee
- Ask open-ended questions instead of closed questions
- Allow for pauses - sometimes silence is a great way to prompt people to reflect on what they've said and go deeper
- Watch for physical and emotional signals
- Ask follow-up questions - especially ones that get at "why"
- Ask clarifying questions if something isn't clear or if there are inconsistencies
- Encourage stories around specific experiences or instances
- Use active listening
- Thank them for their time
- Take a few minutes to jot down top-of-mind learnings and thoughts after each interview

Try not to:

- Ask leading questions - ones that have assumptions built into them
- Let your questions ramble or trail off
- Rush to get to the next question
- Interrupt with acknowledgements, confirmations or "uh huh"s
- Interject your views

Troubleshooting:

They say...	You say...
The person says something and you're not sure what it means.	When you say "x", can you tell when what you mean by that? I just want to make sure I understand you correctly.
The person voices a concern that he/she is not being helpful.	You're giving us just what we need!
The person has gotten completely off-topic.	Let's stop here and shift to another topic.

Explore Debrief Sheet

TDAEd

BIF SXL
STUDENT EXPERIENCE LAB

Date:

Type of activity:

Name of participant(s):

Researcher(s):

Main themes or learnings that stood out in this interview:

Things that mattered most to participant(s):

New questions or topics to explore in future interviews:

Things that participant(s) said or did in this interview that surprised you: