INTERVIEWS

UNM Evaluation Lab Summer Institute
Sonia Bettez
spbettez@unm.edu / evallab.unm.edu
Summer 2019
“I'm not used to communicating face-to-face. Can we conduct this interview via text?”
Characteristics

• Individual Interviews usually last 30 minutes to an hour but they can be longer
• We select Key Informant interviewees because they have a specific kind of knowledge
• Face to face interviews are better but webcams allow for a good level of interaction and observation of reactions
• Focus group interviews reach a number of people at the same time (more on focus groups later)

24 July 2019
Advantages of one on one interviews

• Provide lots of information
• Provide more in depth, interesting and often unexpected information (stories, feelings, descriptions, reactions)
• Interviewer can develop a personal rapport with interviewee and record personal impressions.
• When interviewees agree to participate they usually show up and finish the interview.
• Interviewer can ensure that all the questions are answered.
Disadvantages of interviews

• Interview data results in lots of information that can take longer to transcribe and analyze, adding to the cost.
• Interviewers need skill and training and, if more than one, require guidelines to make sure they are collecting the same information.
• Scheduling presents difficulties that may add time to the process.
Before the Interview

• Decide whether the interview would be **structured** (uniform for all), **semi-structured** (allows or probes, rephrasing, non-sequential) or **unstructured** (allows for following up on answers and asking more questions).

• Always develop an interview protocol based on the **goals of the evaluation**, what you want to know.

• Word questions so they are **not leading**, are **open-ended** and **clear**, and avoid interpreting answers.

• **Pilot the interview** a few times to make sure questions are clear and modify accordingly.
During the Interview

• Describe purpose of interview
• Address confidentiality, ask permission to record and take notes
• Maintain neutrality: do not share information that may bias the interviewee’s responses, do not give positive or negative feedback, verbal or non-verbal (if face to face), do not share personal information.
• Use a friendly demeanor and voice
• Understand interviewee’s communication style and consider cultural context and language.
Before the end of the interview

• Ask if the interviewee wants to add other information, or if anything lacked clarity
• Thank the interviewee for his/her time
• Explain that the interview will be transcribed without personal information, but the person may be quoted in the evaluation report
After the interview

• Review your notes, add remarks that may be important
• Record your observations and salient reflections on the interview
• Transcribe all the interviews
• Code and find themes (analysis)
• Write results
• Present results and recommendations when pertinent
Let’s practice interviewing!

• Choose a partner (Maybe someone you have not met before)
• Find a place to sit together.
• Interview context: You work for the city of (choose one) and are interviewing a resident. The city wants to know personal experiences with and opinions about public transportation.
• Take 5 minutes to, together, develop your questions (no more than 3). You could have a structured or unstructured format.
• Take turns as interviewer and interviewee (15 minutes) or speaker and recorder.
• You may choose to record by hand or on your phone with or without video.
Reports of experience interviewing

As an interviewer:

• Were you able to maintain neutrality?
• Would you do anything differently on your next interview?
• Would you change your question(s) after this interview?
Thank You!

Questions?

Comments?