



GATHERING INTEL

A FEW COMMON METHODS FOR CAPTURING OBSERVATIONS AND CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

A CHILD'S EYES

ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING ELEMENTS OF FIELD WORK IS ABANDONING YOUR PRE-CONCEIVED NOTIONS.

DON'T JUDGE.

Observe & engage without applying value judgments.

QUESTION EVERYTHING.

Especially the things you think you understand! Think of a four year old who's always asking "why."

BE CURIOUS.

If circumstances seem boring or mundane, look for the assumptions that driving those feelings. Assume a posture of wonder.

FIND PATTERNS.

Look for interesting commonalities across the users you observe and interview. Try to unpack the motivations and assumptions that drive them.

LISTEN. REALLY.

Lose your agenda, soak into the moment, and absorb your users' perspective. Listen to the actual words they use, how they use them, without worrying about the next thing you'll say in response.

WHAT HOW WHY

A SIMPLE TOOL FOR MOVING FROM CONCRETE USER OBSERVATIONS TO ABSTRACT EMOTIONS

WHAT

Capture the concrete action a user takes.
Ex. *Brushing* her teeth, *walking* her dog.
(The verb that defines their action.)

HOW

Describe the manner of that action.
Ex. *Hurriedly* brushing her teeth.
(The adverb that describes that verb.)

WHY

Infer the reason for that behavior.
Ex. Hurriedly brushing *because* she's late.
(The motivation that inspires their manner.)

TEAM'S TAKEAWAY

1 USER

Unpack their emotional state.

2 EXPERIENCE

Map the user's journey through.

3 GAPS

Identify gaps in the experience.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

THE INTERVIEW IS THE HARDEST PART. HERE ARE A FEW SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO KEEP YOU MOVING IF YOU GET STUCK.

WHAT

What are you doing or trying to do?
When did you first start doing this?
What was the best/worst time you did this?

HOW

How do you hope to be successful?
How have you made the experience better?
How did you learn to appreciate doing this?

WHY

Why are you doing it that way?
Why do you like this? Why is it important?
Why do you need that? Why do you like it?

WHY-HOW LADDER

WHY QUESTIONS YIELD ABSTRACT, MEANINGFUL EXPLANATIONS. HOW QUESTIONS YIELD SPECIFIC, ACTIONABLE STATEMENTS.

WHY?

Why does your user act the way that she does in this situation?

WHY?

Why does she think that will make her a happier person in the long run?

WHY?

Why doesn't she do it another way? Why does she think this is best?

HOW?

How does she hope to benefit from doing what she does?

HOW?

How does she think that will make her happier? What effect will it have?

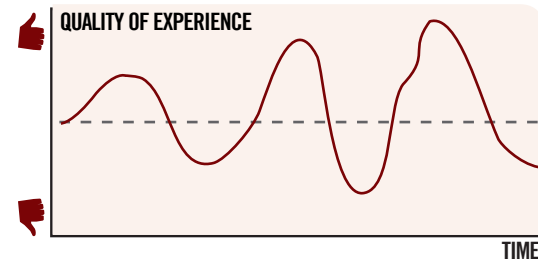
HOW?

How did she learn to do it this way? Where or from whom did she learn?

USE WHY QUESTIONS TO ROOT OUT THE MOST BASIC NEEDS OF YOUR USER. THE MORE WHY QUESTIONS YOU ASK, THE CLOSER YOU WILL GET TO UNIVERSAL HUMAN NEEDS. USE HOW QUESTIONS TO SEEK OUT SITUATION-SPECIFIC ANSWERS TO YOUR USER'S REACTIONS. HOW QUESTIONS GET YOU BACK INTO MORE CONCRETE, ACTIONABLE ANSWERS.

MOOD-O-METER

USE THE GRAPH AT RIGHT TO CHART THE MOOD OF YOUR USER THROUGH IMPORTANT MOMENTS IN THE EXPERIENCE. LOOK FOR CONFLICT, CLIMAX, AND CONCLUSION. TRY TO IDENTIFY THE HIGHS AND LOWS, AND DETERMINE WHAT CAUSED THE SWITCH FROM ONE TO THE OTHER. FIND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT.



INTERVIEW ARC

YOUR GOAL IN INTERVIEWING USERS IS TO ENCOURAGE STORIES AND MINE THEM FOR EMOTIONS. TRY TO LOOK FOR INCONSISTENCIES AND NON-VERBAL CUES. DON'T BE AFRAID OF SILENCE, THE MORE SPACE YOU GIVE YOUR USERS, THE MORE THEY'LL TELL YOU. TRY NOT TO ASK LOADED OR BINARY QUESTIONS WITH ONE-WORD ANSWERS.

