

Depth interviewing skills

Day 2



Session 8

Handling different participants video clips



Session 9

Considerations before the interview



Learning objectives

- Ethical considerations
- Recruitment
- Practical considerations
- Data security considerations

Ethical considerations



Ethics

- Ethical scrutiny (supervisor, Uni/organisation, NRES)
- Is the sample inclusive and enabling?
- Ethical consent to take part
 - Informed consent – **a process**
 - Anonymity, confidentiality and disclosure
- Risk, benefit and harm
 - To participant
 - Researcher safety and well-being



Recruitment

Type of recruitment

- Opt-in or opt-out?

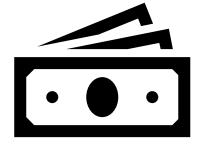
Who does the recruitment?

- Build confidence and trust
- Gatekeepers
- Getting information across clearly/accurately

Setting up fieldwork

- Time
- Place – neutral venue
- Who will be present – confidentiality, privacy, duress

Incentives



Is an incentive required?

- Whether 'appropriate'
- Form taken - cash/ voucher, copy of the report, donation to a service or charity?
- Value
- When to give – before or after

Other expenses

- Travel
- Childcare
- Honorariums



Preparing for the interview

Practical issues:

- Ensure participant knows name of researcher
- Current ID
- Check recording equipment
- Incentives/ payments
- Timing – when, where, how many per day
- Sorting out itinerary
- Familiarise self with research aims, topic guide any sample/ screening information
- Any stimulus materials needed
- Interview summary sheets?

Session 10

Managing depth interviews



Learning objectives

- Key interviewer **attributes**
- Managing the **interview flow**
- Dealing with **challenges**

Interviewer attributes

Important to develop personal qualities that assist in fulfilling the role effectively:

Accessibility

Neutrality

Interest/
Curiosity

Accessibility

Be yourself

- Adopt persona: relate to all types of participants
- Rapport: use tranquillity, humour

Be responsive

- Dress/attire
- Language used
- Terms of reference: language, acronyms
- Cultural sensitivities + power relationships

Neutrality

Be neutral

- Interview presence is ideally neutral
- Helps to elicit the 'truth' about participant perspective
- Emphasise interest in the participant's views

Avoid

- Commenting on answers
- Reacting to controversial views, e.g. racism
- Sharing personal views
- Revealing personal details

Interest / Curiosity

Not essential to be interested in research topic...

- Intrinsic interest in participant
- Empathy without becoming overwhelmed

Curious to build full **'mental picture'** of participant

- Thinking through what else needs probing to flesh out details, underlying factors, gaps etc.
- Listening for relevancy (interviewees & researcher)

Interview phases

Arrival

Good impression

- Punctual
- Credibility
- Small talk to build rapport

Know when to assume control

- Signal start
- Switch to 'interviewer' mode

Start

Set the agenda

- Clear, logical intro

Assuming roles

- Clarity about conduct of interview/ types of questions & answers
- Setting boundaries
- Control process NOT content

End

Signal end of time – can re-energise

- Seek permission to extend
- Move into positive territory
- Leave participants on a finished note
- Explain next steps
- Reassure about anonymity
- Invite them to raise any issues

Creating the right environment

Interruptions

- Enquire ways of making environment suitable for interview politely

Other people present

- Firm & clear about who you're interviewing
- Maintain eye contact with participant
- Abandon – if not possible to continue safely/ confidentially



Potential challenges during interviews

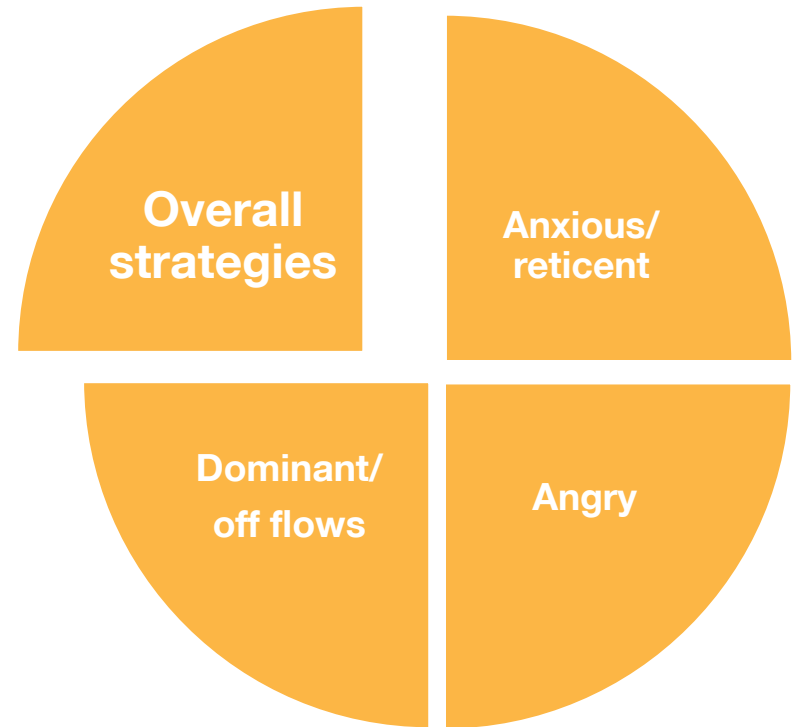


Any interview can become '**sensitive**' – situation can change quickly. Difficulties arise due to:

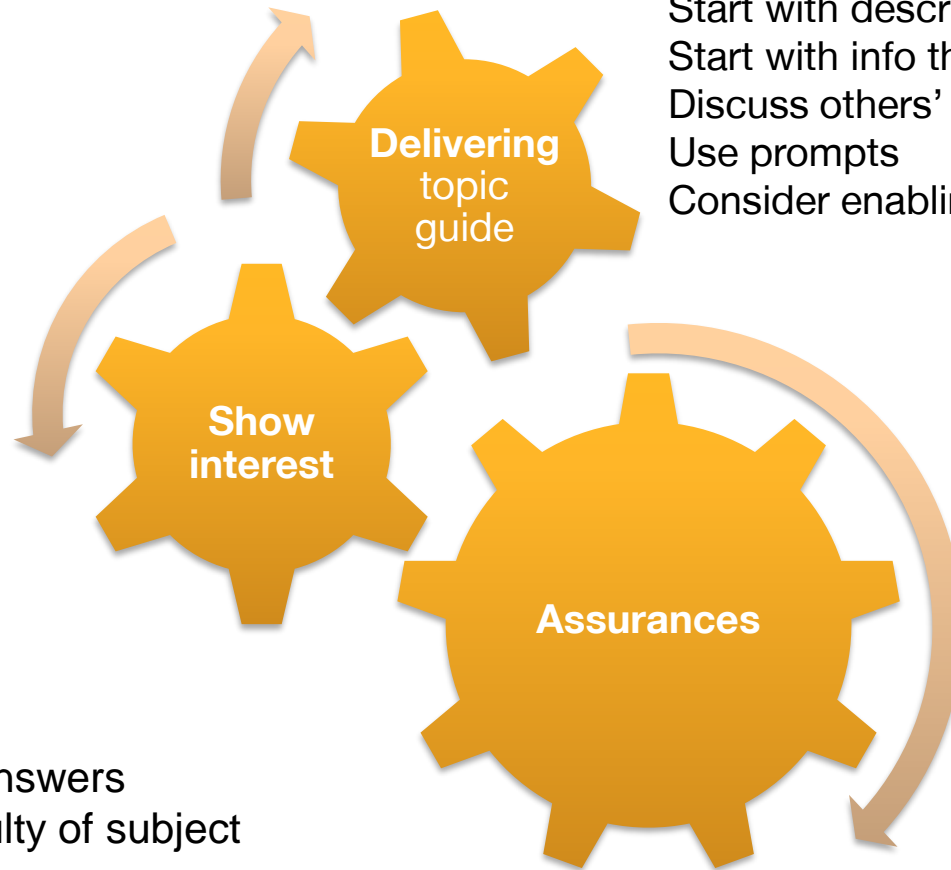
- **External circumstances** at place of interview
- **Sensitive/complex topics** – leading to anxiety, distress, anger
- Apparently innocuous topics raising **difficult memories/emotions**

Strategies for dealing with reactions

- Stay in role
- Right to discuss topic
- Acknowledge participant reactions
- Acknowledge own reactions
- Be guided by participant
- Be prepared



Anxious/reticent participants



Delivering topic guide

- Start with descriptive/concrete subject
- Start with info they are comfortable with
- Discuss others' views
- Use prompts
- Consider enabling/projective techniques

Assurances

- Confidentiality
- No wrong or right answers
- Acknowledge difficulty of subject

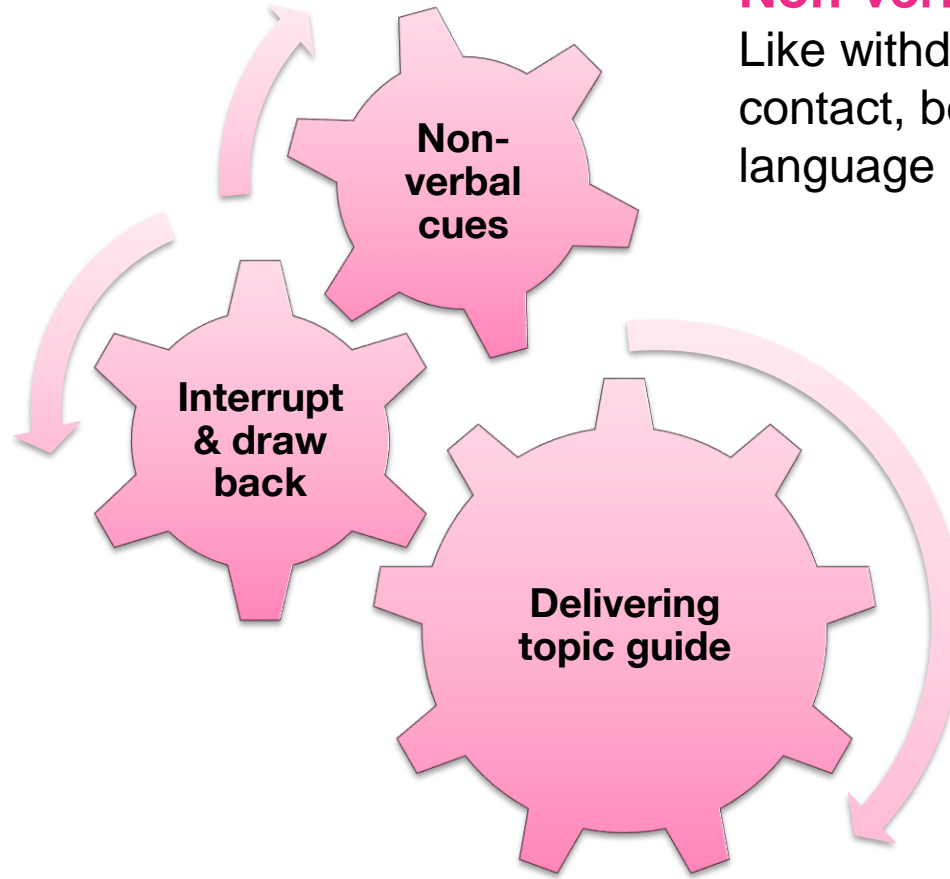
Dominant/off flows

Interrupt

- Reiterate aims of study
- Check relevancy
- Mention interest but time constraints

Topic guide

- Use closed questions if needed
- Discuss non-related topics after interview



Non-verbal cues

- Like withdrawing eye contact, body language etc

Angry participants

Record and explore

Record key concerns/issues
Explore reasons, feelings & importance of views



Acknowledge anger

Anger is probably not direct at you

Safety first

If necessary, make excuse to leave

Summary - Managing the interview

More than just following the topic guide

You need to manage

- Your credibility to the participant
- Interview environment
- Recording of data
- Roles within the interview
- Stages and flow of the interview
- Difficulties that may arise during the interview
- Adapting to the needs of specific populations

Interview practice

Interview role play as a safe and supporting learning tool

Chance to:

- practice delivering a topic guide
- observe others delivering it
- provide supportive comments

Please bear in mind:

- What you say as an interviewee or a participant in the discussion is confidential
- If as a participant you want to stop, please say so...

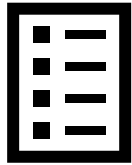
Delivering interviews

- 25 mins to deliver interview
- 20 min for reflection – good order to do this is:
 - Interviewer
 - Respondent
 - Observers

Supportive comments on:

- Experiences of delivering interview: time, topic guide, managing interaction etc
- Being an interviewee
- Questioning – including posing questions, probes and prompts
- Body language
- Quality of information from the interview – what explored well/less well

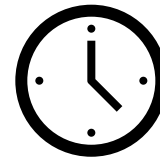
Interview dials



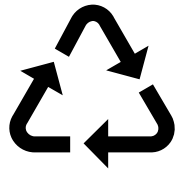
Topic guide



Participant



Time



Environment



Dynamic



You

Things wot I learned: Interviews are about the...

Process	The interview is only as good as the research process it is located in
Participant	Be flexible, open and responsive. Data collection is not data analysis!
Depth	3 key ways to elicit depth: Active listening Clear opening questions Good follow-up questions, probes and prompts
Open question	Clear, open questions that map and mine – closed questions used purposefully
Interviewer	You are the lens through which the data is collected
Detail	The devil is in the detail – from turning up on time at an interview to making sure your topic guide has features to help you make decisions
Challenging situations	Be prepared. No such thing as an innocuous interview!
Experience	Enjoy the process! It's a privilege being able to parachute into people's lives and listen to their story

Interviews are...

Never about unicorns!

No such thing as perfect interviews

