

# Depth interviewing skills

## Day 2



# Session 8

## Handling different participants video clips

SCENE

TAKE



# Session 9

## Considerations before the interview



# Learning objectives

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



# Ethical considerations

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- Is the sample inclusive and enabling?
- Informed consent – **a process**
- Risk, benefit and harm to participant
- Ethical introductions
- Researcher safety and well-being
- Anonymity, confidentiality and disclosure



# Recruitment

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## Type of recruitment

- Opt-in or opt-out?

## Who does the recruitment?

- Enable participation
- Build confidence and trust
- Getting information across clearly/accurately

## Setting up fieldwork

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

# Incentives

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## Is an incentive required?

- Whether 'appropriate'
- Form taken - cash/ voucher, copy of the report?
- Value
- When to give

## Other expenses

- Travel
- Childcare

# Preparing for the interview

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## 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 any sample/ screening information
- Any stimulus materials needed
- Interview summary sheets?



# Session 10

## Managing depth interviews



# Learning objectives

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

# Interviewer attributes

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

Accessibility

Neutrality

Interest/  
Curiosity

# Accessibility

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## 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

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## 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

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**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

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## 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

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## 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

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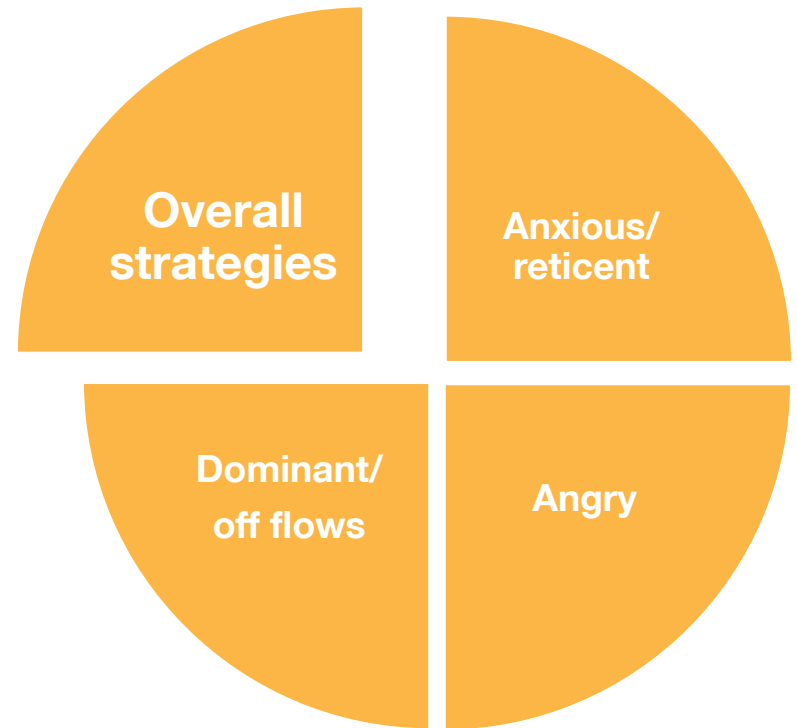
Any interview can become '**sensitive**' – situation can change quickly. Difficulties arise due to:

- **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

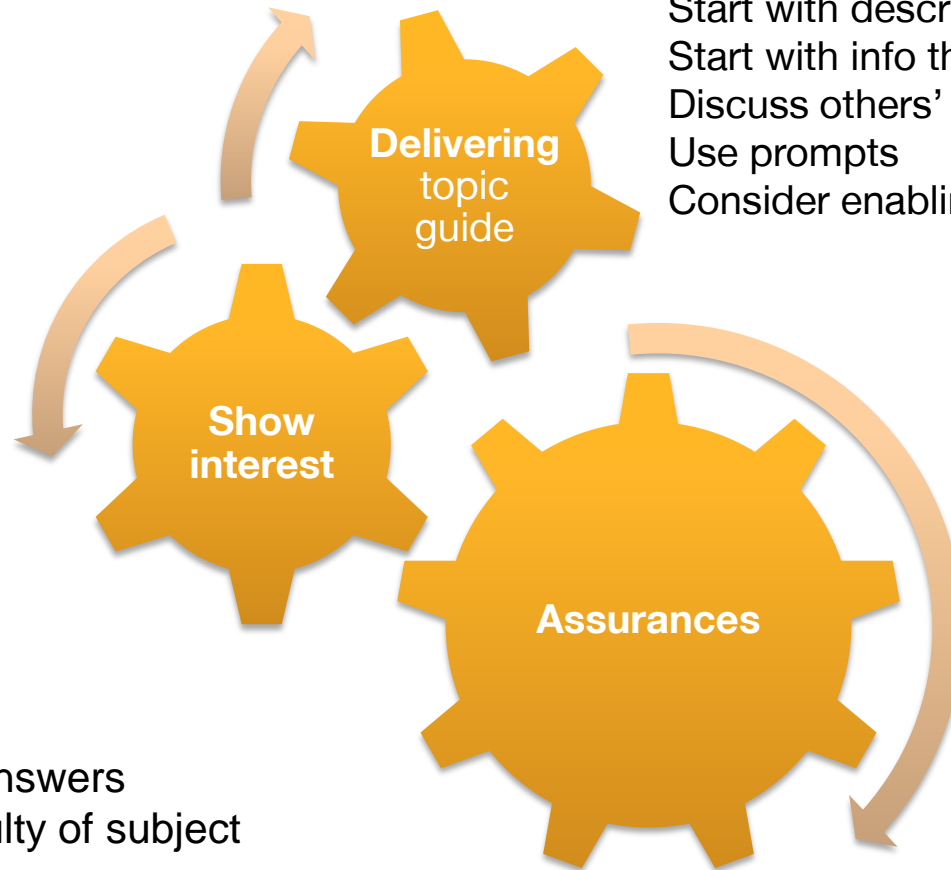
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- Stay in role
- Right to discuss topic
- Acknowledge participant reactions
- Acknowledge own reactions
- Be guided by participant
- Be prepared



# Anxious/reticent participants

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## 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

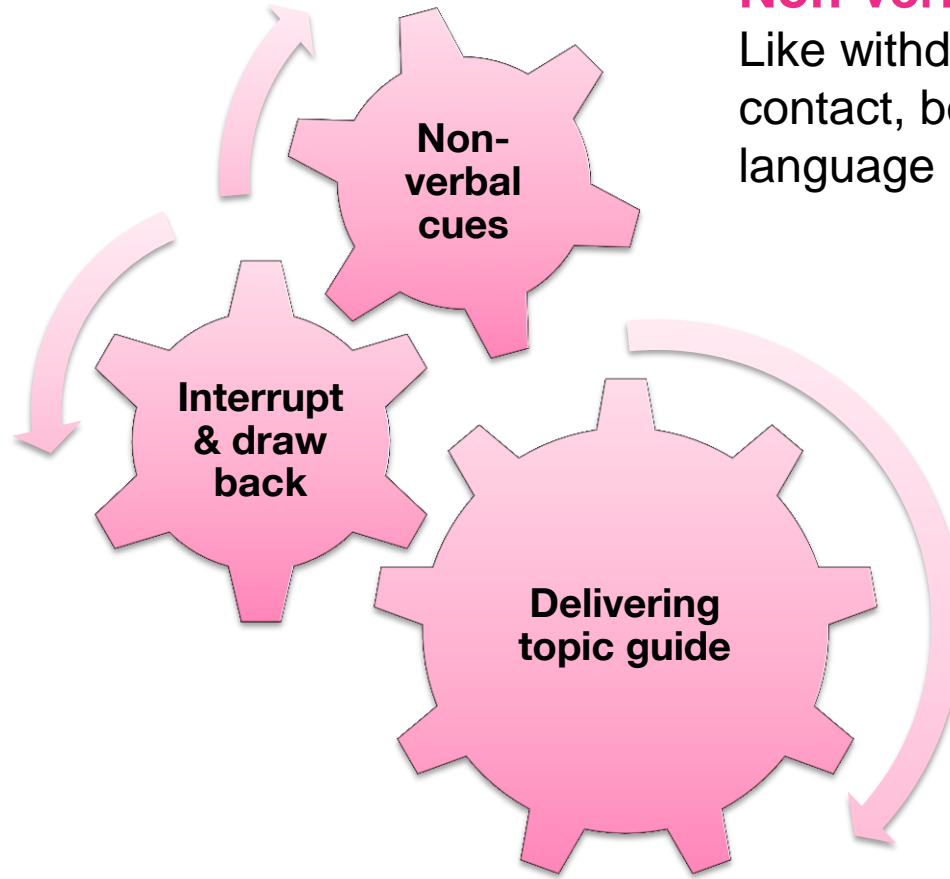
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## Interrupt

- 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

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## 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

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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

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## 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

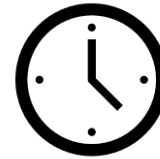
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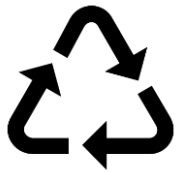
Topic guide



Participant



Time



Environment



Dynamic



You



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

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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...

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**Never about unicorns!**

No such thing as perfect interviews

