

## **Interview Procedures**

1. Plan a consistent preamble including:
  - who the interviewer is
  - who they are working for
  - what kind of questions will be asked
  - time that will be needed
  - what will be done with the data
  - how confidentiality will be maintained
2. Come prepared; plan your interviews carefully; craft your questions precisely and memorize them.
3. Consider multiple directions that the questions and answers may lead.
4. Use a blend of closed- and open-ended questions to ensure gathering some replicable data as well as the rich subjective data possible through the interview technique. Ask for clarification when you need it.
5. Try different techniques; joking, a mild challenge, or asking a subject to elaborate with a story can sometimes give you better information.
6. Unstructured discussions require significantly more time to analyze data.
7. Carefully focused discussion will take more time to create and less time to analyze.
8. Construct a recording form for documenting the content of the conversation.
  - Include a description and space to record responses to each specific question that you will ask.
  - Include abbreviated notations for a range of likely answers, so that you might be able to check off anticipated ideas as they surface. This will allow you to spend your time listening to and recording unique thoughts.
  - Test the recording form with several mock interviews to enhance your ability to focus on the interviewee while taking adequate notes.
9. Skilled interviewers keep discussions active and productive; practice active listening; plan ways to keep the conversation on track and to coax additional information when needed.
10. Good interviews are those where the subjects are comfortable and feel free to talk – do not interrupt subjects or change the direction of the conversations too quickly.
11. Hold interviews in a comfortable private environment, free of interruptions.
12. Avoid counseling the interviewee.
13. If the interviewee asks for a comment to be “off record,” accommodate that wish.
14. Never betray your client’s trust.

## **Analyzing Interview Data**

The procedures for data analysis are similar to those for focus groups (see above). Most important is that notes be reviewed and clarified immediately after the interview. At the end of each group of interviews (perhaps daily) all of that day’s notes should be reviewed and summary observations should be documented.