

Good Questions for Stakeholder Interviews

What the project is about

The more you know about the project or product and what the organization hopes to achieve from it, the better you can ensure that the research is relevant. Questions could be:

- What is the product going to be?
- What is the history of the project?
- What is the reason we are doing this project/product?
- What are the goals of the project?
- What do we still need to clarify?
- Who are our biggest competitors?

The stakeholder's role and interests in relation to the project

If you understand a stakeholder's background and motivations, it's easier for you to identify where you will meet opposition to or gain support for specific research and resulting design changes. Common questions are:

- What is your role in this project?
- How long have you been involved in the project?
- What did you do before this project?
- What do you personally consider a success for this project?
- What worries do you have in relation to this project?
- How would you like to be involved in user research? (E.g., see a report, participate in interviews, workshop the results.)
- Is there anyone else we need to talk to?

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What has already been decided about the project

If you know the constraints of the project, it's easier for you to decide on how ambitious you can be about research and resulting design changes. Questions could be:

- What has been decided about the project/product so far?
- What requirements have been decided for the product?
- What tech decisions have been made, and how firm are they?
- When is the product going to be released?
- How large is the development team?

Who the users are

By clarifying what people already know about users and who they want the customers to be, you can ensure that your user research is focused. You could ask:

- Who are the customers/users?
- What user research have we already done that might be relevant for this project?
- Who do we want the customers/ users to be in 5 or 10 years?
- Do we know the primary use context for the product?

