

Choosing your assessment method

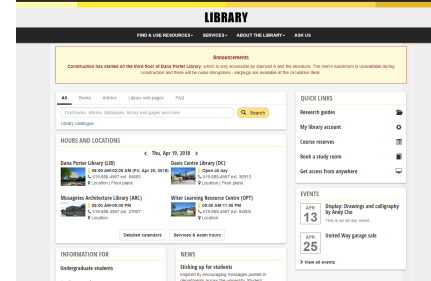
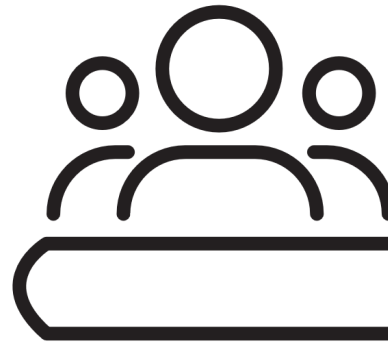
Oct 23rd, 2019

Emily Christofides, UX Specialist

University of Waterloo Library



UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO



Knowing your question

What would you like to know about your users?

- Individually write down:
 - Who are your users in this case?
 - What do you want to know about them?
 - What do you hope to do with that information?

Knowing your question

- Share with your table
- Choose one to share with the group:
 - Question should be broad (not a research question)
 - Have implications for how things are done at your library
 - Be one you think could be answered

Today

- Knowing your question
- Some key methods
 - Surveys
 - Focus groups
 - Interviews
 - Usability
 - Observational methods
- Pick a method

Refining your question

- How complex is it?
- Can it be simply explained/answered?
- Do you need to know the context?
- Do you know the options?
- Will people be convinced by numbers or stories?

Methods

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Usability
- Observational methods

Methods match-up

Survey

What are the challenges to booking a study room at the library?

Focus group

How many people primarily use Google to search the library website?

Interview

How do students currently manage their assignment tasks?

Usability

Where should we place a sign for the lost-and-found?

Observation

How could we better encourage users to recycle in the library?



Methods - Surveys

- Works best for clear questions
- Allows you to answer “what” questions
- Gives you numbers
- Allows for feedback on sensitive topics
- Not as good for understanding context

Methods – Focus groups

- Can get at the why
- Gives you people's reactions and re-reactions
- Depends on group dynamic (& facilitator skill)
- Provides essentially one data point
- Can be hard to schedule

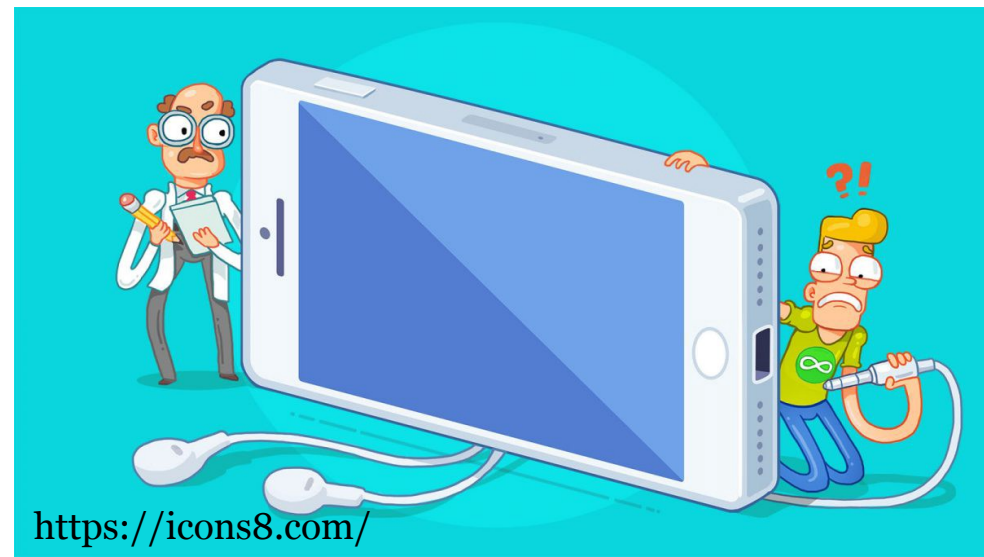


Method - Interviews

- Great for detailed questions
- Gives you “why” and context
- Range of stories
- Doesn't give you sense of relative importance
- Time-consuming to run and analyze

Method - Usability

- Allows you to see more natural interactions
- Can be used for “things” too
- More accurate measure of behaviour
- Can be beneficial with even a few users
- May also need to ask questions to clarify



Methods - Observation

- Lots of different options
- Learn about users without taking their time
- See them in context
- But some contexts may not be observable
- May need to ask some questions to understand

Choosing a method

- All depend on...
 - Who you ask (sampling)
 - What you ask (question design)
- All could give you qual or quant data
- Can be combined

Activity - Pick a method

... Based on best fit

- Surveys – reach more people, get answers to clear questions
 - Focus groups – get people’s reactions to each other’s ideas
 - Interviews – can get in-depth answers to why and how
 - Usability – can observe people’s interactions with product
 - Observational methods – can see people in their usual context
-
- Refine/revise your question so it can be answered with your method
 - Create a few related questions that fit the method