

General Outline for an Affinity Group Interview with Senior Participants of the Hackathon

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The following document is a general outline of an affinity group interviews to be conducted with older adults who participated in the Hackathon event on March 11-12th 2016. It contains guidelines for researchers and moderators who want to take part in the research. In addition it contains a general outline of the interview, with a short description and selected questions that can be used for future reference.

Preliminary information

Group interviewed: group of 6 older adults from the group of 15 who participated in the hackathon on march 11-12th 2016.

Time and place of interview: Warsaw, pl. Konstytucji 4 (location of the seniors' activity club – a place well known to the interviewees, creating an atmosphere for a conversation), at a time convenient to the seniors (Monday, March 21th, 11:00 – 13:00, during their weekly computer study workshops).

General characteristics: Due to the specific nature of the group interviewed, as well as mostly exploratory character of the interview, an affinity mini-group interview was preferred rather than a classic focused group interview. The chosen technique allows for a more in-depth insight into the perspectives of the interviewees, who, as members of the seniors' club are strongly connected through mutual relationships and experiences.

Context of the research

The interview serves as a complementary work to the research and observation conducted before and during the Hackathon. In total 15 seniors participated in the event. Most of them knew each other as members of the seniors club, and participants of weekly computer study workshop. Some of them had experiences with previous LivingLab PJAIT activities. It is crucial, in a study such as this to acquire in-depth answer, that would complement the data collected in other stages of the research (before and during the Hackathon). Therefore, an affinity mini group interview was applied with 6 senior, from groups participating in the seniors' club activities.

Due to the interviewed group's characteristics as well as the limitations of the group interview method (possibility that some of the participants will dominate the discussion, consequently limiting the expression of other interviewees), individual in-depth interviews may also be utilized afterwards.

The following script forms a general layout of a group interview. It contains examples of questions that can be asked in order to tackle the main research objectives. It needs to be emphasized though, that these questions are just suggestions, and do not need to be reiterated verbatim during the interview.

Research objectives

Two main objectives were established for this interview:

1. Collection of evaluation insight, that would allow for improvement in future iterations of the Hackathon events.
2. Research objective: how did the seniors' participation influence the quality of apps developed during the Hackathon, what were the intergenerational group dynamics.

Important notes: the interview is meant to be a free flowing conversation rather than a strict questionnaire with questions to be answered in a strict order. Questions shown in this document, serve primary as examples, to be used as an inspiration for weaving the flow of discussion. Despite the fact that the interview is not a strict questionnaire, any questions should be formulated in a formal style, with regard to the social context (use of correct honorifics, avoidance of colloquialism etc.)

IMPORTANT in order to sustain continuity between various stages of the research it is important to identify and note down the ID numbers that each of the senior participants used during the Hackathon event/ This will also help in anonymizing the results.

Examples of questions and phrases the moderator/researcher can use during the interview are written in *italics*.

General Introduction

Due to the fact that this particular group interview takes place after the Hackathon, as well as the specifics of the group of people interviewed (people who know each other through shared activities in the seniors' club, and are familiar with the researchers) the initial interview introduction has been scaled to a minimum. In general the interview introduction can take more than 30 minutes, when the researchers have to introduce themselves, and the topic they want to discuss.

Brief introduction by the researcher/moderator. Introduction to the research objectives and the interview's topic. Importance of reminding the interviewees that the interview is recorded, and all collected data is confidential.

We would like to thank you for attending to this meeting. The interview you are about to participate in is scientific in nature. Its aim is to collect information that would help improve the quality of any future events we are about to organize. We will also want to ask questions related to research hypotheses tested by our research team.

First part – Interview introduction

Begin the interview with questions related to the seniors' expectations concerning the Hackathon, and how they were verified during the event.

The moderator should encourage the interviewees to answer freely and in a natural manner unbound by the constraints of a regular questionnaire style.

A few days have passed since the end of the Hackathon. We are interested in knowing what are your impressions after the event?

Encourage the confrontation of expectations with reality. Pay attention to both positive and negative feedback.

Was there anything that failed to meet your expectations? Did something disappoint you? Or were there things that surprised you in a positive sense?

Can you recall your fear regarding the Hackathon. Did any of them turned out to be right?

What was the vision of your role in preparing the app?

Part two: from expectations to experiences: Hackathon opening

Ask about the seniors opinions on the group selection process (how did the matchmaking turned out within the seniors, and between the seniors and junior programmers). Inquire about initiative and cooperation.

What are your opinion on the first stages of the Hackathon event. How did you feel during the event? Did any of you feel isolated, excluded?

Pay attention to any hints of who came to the event already with a senior partner, who came along and found a pair at the spot.

Did you arrive at the hackathon with an idea for a app?

How did the matchmaking between seniors and juniors proceed? How did the seniors react to the process (note: the group matching stage was left to be an emergent process with a limited moderation and researcher input into the selection of groups). Where did the seniors end up? Did they joined a single group or were consultants for many groups?

Did the junior participants reached out to find suitable seniors for their groups, or was it you who had the initiative. How did you feel during the process? What you liked, what you disliked?

Was finding a group easy? Did the first group that approached you/ you approached was your final choice?

Can you recall the name of your group, or the name of its members?

Part three: idea development

Who took the initiative during idea development? Did the seniors propose their own ideas for apps?

How did your cooperation with the juniors begin? Did both parties introduced themselves to each other?

Was it easy to discuss your ideas with juniors?

Did the idea for an app come from the juniors?

Was the idea, a result of mutual effort?

How did the juniors react to your ideas? Did they use them? Did the developer team change its plans thanks to the insight given by the seniors?

What was your motivation while discussing the ideas for apps? What in your opinion were the motivations of the junior? Did you base your ideas on your own needs and experiences, or did you refer to general views of the elderly?

Was it easy to convince the juniors to your ideas?

How, in the opinion of the seniors, did the process of development look like during day one? Were the senior passive recipients/observer or active participants of idea development?

Did you discuss your ideas among yourselves (the seniors) within the group. Did suggestions for apps and functionalities come from you, or the juniors?

Part four: from ideas to effects

Summary of day one (idea development, setting the rules of cooperation), then moving to day two, contact with the team, review of apps. Feedback from the seniors, and from the juniors.

Did your group establish any mean of communicating while you left the event for the night? What were the forms of communication that you established (phone, e-mail)? At what time did you arrive on day two?

How if at all, did you communicate with your group during your time outside the event? Who contacted who, did you called the juniors, or did they called you? Were the means of communication different from what you agreed upon?

How did you react to the first version of the app?

Did you see any of your original ideas and suggestions in the app?

In your opinion why did your team lose/win? Who, in your opinion, should win, and why?

In general, how well did you communicate with the juniors?

Sum up and verify the collected opinions

Would you like to participate in a similar event in the future?

What if any would you change in the design of such an event?

How, if at all, would you change the way you and junior members of your group cooperated?

Conclusion

Thank the interviewees for their participation. In case more individual insight is required, arrange individual in-depth interviews with selected participants.

Thank you your time and provided insight. We would appreciate it even more if you could stay a little while and allow us to discuss with some of you individually.