

Writing good questions

Transcript

Writing good questions is a skill that takes time, practice and experience. It can also mean the difference between a useful test and a complete waste of time and money

So to help you get it right, here are 4 key points to remember:

1) Keep things concise

Short studies are good studies, in the same vein, concise questions are good questions.

If you overload your participants with questions they'll become tired or bored so, to get through it quicker would just answer 'I don't know' and just give the most complimentary, or flattering answer rather than telling the absolute truth, as they've lost their motivation and are struggling to pay attention.

Test it out yourself. Your study should only take around 15 minutes to complete any longer and it becomes a struggle.

So keep the questions short and to the point and ensure you only ask one thing per question.

For example, "*How difficult and frustrating was it to use the app?*"

Is a confusing question to answer. Instead ask it in two separate questions

"Was there anything frustrating in the task you just attempted?"

Then *"How easy or difficult was the task to complete?"*

So remember to always keep your questions simple and concise.

2) Remove bias

When writing your questions, be aware of your own bias, so you don't lead the participants one way or another.

It's like seeing a film with friends that you thought was really bad. And at the end you ask them, *"Why didn't you like the film?"* when in fact, they thought it was good.

But would give you an answer in line with your own opinion. This is leading.

Also, when using multiple choice questions, by randomising the answers and adding an *"other"* and *"none of the above"* options all contribute to neutral and unbiased questioning.

So remember, be aware of your own bias, when writing your questions, so you get the right insights you need.

3) Start broad then get narrower

Start broad then get narrower. It's good practice to start your studies with open ended questions. Questions that need more than a, yes, no, answer. From these questions you'll get qualitative and spontaneous feedback and find out about your users' work, use of the product and any overall feedback they may have.

"Tell me about a typical day for you at work?" and *"What are your biggest daily challenges at work?"* are typical icebreakers.

Then you can then get narrower as the research goes on by using closed questions. This would give you quantitative data to gather or validate information, like asking *"If you could change one thing, what would it be?"* or to rate their experience or ask how useful they think a specific function or feature will be for them.

So remember to start with broader open ended questions then move onto closed questions, to get the specific insights you need.

4) Test before you launch

Before you launch your studies to participants, it's essential that you first test it. Then test it with your team, to make sure your questions really relate to what you want to test, and to check that the questions are not biased to your opinion.

Then soft launch it, with 10 percent of your target sample.

Then check the feedback you gather from it. If it doesn't shed light on how to practically improve the product, you can then tweak or change the questions to improve it.

So remember, before you launch it, Test, test, test.