

Actors and Strategies for Change – Towards Global Sustainabilities

Weekly Missions

Part 1: Interviews

Since the course is largely based on students obtaining information from guests in an interview format, here are some important points to make this a valuable process, even though you might be completely unfamiliar with conducting interviews.

Types of Topics in Questions

1. **Background/demographics** - standard background questions, such as age, education, etc.
2. **Knowledge** - to get facts about a topic
3. **Behaviours** - about what a person has done or is doing
4. **Opinions/values** - about what a person thinks about a topic
5. **Feelings** - note that respondents sometimes respond with "I think ..." so be careful to point out that you're looking for feelings
6. **Sensory** - about what people have seen, touched, heard, tasted or smelled

Note that the above questions can be asked in terms of past, present or future.

Sequence of Questions

1. Before asking about controversial matters (such as feelings and opinions), first ask about some facts. With this approach, respondents can more easily engage in the interview before warming up to more personal matters.
2. Intersperse fact-based questions throughout the interview to avoid long lists of fact-based questions, which tends to leave respondents disengaged.
3. Ask questions about the present before questions about the past or future. It's usually easier for them to talk about the present and then work into the past or future.
4. The last questions might be to allow respondents to provide any other information they prefer to add and their impressions of the interview. We

will do this as well by asking guests to prepare their 3 key messages they want to get across, regardless of the direction the interview takes.

Wording of Questions

1. Wording should be open-ended. Respondents should be able to choose their own terms when answering questions.
2. Questions should be as neutral as possible. Avoid wording that might influence answers, e.g., evocative, judgmental wording.
3. Questions should be asked one at a time.
4. Be careful asking "why" questions. This type of question infers a cause-effect relationship that may not truly exist. These questions may also cause respondents to feel defensive, e.g., that they have to justify their response, which may inhibit their responses to this and future questions.

Conducting Interview

1. Ask one question at a time.
2. Try to relate your questions to the subject matter of the class and the set reading.
3. If possible, try to relate your questions to current affairs and elements of social change that are currently ongoing, based on your research and the discussion on current affairs and actors.
4. Try to relate your questioning to the thread of social change theory that will be running throughout the course.
5. Attempt to remain as neutral as possible. That is, don't show strong emotional reactions to guests' responses.

References

Based on Free Management Library (2018). General Guidelines for conducting Research Interview. Available on:

<https://managementhelp.org/businessresearch/interviews.htm#anchor567684>

(last accessed: 10.01.2018)

Part 2: Padlet

Throughout the course you will be using a website called [Padlet](#). Using this tool will be an integral part of your weekly tasks that help you to prepare for each class.

Every week there will be two Padlets that you will be required to make a contribution to:

Padlet 1 will consist of: relevant information that you source yourselves on the upcoming speaker, this can be an interesting article that the speaker has published or a link to a TED talk of the guest, etc. This Padlet will also be the location where you **must** upload your question/s for the guest speaker (3 days in advance at the latest).

Padlet 2 will consist of: current examples of social change found in the world's media relating to the focus of the week. This is a chance to compile a portfolio of actors and strategies for change that can be a great resource for you to utilise during the individual assignments. What you upload here will form the basis of discussion during the first 15min or so of each class where you will share what you found with the day's guests.

These Padlets give all students a chance to collate their findings and research in one place that can be shared with every member of the course. The questions uploaded to Padlet 1 will be made available to the upcoming speaker to give them an idea of what to expect during the interview session.

A contribution to each Padlet weekly is part of your course examination. Thus, you will have to **create a Padlet account in your name** (you can add to the Padlet without being logged in, but if we can't trace whether you contributed we will assume that you didn't). Overall, you need to contribute to 75% of all Padlets in order to pass this part of the examination (pass/fail criteria).

Simply double click anywhere on the Padlet and you will have the option to upload a wide range of attachments. Happy Padling!