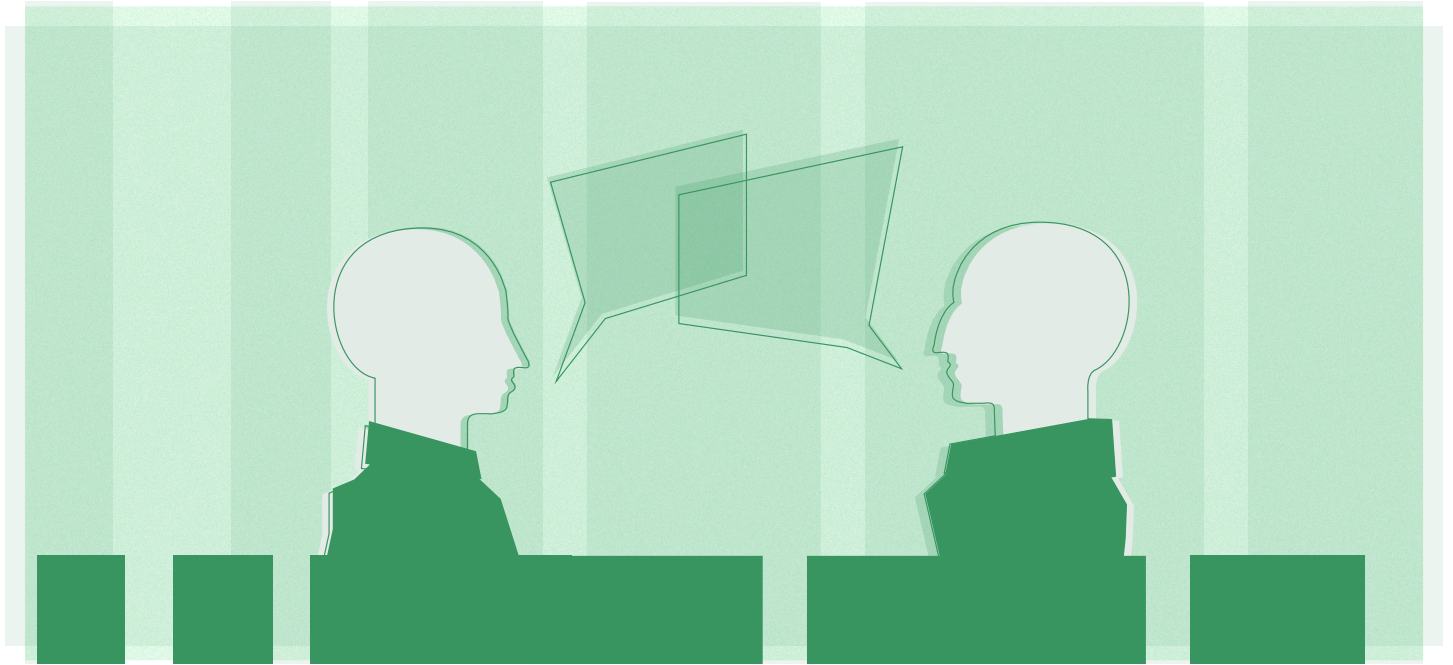


Conducting interviews

If you've been through our other resources on interviews, you should feel well prepared to get going, but there are still a few points to take on board during the interview itself.



Be responsive...

Don't just read out your question, accept the answer, and then move on to the next one. Most people are not used to being interviewed, so if it can feel more like a conversation, they will relax. If their answer doesn't give you enough detail, ask them to elaborate, or give an example. Be aware of what their body language can tell you, and what yours communicates too. If they're clearly confused by a question find a way to better phrase it for them - if they show any signs of distress you'll need to judge whether to abandon altogether or "maybe come back to that later, but let's move on to something else for now".

...but keep on track.

Too much elaboration and discussion can mean you run out of time, and don't get through all your questions, so keep an eye on the clock and tick off the questions as you go. If the interviewee does want to wax lyrical on something, maybe suggest "we come back to that again at the end, if we have time".

It's about them, not you.

Sometimes it can be helpful for the interviewer to give their take on a subject, or share their experience - it serves as an example of the kind of answer you might be looking for, and helps develop a sharing, relaxed relationship. But be careful not to put words into their mouth, and don't make it all about you - you will find it frustrating if you go through your transcript to find half of it was your own input.

People will fill silence.

We sometimes talk too much as interviewers because a silence occurs, and it is a natural response to fill it. Try to resist that temptation after asking a question. The silence may simply be because they're thinking through their answer. If it feels awkward for you, busy yourself by making notes - eventually they will also want to fill that silence, and speak.

Analyse as you interview.

Don't assume that analysis of the interviews only happens after you've completed them all. During the process, or maybe just after the interviewee has left, make notes about any themes that are coming through strongly, or you remember from previous interviews occurring here too. Note any additional questions or points that you'd like to address with future interviews.



M & E
L A B
Monitoring
& Evaluation