

# Interview Best Practices

At Sprint we interview for empathy because we want to understand a person's thoughts, emotions, and motivations. By understanding the choices that person makes and the behaviors that person engages in, we can identify their needs, and design to meet those needs. To ensure your interview is focused on empathy be sure to follow the best practices listed below.

## Do

**Do ask neutral questions.** “What do you think about ...?” is a better question than “Don't you think ..?” because the first question doesn't imply that there is a right answer.

**Do ask for more information.** Even when you think you know the answer, ask people why they do or say things. The answers will sometimes surprise you. A conversation started from one question should go on as long as it needs to.

**Do encourage stories.** Whether or not the stories people tell are true, they reveal how they think about the world. Ask questions that get people telling stories.

## Don't

**Don't suggest answers to your questions.** Even if they pause before answering, don't help them by suggesting an answer. This can unintentionally get people to say things that agree with your expectations.

**Don't ask binary questions.** Binary questions can be answered in a word; you want to host a conversation built upon stories.

**Don't frame a question with “usually...”** Instead, ask about a specific instance or occurrence, such as “tell me about the last time you \_\_\_\_\_”

**Don't be afraid of silence.** Interviewers often feel the need to ask another question when there is a pause. If you allow for silence, a person can reflect on what they've just said and may reveal something deeper.

