

Collecting Data I

-Asking People

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Topics of Discussion

- Understanding User Needs
 - Why ask?
 - How does it link to designing for usability?
- Methods for 'Asking People'
 - Questionnaires & Surveys
 - Questions (open vs close ended)
 - System Usability Scale (SUS)
 - Tools (MS Forms, Google Forms)
 - Interviews
 - Structured
 - Semi-structured
 - Unstructured
 - Focus Groups
 - Sometimes better than individual interviews

Understanding User Needs

Why ask?



Uncover hidden needs [1]

Users often can't fully articulate what they want — asking surfaces unspoken frustrations, workarounds, and desires that observation alone might miss.



Define the right problem [1]

Designing without asking risks solving the wrong problem. User feedback ensures the design effort targets a real, validated pain point.

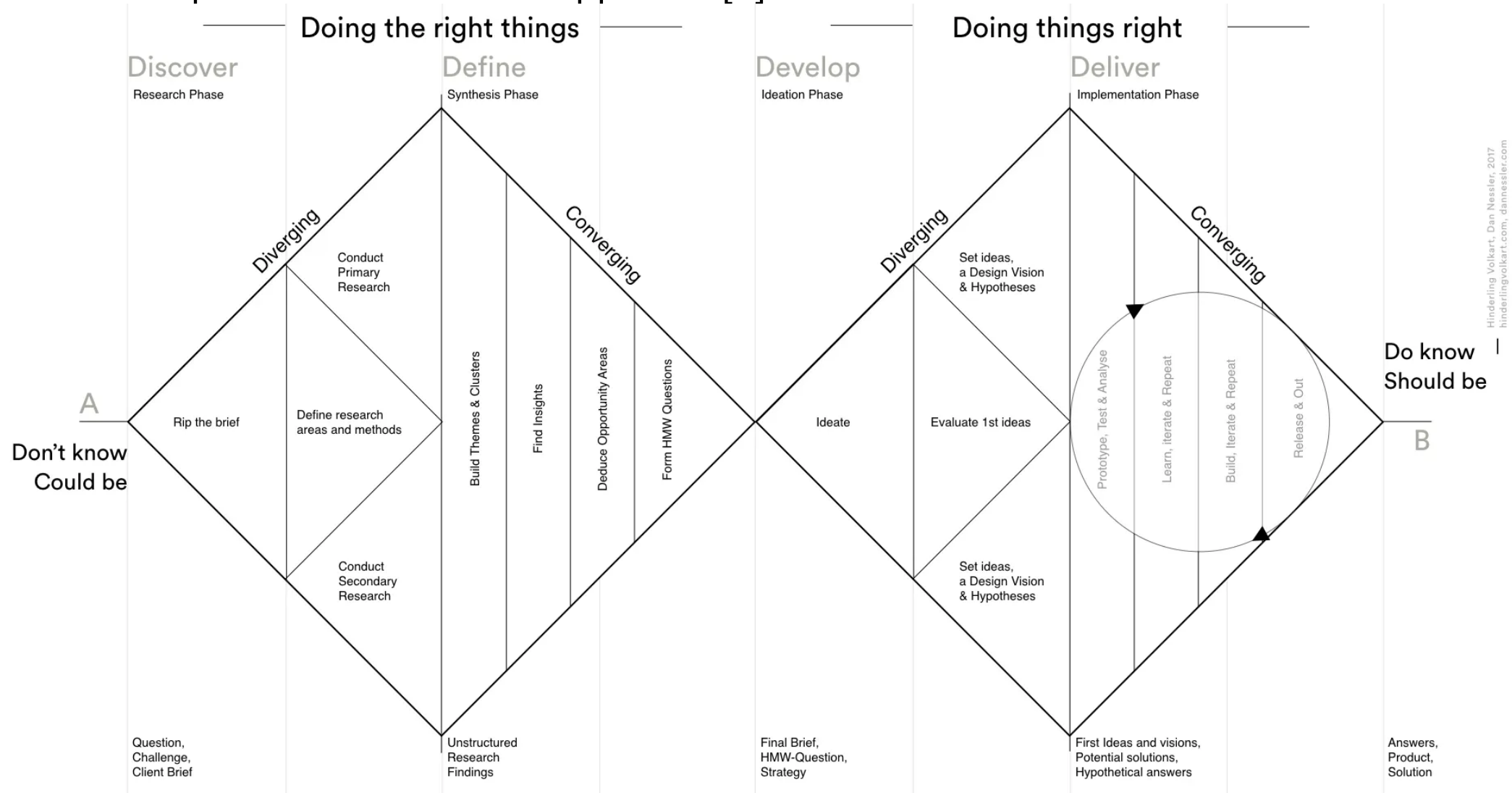


Validate assumptions early [1]

Asking people is cheaper than building the wrong thing. Early data prevents costly late-stage redesigns and developer rework.

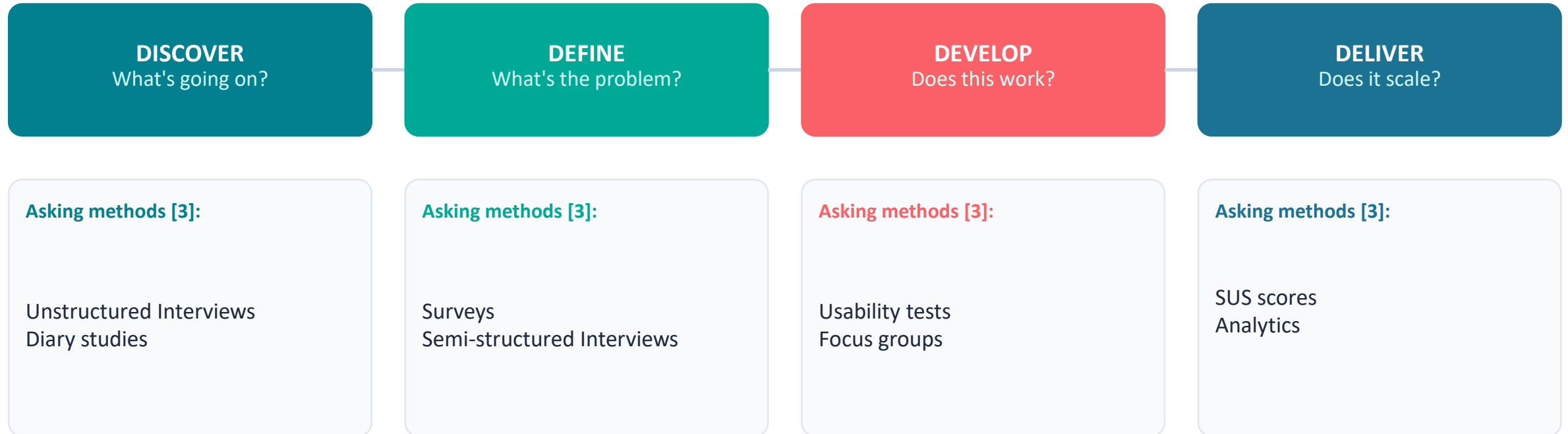
Designing for Usability

- The Revamped Double Diamond Approach [2]:



How does it link to Designing for Usability?

Data collection is not a one-time activity — it runs through every phase of the Double Diamond.



Key insight: The method changes with the phase. Discover = broad & open. Define = focused & validating. Develop = iterative. Deliver = evaluative & measurable.

Questions: Open vs Closed

The type of question determines the type of data you get.



OPEN-ENDED [1]

Free-text responses

- Produces qualitative, rich data
- Allows unexpected answers to emerge
- Better for Discover / Define phases
- Takes longer to analyse

Example:

"What frustrates you most about checking in at the airport?"



CLOSED-ENDED [1]

Fixed-choice responses

- Produces quantitative, comparable data
- Easy to analyse and graph
- Better for Deliver / validation phases
- Can miss nuance and context

Example:

"On a scale of 1–5, how easy was it to check in?" (Likert scale)

System Usability Scale (SUS)

A standardised 10-item questionnaire — the most widely used usability metric in industry [4].

What is it?

- 10 closed-ended questions
- Each rated on a 1–5 Likert scale (Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree)
- Alternates between positive and negative statements (reduces bias)
- Produces a score from 0 to 100
- Developed by John Brooke (1986)

Interpreting the score [4]

≥ 85 Excellent

71–84 Good

51–70 OK / Marginal

≤ 50 Poor

? *Example SUS items: "I thought the system was easy to use." · "I found the system unnecessarily complex."*

Survey Tools

Both tools are free and accessible for UWTSD students.

Microsoft Forms

Integrated with your UWTSD Microsoft 365 account

- ✓ Already linked to your university login
- ✓ Integrates with Microsoft Teams and SharePoint
- ✓ Automatically generates charts from responses
- ✓ Branching logic (show Q5 only if Q4 = Yes)
- ✓ Export to Excel for further analysis

Best for: academic submissions, sharing within Teams, exporting data to Excel [5]

Google Forms

Widely used in industry and UX research

- ✓ Very quick to set up (no login required for respondents)
- ✓ Clean, mobile-friendly response interface
- ✓ Free-text, Likert, grid, and image questions
- ✓ Results auto-populate a Google Sheet
- ✓ Easy shareable link or QR code

Best for: public surveys, quick pilot tests, sharing via social media or QR code [5]

Interviews

One-to-one conversations designed to surface user goals, behaviours, and frustrations.



← More structured / controlled

More open / exploratory →

Structured [6]

- All participants asked exactly the same questions in the same order
- Mostly closed-ended questions
- Easy to analyse and compare
- Less flexible — can't explore unexpected answers

Best for: comparing responses across many participants

Semi-structured [6]

- Prepared question guide, but follow-up is encouraged
- Mix of open and closed questions
- Balance between consistency and exploration
- Allows unexpected themes to emerge

Best for: most UX research — the most common type

Unstructured [6]

- No fixed questions — conversational
- Researcher follows the participant's lead
- Highly exploratory and rich
- Hard to compare across participants

Best for: early discovery, ethnographic research

Conducting an Interview

Practical guidance that applies across all three interview types [7].

01

Obtain informed consent

Explain purpose, recording, and how data will be used. Provide a consent form. Participant can withdraw at any time.

04

Avoid leading questions

Not: "Did you find the button hard to see?" — Instead: "What did you notice when you arrived on that screen?"

02

Start with easy, open questions

Begin with "Can you tell me a bit about yourself and how you currently use [the product]?" before diving into specific tasks.

05

Record and take notes

With consent, record the session. One person facilitates; another takes notes. Avoid sole reliance on memory.

03

Use probing questions

"Why?" "Can you tell me more?" "What happened next?"
Silence is okay — don't rush to fill it.

06

Debrief at the end

Thank the participant, explain next steps, give them a chance to ask questions or add anything they forgot.

Focus Groups

A facilitated group discussion (typically 4–8 people) exploring shared attitudes and experiences [7].

When are they better than individual interviews?



Exploring shared experiences [7]

When you want to see whether an attitude is widely held or unique. The group dynamic surfaces consensus and disagreement quickly.



Generating ideas together [7]

Participants build on each other's responses. One comment sparks another — useful early in the design process for brainstorming.



Efficient for scarce time [7]

You gather data from 5–8 people in 90 minutes instead of needing 5–8 separate interview sessions.

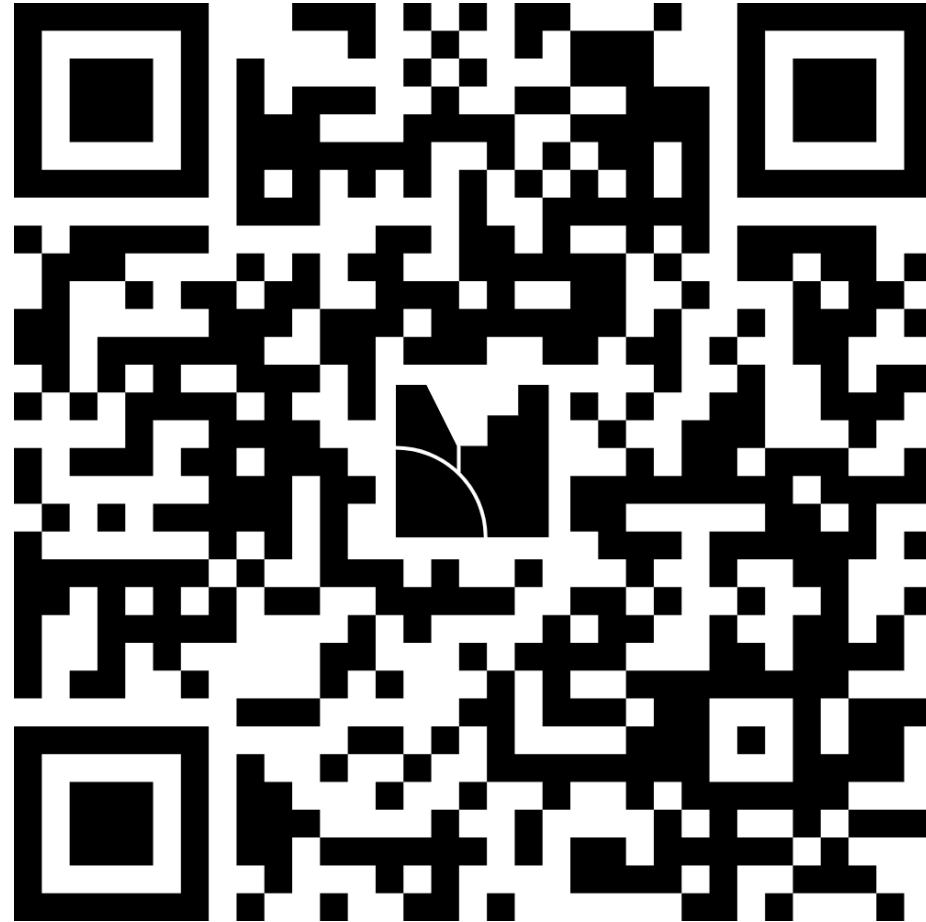


Watch out for groupthink: dominant voices can silence quieter participants, skewing results. A skilled facilitator manages turn-taking and actively draws out quieter members [7].

Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

Feedback



[Menti Link:](https://www.menti.com/alqjc4vvar2m)

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