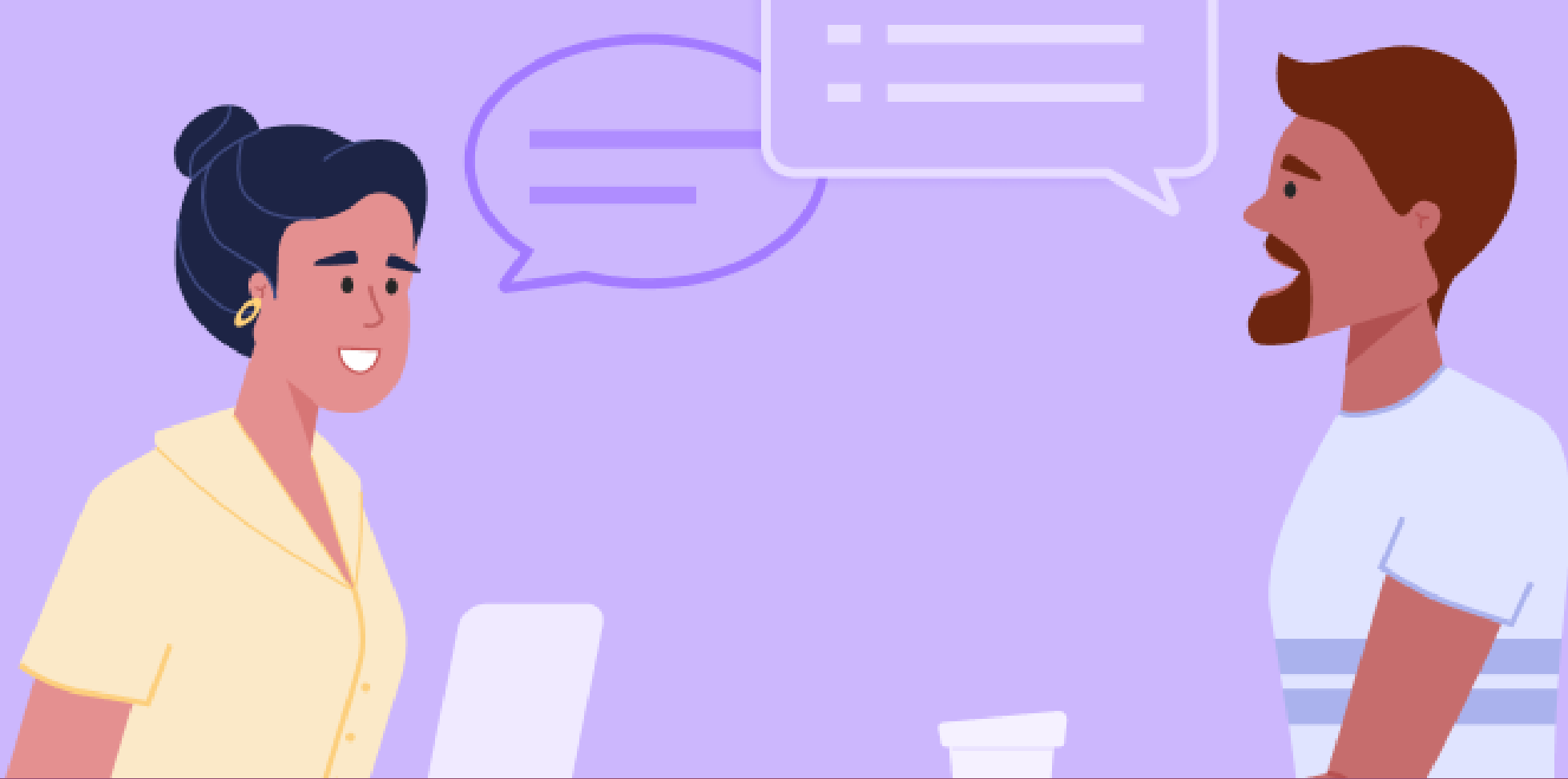




Session 1: Why interview?



Planning

Before you start, you need to consider:

- How many interviews are needed/are practical?
- Recorded or taking notes?
- Transcribed? (*students must transcribe*)
- How will transcripts be analysed?
- Will the participants see the transcription and researcher's interpretations?



Reflexivity



1

What is your own knowledge and/or expertise?

2

Potential impact on the participant/s?

3

What are your methodological decisions or issues that may impact your research?

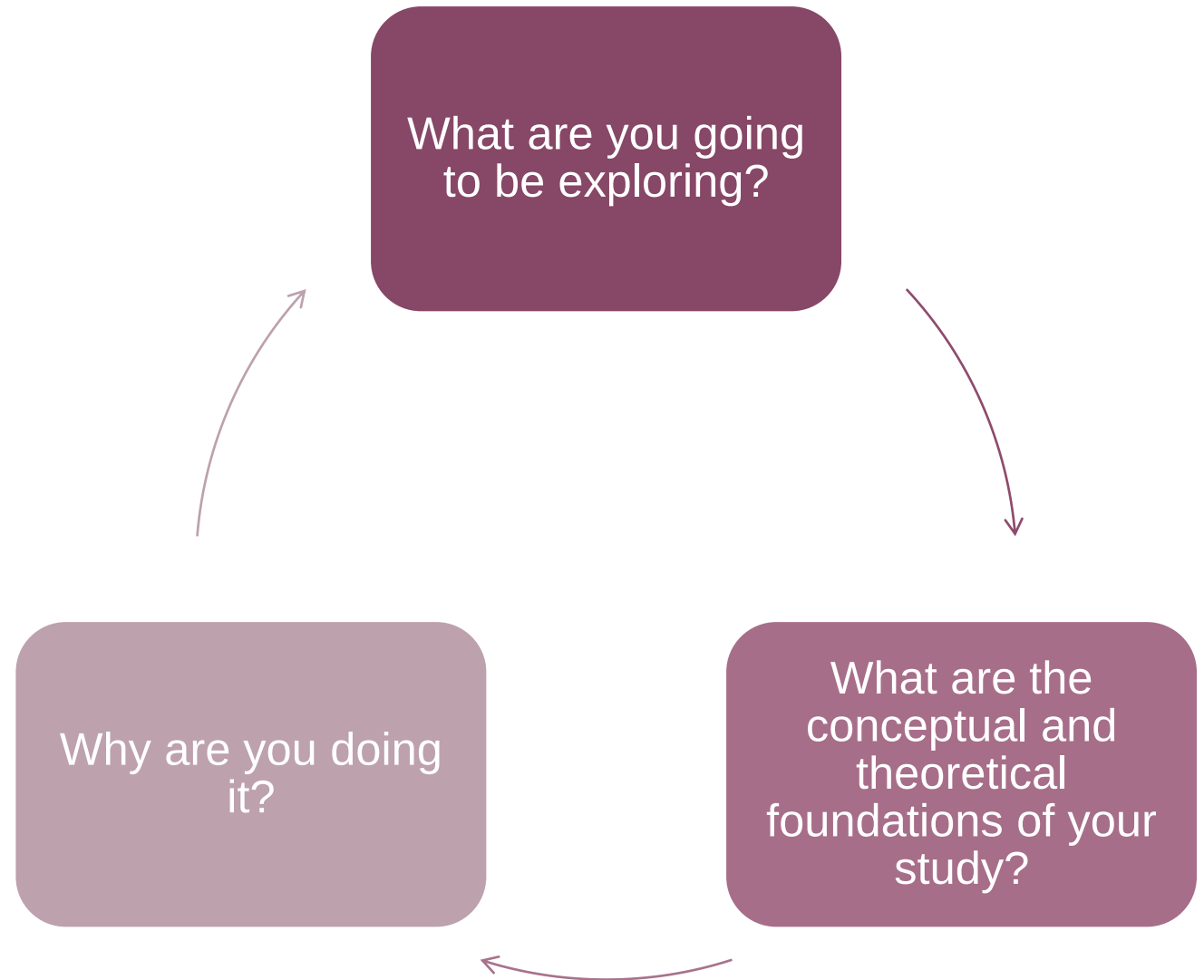
4

Appropriate ways forward?

5

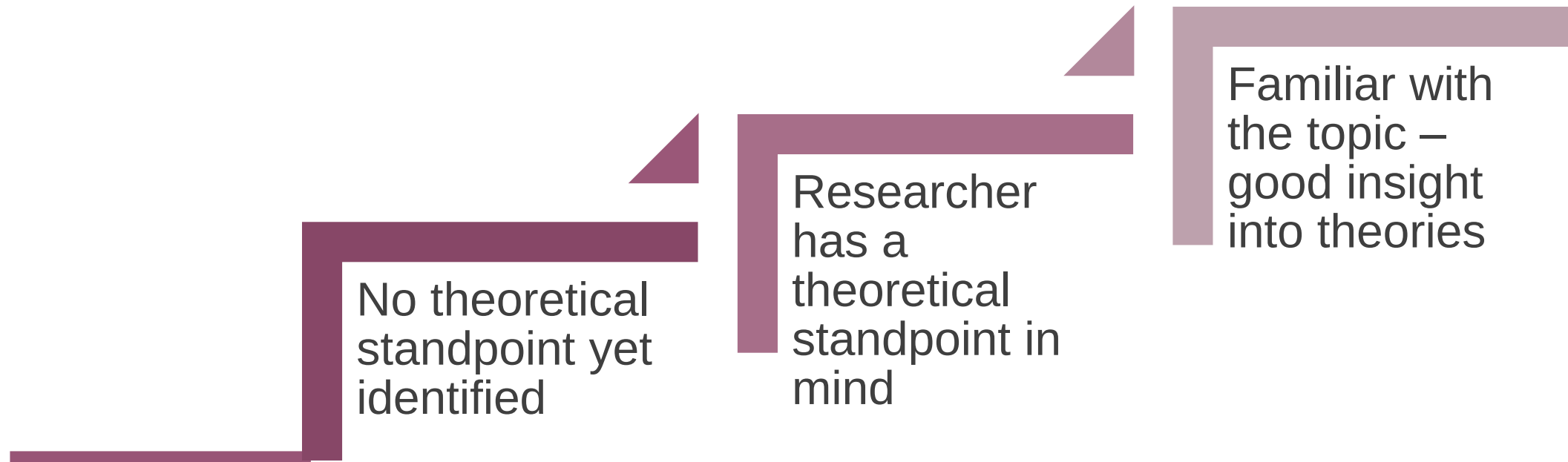
Extent to which you are prepared to remain on topic – rigidity of the interview/focus group

So...



Content

Contextualise the study



The topic area and interview questions you used **must** be rooted in appropriate literature – the foundation of your study – to answer your research questions



If you wanted to investigate factors that affect motivation in university students, what would you investigate?

Ten minutes –
group work and
feedback





Designing

Designing

Time

Design your interview to get the maximum amount of data within an acceptable period of time

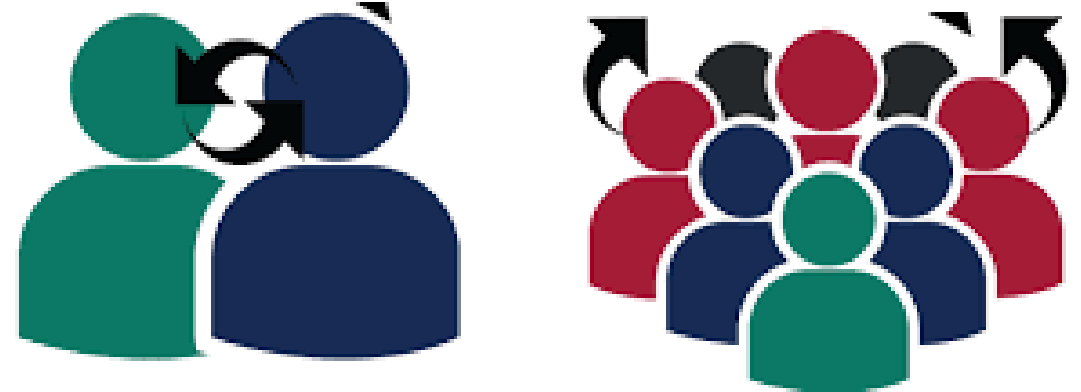


Participant numbers

Choice affects both time and form

Interview as many people as you need to, to find out what you need to know

So – depends on the purpose of your study



Resources available

Time and money considerations

Must design your study accordingly

(gather as much information as you can in as few visits as possible)

Type of interview



Structured Interviews

- Fully-structured – sticking to a rigid order of questioning – mainly open-ended questions allowing for open responses



Unstructured Interviews

- Unstructured / narrative - richest data



Semi-structured Interviews

- Semi-structured or semi-structured photo-elicitation - keep topic in focus



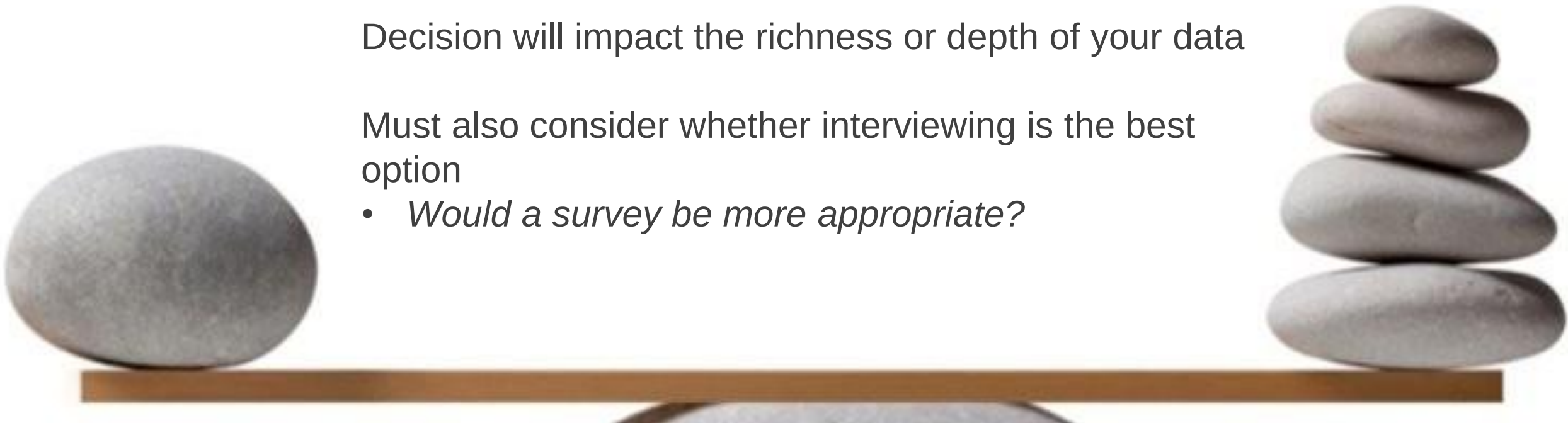
- Group interviews (focus groups) – higher number of participants, but will depth and quality suffer?

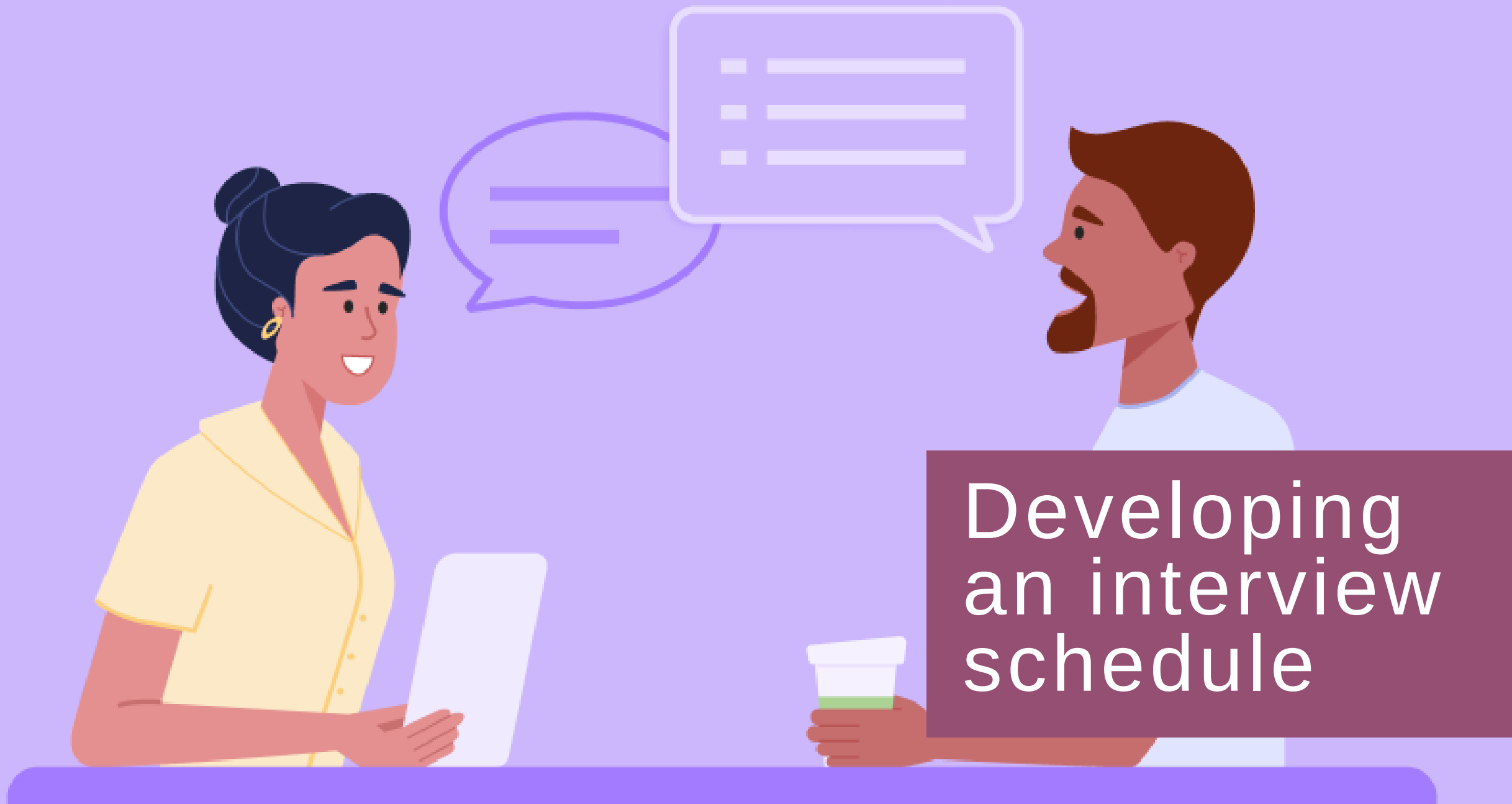
Quality vs. Quantity

Decision will impact the richness or depth of your data

Must also consider whether interviewing is the best option

- *Would a survey be more appropriate?*





Developing
an interview
schedule

Developing an interview schedule

1. Think about what information you want to get from your participants
2. Develop an interview schedule to guide your questions to ensure you cover all important areas

What to include:



Introduction

*"I am.."
"I'm doing this
research
because.."*



**Permission to
record /
insurance of
anonymity**



Questions



**Prompts and
hints**
*For follow-up
questions*



Wrap-up at the end

*Thanks and
summary of the
research aim*

Basic principles for developing questions



Ask questions in a conversational manner

Keep questions brief, clear, reasonable, uni-dimensional, and avoid jargon!

Get feedback from others on your questions

Allow enough time to make revisions

Skills for semi-structured interviews



Use neutral, open-ended questions that aim to elicit in-depth responses from participants

Your questions form a prompt, but are not necessarily adhered to in order

Allow participants to express their beliefs, opinions and feelings **freely**



Do not use loaded or leading questions

Do not use closed questions

Avoid double-barrelled questions

Avoid complex terms or jargon

Avoid double negatives

Categories of questions

Opening

Get acquainted with the participant, feel connected, and build rapport

Introductory

Begin the discussion of the topic

Transition

Moves smoothly and seamlessly into key questions

Key

Obtains insight on areas of central concern in the study

Ending

Helps researcher determine where to place emphasis and brings a close to the discussion

An illustration of a woman with dark hair in a bun, wearing a yellow top, and a man with a beard, wearing a light blue shirt, facing each other in conversation. Between them are two speech bubbles: a smaller purple one and a larger white one with a purple outline. The background is a solid light purple color.

INTERVIEWING SKILLS

What things are important when it comes to conducting a 'good' interview?



Interviewing Skills

Expertise and Interview Skills

Must consider your own capabilities when it comes to conducting interviews for research purposes



The more expertise you have in the relevant field the better, but may still have poor interview skills



Often people are hired as researchers or research assistants because they can interview really well



Researcher training - 'how to interview' (situations, sample groups, topics, etc.)

Interview Skills: Dynamics



Researcher effects

Image management, first impression, etc



Characteristics of the researcher/interviewer

Self-presentation, looks, speech, power relations



Nature of researcher – relationship with respondent (status, gender, rapport)



Characteristics of the respondent
– status differences?



Rules and rituals of a 'speech event' – turn-taking, active listening

Interviews have a context – not neutral, but active interactions, leading to negotiated, contractually-based results

Ethical issues?



Power relations



Well-constructed consent information!



Perceived pressure to answer questions
/ continue with interview



Dealing with distress



Well explained and sensitive debrief



Unavoidable features of interviews?

1

Both the interviewer and the respondent are bound to hold back some of what is in their power to state

2

Meanings may differ

3

Unease for the respondent (adept avoidance)

4

Impossible to bring all aspects of the encounter within rational control?

Non-verbal communication

Proxemics

Use of space



Chronemics

Time in NVC



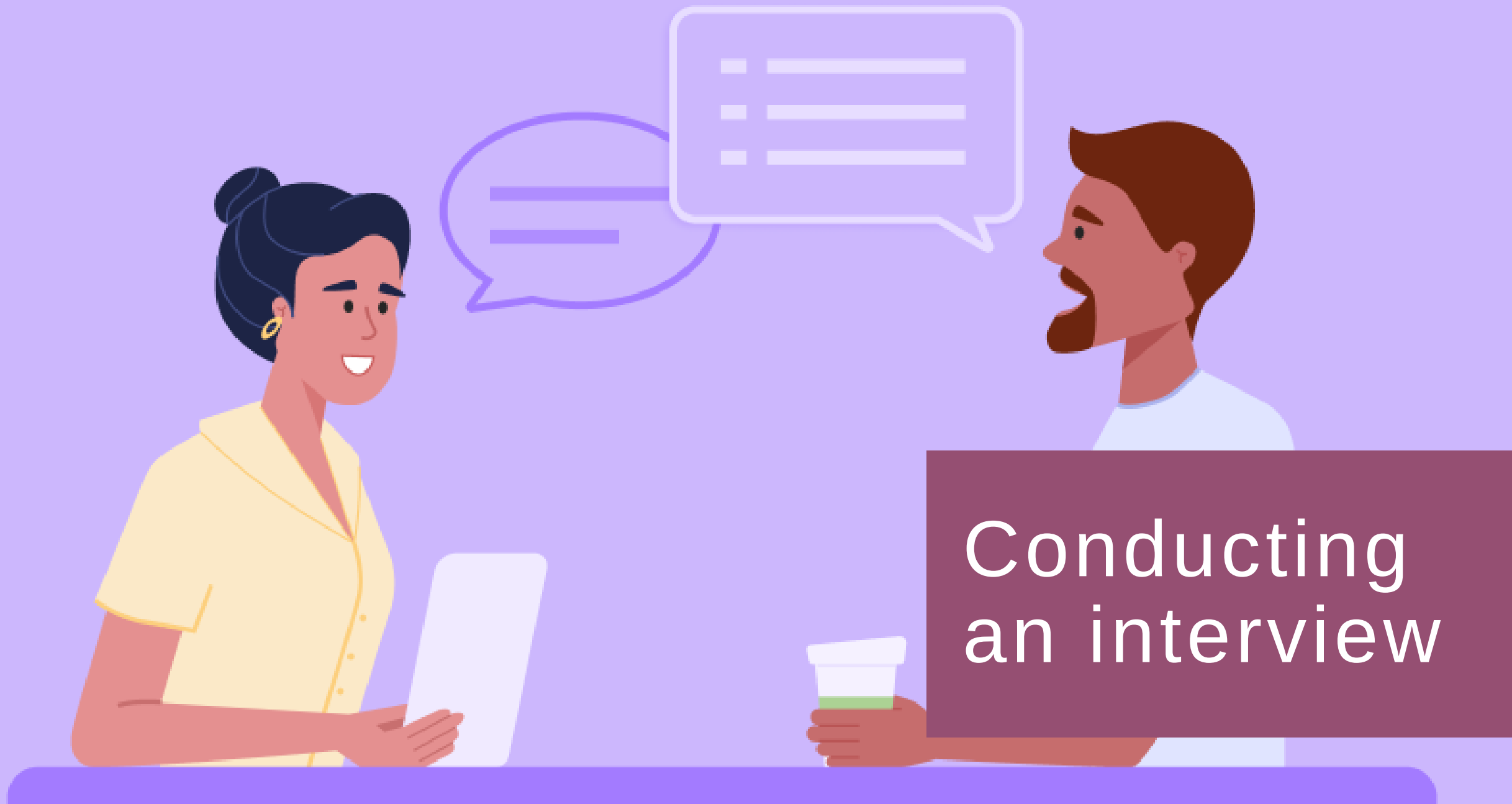
Kinesics

Body movement,
gestures



Paralinguistics

Tone, pitch, volume



Conducting
an interview

Beginning the interview

Where?

IQ psych labs? Interview, ok. Focus groups, enough room?

Seating?

Comfort is important to participants

Refreshments?

Is there a table available?

How are you introducing the study?

Explanation of purpose, aim

Ethics

Reassurance of confidentiality, right to withdraw, etc

Permission to record

Informed consent

Conducting the interview

01

Ensure that you are familiar with your questions

Avoid looking like you don't know what your questions are.

02

Ensure that you ask all questions of all participants

Questions can be asked in a different order

03

Know what information each question is meant to elicit

You might need to use further probes

04

Take notes

Body language and paralanguage might be important

Concluding your interview

Always conclude an interview graciously, even if participant(s) not forthcoming/has annoyed you

Do not allow the interviewee any cause to complain about the interview ... or you!



Thank the participant



Remain non-committal to queries about 'scores or responses'



Distress? Plan how to deal with this



Focus Groups



- **A focus group is an interview conducted with multiple interviewees at one time**
- Key aspects for successful implementation of focus groups:
 - Preparation
 - Good people skills

- Group discussion – approx. 6 to 8 participants per focus group (Albrecht et al, 1993; Wilkinson, 2003)
- There is no “one ‘right’ way to do focus groups” (Morgan, 2008)
- Sampling for focus groups normally reflects those who can provide the most meaningful information on the topic of interest

Focus groups: Skill and Ethics

Focus groups require more skill to conduct because you are dealing with more people (some of whom may have strong opinions or sensitive experiences to share)

Researchers must guide proceedings in a subtle and unobtrusive way
Intervene only if necessary



**Confidentiality is
expected of all members**



**Everyone's opinion is
valid; members should
not judge but are free to
disagree with another
person's opinion**



**Encourage respect to
allow all members to talk**

Dominant participants

Some participants sign up to take part in focus groups because they are passionate about the topic, have a story to tell, or have a strong opinion.

If two or more dominant group members engage in a heated debate at the expense of the others who cannot join in or who are made to feel discomfort – need to take active steps to ...



Diffuse the situation



Refocus the group



Balance out the discussion process to include all members

Topic: University students and stress

1. In pairs, design an interview schedule for a one-to-one interview – 5 questions
2. Each person to interview one other person (not pair member) using the interview schedule
3. Record the interview (*with each interviewee's permission*)
4. Take notes regarding answers, paralanguage and body language
5. Contribute to the feedback session