

Cognitive Interviewing: Using An Inductive Approach to Inform Question Design Principles

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Advantages of Using Cognitive Interview Method to Inform Question Design Principles

- Inductive
- Systematic
- Empirical



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Building Principles Inductively

Identifying themes across different types of question topics.



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Building Principles Inductively

Question Topics Include:

- Tobacco product use
- Complementary and alternative medicine
- Cancer control
- Dental health



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Questions on Tobacco Use

- Do you now smoke regular cigars, cigarillos, or little filtered cigars every day, some days, or not at all?
- Do you now smoke regular pipes, water pipes, hookahs filled with tobacco or bidis every day, some days, or not at all?
- Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your entire life?



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Questions on Complementary and Alternative Medicine

- Have you EVER used natural herbs or other non-vitamin supplements for your own health?
 - Yes
 - No



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Questions on Cancer Control

- Have you ever been told by a doctor or other health professional that you had cancer or a malignancy of any kind?
 - Yes
 - No



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Questions on Dental Health

- Have you lost all of your upper and lower natural, permanent teeth? (yes/no)
- **DURING THE PAST 6 MONTHS, have you had any of the following problems? Please say yes or no to each.**
 - (1) A toothache
 - (2) Sensitive teeth
 - (3) Bleeding gums
 - (4) Gum disease
 - (5) Crooked teeth
 - (6) Broken teeth
 - (7) Missing teeth
 - (8) Teeth that need to be pulled
 - (9) Decayed teeth or cavities



Different Topics/Common Themes

- Using or not using something = self concept
 - Herbal supplements
 - Tobacco products
- Having or not having something = in the middle of an implied dichotomy
 - Cancer
 - Teeth



Informing Question Design

- If you want people to report on behavior: questions should not imply categories into which respondents must place themselves – this taps into self concept.
- If you want people to report on something they have or don't have: questions should not imply a dichotomy – life often has experiences that exist “in the middle” of a dichotomy.



Informing Cognitive Testing

- Impossible to predict for certain how questions will function
- Guidance for what to explore and how to probe



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Final Reports

- Willson, S. (2014). Cognitive Interview Evaluation of the 2015 NHIS Cancer Control Supplement . National Center for Health Statistics. Hyattsville, MD Accessed at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/QBank/Report.aspx?1136>
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