Respondent Centred Survey Design Principles and Practice

Laura Wilson & Andrew Phelps

NatCen-ESS ERIC-City methodology seminar series
- “#methodsem”
Respondent Centred Survey Design
Principles and Practice

Part 1 - the design bit…

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CH-CH-CH-CHANGES

THEN

Nowie
The challenge is service transformation

Not website redesign
GOV.UK – GDS design principles...10!
START WITH NEEDS
USER NEEDS, NOT GOVERNMENT NEEDS

Design principles
Government Digital Service
www.gov.uk/designprinciples
DO LESS
DESIGN WITH DATA

Design principles
Government Digital Service

1. Start with needs (not needs, not government needs)
2. Do the hard work to make it simple
3. Test early
4. This is for everyone
5. Understand context
6. Build digital services, not websites
7. Be consistent, not uniform
8. Make things open

www.gov.uk/designprinciples
DO THE HARD WORK TO MAKE IT SIMPLE
Iterate. Then iterate again.
UNDERSTAND CONTEXT
BUILD DIGITAL SERVICES NOT WEBSITES

Design principles
Government Digital Service

1. Start with needs (user needs, not government needs)
2. Do less
3. Design with data
4. Do the hard work to make it unique
5. Don’t be afraid to fail
6. This is for everyone
7. Understand content
8. Build digital services, not websites
9. Be consistent, not uniform
10. Make things open

www.gov.uk/designprinciples
BE CONSISTENT NOT UNIFORM
Digital Service Standard

1. Understand user needs. Research to develop a deep knowledge of who the service users are and what that means for the design of the service.

2. Put a plan in place for ongoing user research and usability testing to continuously seek feedback from users to improve the service.

3. Put in place a sustainable multidisciplinary team that can design, build and operate the service, led by a suitably skilled and senior service manager with decision-making responsibility.

4. Build the service using agile, iterative and user-centred methods set out in the manual.

5. Build a service that can be iterated and improved on a frequent basis and make sure that you have the capacity, resources and technical flexibility to do so.

6. Evaluate what tools and systems will be used to build, host, operate and measure the service, and how to procure them.

7. Evaluate what user data and information the digital service will be providing or storing, and address the security level, legal responsibilities, privacy issues and risks associated with the service (consulting with experts where appropriate).

8. Make all new source code open and reusable, and publish it under appropriate licences (or provide a convincing explanation as to why this cannot be done for specific subsets of the source code).

9. Use open standards and common government platforms where available.

10. Be able to test the end-to-end service in an environment identical to that of the live version, including on all common browsers and devices, and using dummy accounts and a representative sample of users.

11. Make a plan for the event that a digital service being taken temporarily offline.

12. Create a service that is simple and intuitive enough that users succeed first time.

13. Build a service consistent with the user experience of the rest of GOV.UK including using the design patterns and style guide.

14. Encourage all users to use the digital service (with assisted digital support if required), alongside an appropriate plan to phase out non-digital channels/services.

15. Use tools for analysis that collect performance data. Use this data to analyse the success of the service and to translate this into features and tasks for the next phase of development.

16. Identify performance indicators for the service, including the 4 mandatory key performance indicators (KPIs) defined in the manual. Establish a benchmark for each metric and make a plan to enable improvements.


18. Test the service from beginning to end with the minister responsible for it.
Prescribed phases of service development...
The challenge is service transformation

Not website redesign

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THIS MOMENT IS AN OPPORTUNITY
What is the DATA user need?
MENTAL MODELS

A) Interviewer focus groups
B) Respondent thought process
OH YOU SPEAK THE QUEENS ENGLISH DO YOU?
FROM the GROUND UP...
Pre-notification letter

Invitation letter

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to tell you that the Office for National Statistics is running a UK-wide online study, and we would like you to be a part of it. The study covers a range of topics, including work, retirement, higher education, unemployment and looking after the family or home.

How do I take part?

Here is your household access code. Use this to complete the study following the steps below:

1234 5678 9012

Step 1
Using your computer, tablet or smartphone, go to www.ons.gov.uk/takepart and click 'start now'.

Step 2
Enter your access code in the boxes provided.

Step 3
Complete the study and submit when done.

How long will it take? The study should take between 10 and 20 minutes to complete.

Who can take part? All adults in your household over the age of 16 should take part. Any related adult may respond on the behalf of another household member – they will only be asked about facts, not opinions.

When should I complete it by? You should complete the study by DATE, if you do not take part online by DATE, one of our interviewers may contact you to conduct the study in person. Most people we invite to take part will not choose to be counted.

What if I need help? If you need help to take part online, please phone us for free on 0800 805 7376. For further information go to our website www.ons.gov.uk/surveys or read the information slip provided.

Thank you for your time.

Yours faithfully,

Ian Cope – Director General

A5 leaflet

What you need to know

The Office for National Statistics is the UK’s largest independent producer of official statistics and the recognised national statistics institute of the UK. We are not a commercial organisation and do not work for political parties.

We would like your household to take part in a UK-wide online study. The steps to the right show how our studies inform government decisions, for example part statistics from our studies led to the introduction of the winter fuel allowance. By taking part you are ensuring your local area and the UK are properly represented in statistics, which go on to have a big impact on us all.

Whatever you are, whatever you do, we are keen to hear from you.

To take part, all you need to do is complete step 2.

How to find out more

Online

Our website contains more information on how you were chosen and what we do with your data: www.ons.gov.uk. You can also read our statistics here.

If you would like to see the stories behind our work, you can do so: https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus.

By telephone

You can call us for free on 0800 805 7376. NIS service (18003) 0800 805 7376.

Our phone lines are open: Monday to Thursday – 8am to 8pm, Friday – 8am to 5pm, Saturday – 9am to 1pm.

Confidentiality

The information you give us will be treated as confidential as directed by the code of practice for Official Statistics. It will be used to produce statistics that will not identify you or anyone in your household. Survey information is also provided to other approved organisations for statistical purposes only. All such statistics produced are subject to the code and the same standards of protection are applied to your information at all times. Subject to the code, a third party will be processing the data from this study. None of your information will be sold on.

The information you give us is protected by law and is treated as confidential. It will be used for statistical purposes only. The Office for National Statistics is not linked to any political parties.
Old way... Graceful Degradation

New way... Progressive Enhancement

Mobile first!

Plus - optimise design for the mode!
YOU ARE NOT YOUR USER
G.O.O.B
(Get Out Of The Building)

Proto-type

Usability testing & Cognitive testing

Focus groups

Pop-up testing
Brown versions also...
find what works

not what’s popular

User research isn’t about finding out what users like, but what works best for them.
GET INSPIRED BY THESE EXAMPLES
Alex Nolan
Senior Researcher

Topic:
Labour Market questionnaire

User centred design approach:
- Designing with data
- Mental models
Design with Data
Were you on one of these schemes?

Yes, on schm 6, 7 or other

Activity while on scheme

Voluntary/ environmental work; or other employment training

Activity while on scheme

Before or after setting up own business?

Before

Working for/ away from employer; practical training

Before

Waiting to start new job?

No

SE

Yes

Working for/ away from employer; practical training

Voluntary/ environmental work; or other employment training

Waiting to start new job?

No

Unpaid work for own business?

Yes

Unpaid work for rele business?

Why can’t start?

No

Looking for work?

No

Looking for work?

Why can’t start?

No

Able to start?

Yes

Not active 12-22

Not active 23-33

Not active

Able to start?

Yes

Main reason not looking

Would like work?

No

Main reason not looking

Would like work?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Main reason not looking

Would like work?

No

Main reason not looking

Would like work?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

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Able to start?

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Able to start?

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Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?

Yes

Able to start?
DO THE HARD WORK TO MAKE IT SIMPLE
Did you do any paid work in Ref?

- Yes
  - Self employed or as employee?
    - SE
    - EMP
  - Looking for work?
    - Yes
      - Able to start?
        - Yes
          - Waiting to start new job
        - No
          - Why not?
            - unemployed
            - ANY
            - Not active
          - Any unpaid work?
            - Yes family work
            - UFW
          - Any training in ref?
            - Govt funded?
Did you do any paid work in Ref?

Self employed or as employee?

This work was part of a training scheme = true

Before setting up own business = true

Looking for work?

Able to start?

Why not?

Able to start? (Waiting to start new job)

Why not?

Unemployed

Not active

Job not actually started

Ineligible if:
- long term away no pay
- work is casual
- not started job / business

Why not working Ref?

Govt. funded?

Any unpaid work?

Any training in ref?

Govt. funded?
START WITH NEEDS
USER NEEDS, NOT GOVERNMENT NEEDS
Design principles
Government Digital Service
www.gov.uk/designprinciples
Did you do any paid work? [Yes/No]

If more than 1 job, status of main job? [EMP/SE]

Self employed or as employee? [SE/EMP]

This work was part of a training scheme = true

Before setting up own business = true

Looking for work? [Yes/No]

Able to start? [Yes/No]

Waiting to start new job

Why not? [unemployed]

Ineligible if: long term away no pay; work is casual; not started job / business

Why not working Ref? [Any]

Job not actually started

Any unpaid work? [Yes/No]

Any training in ref? [Govt. Schm/UFW]

Govt funded? [Govt. Schm/unemployed]

Looking for work? [Yes/No]

Able to start? [Yes/No]

Waiting to start new job

Why not? [unemployed]

Ineligible if: long term away no pay; work is casual; not started job / business

Why not working Ref? [Any]

Job not actually started
ITERATE.
THEN
ITERATE
AGAIN

Design principles
Government Digital Service

1. Start with needs (not needs, not government needs)
2. Do less
3. Design with data
4. On the found work to make it simple
5. Be bold
6. Think iteratively
7. This is for everyone
8. Understand context
9. Build digital services, not websites
10. Be consistent, not uniform
11. Make things open
12. Make things better
www.gov.uk/designprinciples
Were you working / employed in ref week?

Original
- Did you do any paid work in the week ending Sunday the [date], either as an employee or self-employed?
  - 'Paper work?' ; "No, just my normal job"

v.1
- Did you do any work for payment or profit (including in self-employment) in the week ending Sunday [date], even for as little as one hour?
  - National account definition; "I would have said yes because they still gets holiday pay"    "Well I was on holiday so I was paid"

v.2
- Did you have a paid job or business in the week Monday [date] to Sunday...? 
  - Job easy concept; do not have to be present in Ref, or paid in Ref; 
  - "I was paying myself a wage but nobody was paying the company... the question is are you talking about it as a business or not?" – Sole traders

v.3
- Did you have a paid job, either as an employee or as self-employed, in the week Monday [date] to Sunday [date], [year]?
  - Better captures different self-employed types; 
  - "but if it had been ‘self-employed’ that would have been a yes"
Emma Dickinson
Senior Researcher

Topic:
Socio demographic questions

User centred design approach:
- Mental models
ITERATE.
THEN
ITERATE
AGAIN

Design principles
Government Digital Service

1 Start with needs (your needs, not government needs) 
2 In less than 6 weeks 
3 Design with data 
4 On the ground with users 
5 For everyone 
6 This is how we do it 
7 Understand context 
8 Build digital services, not websites 
9 Be consistent, not uniform 
10 Make things open 
www.gov.uk/designprinciples
Earth people. We come in peace. Let's enjoy fun. We are not eating you quickly.

Darn that google translate.
How many people live in your household, including yourself, and any children and babies?

Please include all people who have this accommodation as their only residence.
For people with more than one address please click the descriptions below and follow the include/exclude guidance.

> Students away at university/college, student nurses, children at boarding school
  - INCLUDE: Children under 19 at boarding school/college
  - INCLUDE: Students living in a hall of residence in term time:
  - EXCLUDE: Students NOT living in a hall of residence

A hall of residence is a property connected to a particular educational establishment that provides communal accommodation for students attending there.

- EXCLUDE: Student nurses living away in NHS accommodation

> Other people living away
  For example, working away from home, in prison, in hospital, in a nursing home:
  - INCLUDE: If for less than 6 months
  - EXCLUDE: If for 6 months or more, even if this address is considered to be their main residence

> People here temporarily while looking for permanent accommodation

  INCLUDE

> People normally resident abroad

  EXCLUDE

> Second home/holiday home

  EXCLUDE: If this address is a second home/holiday home for anyone (even if this means the answer is '0')
Please enter the following information for everyone in the household, starting with yourself in the first row. 

Please use a different name or initial for each person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First name</th>
<th>Surname</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Select</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Select</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person 6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person 8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prefer not to say</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Step 2...
START WITH NEEDS
USER NEEDS, NOT GOVERNMENT NEEDS

DO THE HARD WORK TO MAKE IT SIMPLE
About your household

Who lives at this address?

Include everyone who classifies this address as their main residence

My Details

My Title
Please select

My First or Given Name

My Surname or Family Name

My Sex
Please select

My Date of Birth

DD MM YYYY

Add another person

Save and Continue
Respondent quote:

“I don’t know what this ‘add another person’ button is for, I’ve put myself in so I’ll just ignore it…”
About your household

Enter your details

My First or Given Name

My Surname or Family Name

My Sex

- Male
- Female

Save and Continue
About your household

Does anyone else live at 1 High Street?

- Yes
  - This is the main residence of other adults, children or babies, even if they are currently away for a continuous period of up to 6 months

- No
  - This is not the main residence of any other adults, children or babies

Save and Continue
Better Statistics, Better Decisions
Strategy for UK statistics, 2015 to 2020
Respondent Centred Survey Design Principles and Practice

Part 2 - the results bit…

Andrew Phelps
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