

Customer interview cheat sheet

To ensure you get the most out of your interview, it's essential you ask the right type and style of questions. Here are some guidelines to keep questions focused and direct to maximize your customers' time.

Rule #1 **Questions should be relevant to your goal.**

Don't ask irrelevant questions that aren't directly tied to the answers you need. Every question should relate to your desired insight that you intend to act on. For example, let's say your desired insight is "to understand the types of decisions customers need to make using your product"

An example of a weak question would be:

"What tools and software do you use today?"

The issue with this question is that it is irrelevant to your insight goals, because it is too broad.

A stronger question would be:

"What tools and information do you use to make decisions?"

It's stronger because it is broad enough to position the bigger picture, but still tied directly to insights goals.

Rule #2
Questions should fill gaps in unknown information.

Don't ask questions that you can get answered elsewhere, like your CRM or LinkedIn.

An example of a weak question would be:

"What is your job title?"

The issue with this question is that it aims to capture information that is already known
– you can get this info elsewhere.

A stronger question would be:

"What are the most important decisions you make in your role?"

This information is likely not available elsewhere, and is therefore worth asking.

Rule #3
Questions should be unbiased.

Don't ask questions that are leading towards the answer you expect.

An example of a weak question would be:

"How does our product help you make better decisions about marketing spend?"

The issue with this question is that it is biased, because you are assuming your product helps them make decisions about marketing spend.

A stronger question would be:

"How does our product help you make decisions?"

This is better because it stays broader and gives the respondent more freedom in providing information you might not have uncovered otherwise.

Rule #4

The best questions are also open-ended.

Keep questions open-ended to allow for more novel insights. Yes or no questions are often leading and do not result in unique insights you may not have expected.

An example of a weak question would be:

“Could we fix our product to help you make better decisions?”

The issue with this question is that it is not open-ended, and leads to “yes” or “no” answer

A stronger question would be:

“How could our product help you make better decisions?”

Rule #5
Questions should lead to unique answers.

Don't ask two questions that result in the same insight. Scale questions from broad to specific to drill deep into the areas you want to explore, without getting repetitive.

An example of a weak question would be:

"What type of decisions do you make using our product?"

The issue with this question is that it is duplicative and results in the same insights as
"How does our product help you make decisions?"

A stronger question would be:

"How would you feel if you could not use our product to help make the decision you previously mentioned?"

This expands on previously asked questions, but provides deeper insight.
