

Using Reflective Diaries to Gain User Insight

Using Small Scale Studies to Explore User
Interaction with Library Services at Liverpool John
Moores University

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Rationale



- Significant refurbishment projects ahead
- Closure of one library and transfer into town
- Inform current services
- Gather user insight
- Moratorium on Surveys

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<http://requestfordownloads.blogspot.co.uk/2012/09/why-us.html>

General Methodology

Three Stages for Consideration



Stage 1 - Preparation

Determine What To Investigate
- Be Specific

Articulate A Hypothesis

Acknowledge Any Preconceptions

Secure Budget For Incentives

Decide Methodology
- Free Text?
- Template?

Set A Recruitment Strategy

Stage 2 - Action

Recruit!

Run The Study
(At Least Three
Weeks)

Maintain
Communication
(but don't overdo it)

Stage 3 - Reflection

Read the Responses

Determine Themes

Analyse

Summarise

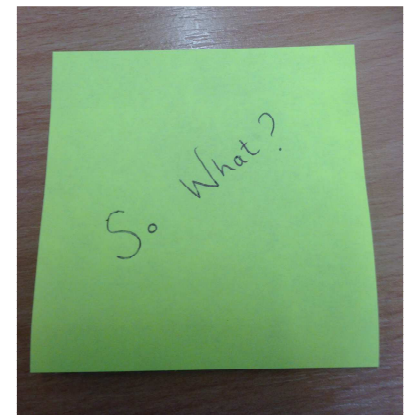
ACT!

Review

How It Worked In Practice

To date have run three iterations:

- One purely narrative based
- One more structured
- One using video interviews



Phase 1 - Qualitative



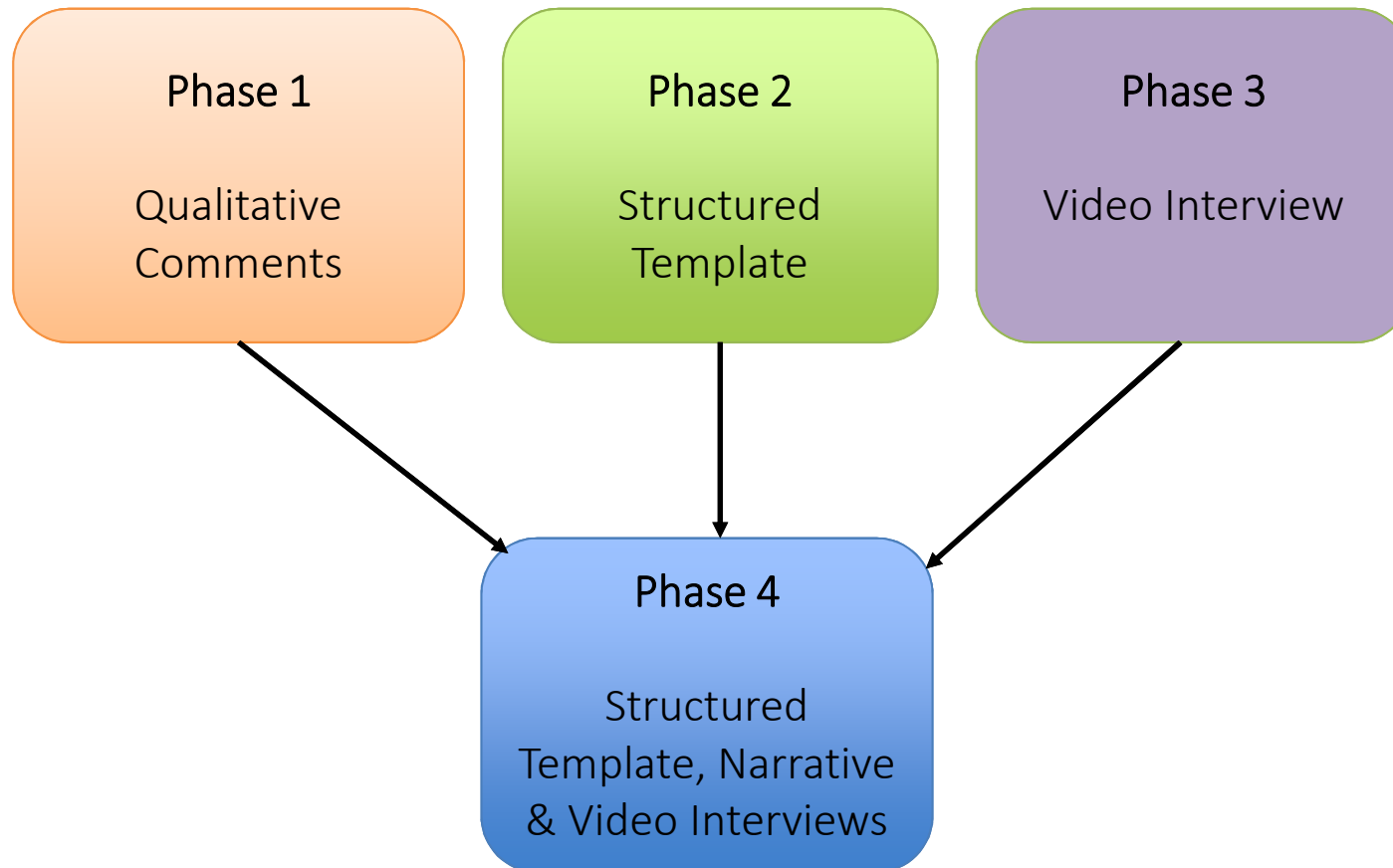
Phase 2 - Quantitative

Standard template headings

1. Date
2. Where are you?
3. What are you accessing it [the e-library] on?
4. E-resources used
5. What are you wanting to do?
6. Positive aspects of the experience
7. Negative aspects of the experience

Phase 3 - Video

Phase 4 – The Best of All Worlds?



Benefits

- Flexibility – small or large scale
- Low resource intensity – both staff and financially
- Level of insight
- Improved user engagement
- Tailored to specific area of Library Activity



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Limitations

- Not academically rigorous
- Validity depends on representation of sample
- Small scale
- Quality control can be an issue – especially with pure narrative
- Timing dependent



Further Information

Further information is available on request

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