

SME AND COLLABORATION ORIENTATION

INTERVIEWS

Interviews to learn more about the company and its challenge

0. Name of the phase

SME and collaboration orientation

1. Name of the tool

INTERVIEWS

2. Duration

20-40 minutes

3. Materials used

- Pens and other tools to take notes which might include voice recording tools
- Case-related interview props

4. What is this tool and what is its purpose and benefit?

Interviews can be used for different purposes and at different phases of development or research. Therefore interviews are also a powerful tool to learn more about a company by interviewing these directly or external bodies such as customers, collaborators, or developers. In this interview tool version, the focus is on understanding through company interviews what is the situation or challenge of a company. Different forms of interviews can be used from structured and semi-structured interviews to group interviews. Different props can be used to support interviews. In this tool version, students can prepare to interview real companies or roleplay the company and the interviewee.

5. Steps how to use this tool in practice

1. Agree on the interview and do the preparatory work before the interview. Learn more about the company, its competitors, and the field in which it operates in advance. You will need these during the interview.
 2. Start formulating questions keeping in mind what is the purpose of your interview. This can be such as finding out more about their development needs, product development needs, competition landscape, or anything else. Plan carefully which are closed and open questions. Normally the questions of basic information or that usually have quantitative or can otherwise have specific data are closed, while the other questions are more open as also the situation for
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each company is different. Plan the questions also according to the time you have agreed for the length with the company.

3. At the interview situation, start with a few more specific company-related questions and ask about the main challenge or situation they face. Then go deeper into the topic of interest varying closed and open-ended questions. The information you studied beforehand becomes useful at this stage. Interview when saturated.
4. At the end of the interview, you can still repeat some of the key elements and verify the scope of the case.
5. Transcript the interviews and analyze them. Have these verified by the company. When analyzing interviews, look for patterns and anything that would catch the eye. Again, the preliminary studied information helps in this.
6. Analyze the interview and look for patterns, issues, and opportunities from it using a method that you prefer. You can also discuss the findings with the company and agree on the next steps and direction of the project.

6. Tips and hints for using this tool

Remember the consent forms and other legal issues, such as confidentiality agreements
