Anatomy

Anatomy of an Interview

Most interviews follow the following sequence:

- Introduction
- Kickoff
- Build Rapport
- Grand Tour
- Reflection
- Wrap-Up
Anatomy of a Story

Memorable stories typically embody this structure

- **Introduction**
- **Rising Action**
- **Climax**
- **Denouement**

(time)
Anatomy of an Interview

The Ethnographic Interview shares this structure

- **Introduction**
  - Intro
  - Kickoff
- **Rising Action**
  - Build Rapport
- **Climax**
- **Denouement**
  - Grand Tour
  - Reflection
  - Wrap-Up

**Anatomy**
Anatomy

Introduction

Establish an interview partnership

Grand Tour

Build Rapport

Kickoff

Reflection

Wrap-Up

Intro
Anatomy

Introduction

- The informant may be confused as to exactly what is happening.
- Be direct — “Why don’t we sit down here?”, put them at ease.
- Find a good place for the interview — if possible arrange comfortable seating, adequate lighting, and a low noise - traffic location.
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Introduction

Describe your purpose

- “We’re going to explore how decisions get made in the Emergency Room.”

Outline the interview

- “We’re going to spend the day with you. We’ll be watching how the organization works, and later ask you and your staff some questions”.
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Introduction

Let them know that their knowledge is important

- "I've never been a waiter. It looks pretty hard to keep all your customers happy. Can you help me understand how you do it".
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Kickoff

Shift the focus to them by introducing themselves and their lives

Build Rapport

Grand Tour

Reflection

Wrap-Up

Intro

Kickoff
Kickoff

At the end of your introduction, make a clear transition over to them:

- “So maybe the best place to start is to have you introduce yourselves and tell us a bit about the band…”

Clarify with lots of follow-up questions. This section helps to get the respondent talking and feeling at ease.
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Build Rapport

Most of your time will be spent making a connection
Informants may be defensive initially, providing only short answers “Oh you know...normal stuff. Just like everyone else. No big deal”. Be patient. Continue asking descriptive questions to build their confidence and trust.

- Reassure the informant that they are doing okay — “I don’t know...is this the kind of thing you want to know?” Tell them “Absolutely, exactly what we need”.
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Grand Tour

Explore the details of their world both physical and mental

Look for critical issues and disconnects

Kickoff

Build Rapport

Grand Tour

Reflection

Wrap-Up

time
Anatomy

Grand Tour

- This may be a walk around a bedroom, factory, or mobile phone.

- There is incredible detail in the Grand Tour, including things you would never think to ask “Tell me about the picture in your battery door”.

- Ask your informant to act out interactions or open up hidden areas.
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Reflection

Take a break and review what you have learned, then encourage personal insights and discussions of why
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Reflection

- After you have spent a good deal of time with the informant, they may be more able to offer up personal insights, describe their plans, dreams, passions, etc.

- It’s okay here to offer theories about the informant for their evaluation or to ask the informant to generate their own theories
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Wrap-Up

Amazing things happen when the interview is over
Anatomy

Wrap-Up

- At the end of the allotted time, thank them and tell them how helpful they have been. Ask them for any final thoughts, or if they have any questions for you.

  The notion that the interview is over often jars loose a lot of comments, thoughts, and insights. Keep the camera/tape recorder rolling.