

Questions for PD planning: Getting feedback on a design

Your group should ask each other...

Does your plan allow and opportunity for at least one type of stakeholders to discuss or reflect on your design? This may be verbal discussion, written or drawn reflection/discussion, reflection through role playing, reflection by making...

Are most of our questions (or activity prompts) “open”, and a good basis for discussion? OR are they very specific and narrow?

Are we focusing on getting feedback around meanings, use, experiences, why/how questions? OR are we asking yes/no questions? Or about numbers? Or offering “forced choices” between X and Y?

Will our plan let stakeholders get specific information about the design (through artefacts, interaction, other) such that they can actually give feedback on it?

!!!!!! By itself, doing usability-testing type activity (or asking sets of very narrow, specific questions) is NOT ENOUGH. There must also be opportunity for reflection and openness.

Your PD session needs to do the following:

- Do something to let your stakeholders understand what your idea is, what “problem” it is trying to solve, some of the context around it (this then can give them an opportunity to seek follow-up information, challenge your assumptions, etc.)
- Offer opportunities for discussion and reflection. You may try out more than one kind in your session.
- Find out how stakeholder understand your idea. What do they seem to focus on, think is interesting, important? They way they understand or try to make sense of the idea may NOT be at all the way your group understands it.
- Give an opportunity for stakeholders to get a sense of what your idea *is like*. Let them experience it. The experience is not the same as literally what it the idea is. This may mean more direct interaction of some kind.
- Get stakeholder feedback on *idea in context*. Is it appropriate in this specific context of design/use (i.e. Edinburgh uni?)
- Try to find out if your design idea is “of value” to stakeholders, offers them any potential benefits, meets a need that they have.
- If your idea is a thing or a service, explore possible use. Do the stakeholders think they would use something (or try something, go somewhere, etc etc)? Why or why not? Push for examples, try to discuss (etc) in a way as to explore the interaction or decision-making.

Remember to communicate to stakeholders that it is OK to say they do not like or understand things. Their input is useful to you even when it is negative.