Research questions and interview questions for qualitative research

Developing qualitative research questions

1

What is the area of research are you interested in?

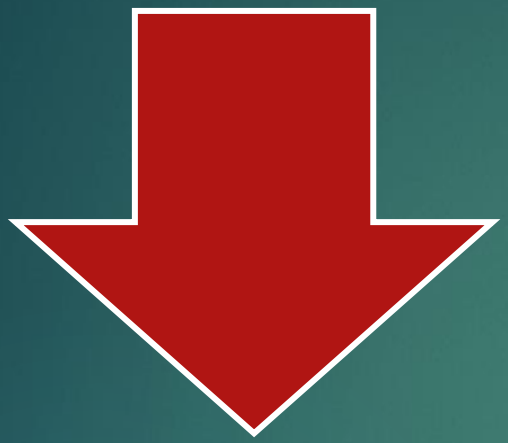
2

Familiarise yourself with the topic area, then narrow down your question to a specific issue.

3

What research has already been done? Gaps? Recommendations

What's the difference?



Overarching issue your research aims to answer

Participant focused questions to generate data



How do you create a research question?

- How or why questions
- Complex or wide
- Base it on literature
- Interesting
- Ethical
- Feasible

A Psychology Qualitative Research Question usually explores:

- **Beliefs**: an attitude that something is the case, or that some proposition about the world is true.
- **Motivations**: the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors.

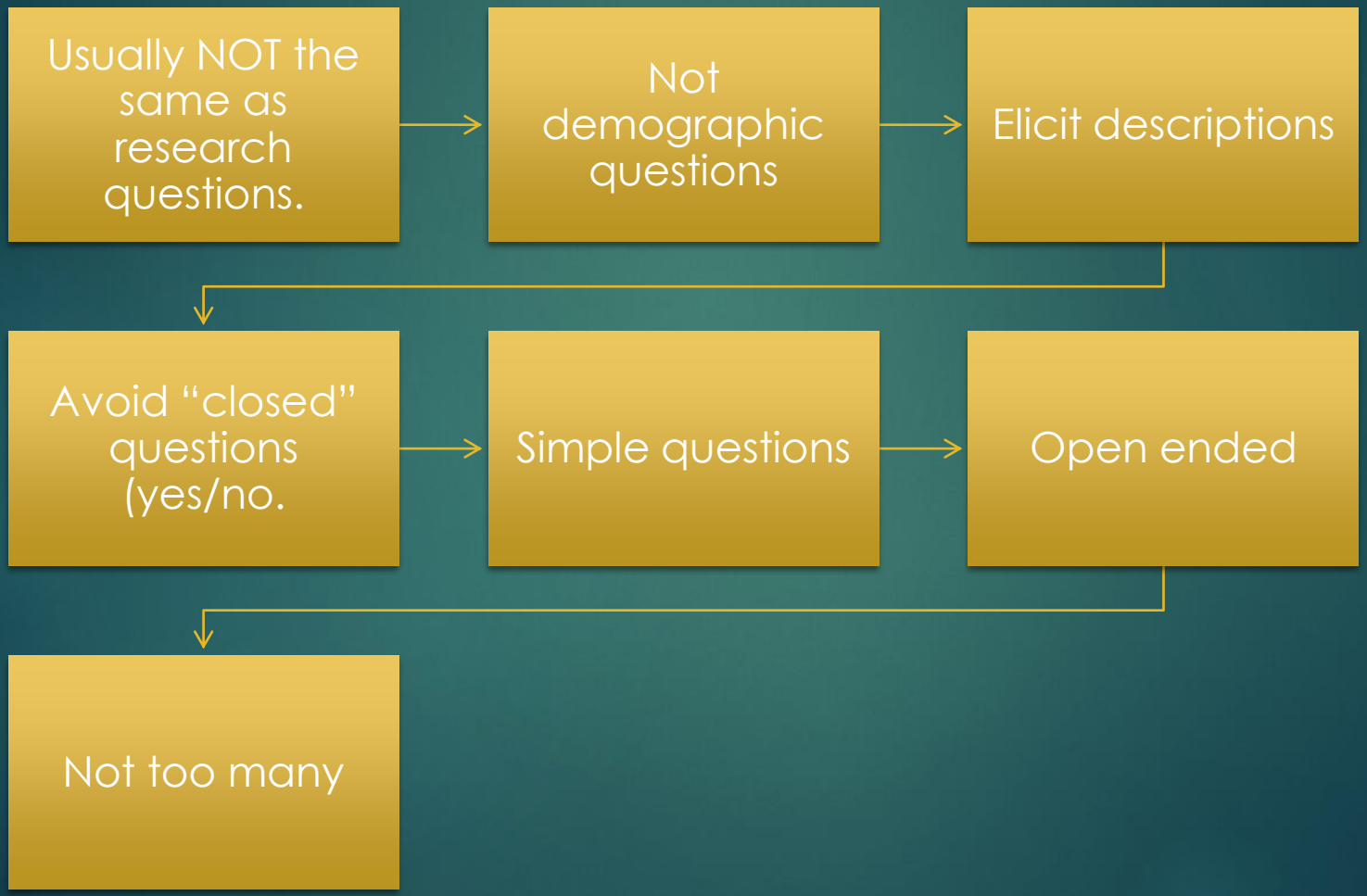
Social Representations: a system of values, ideas, metaphors, beliefs, and practices that serve to establish social order, orient participants and enable communication among the members of groups and communities.

Attitudes: a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, thing, or event. Often the result of experience or upbringing, and they can have a powerful influence over behavior.

What makes good interview questions?

- Motivated by the literature
- Open ended and clear
- Opportunities for participants to talk
- Use prompts
- Check mutual understanding

Qualitative interview questions



Interview Questions

- What do you need to know?
- Avoid leading questions
- Structured/Semi-Structured/Unstructured
- An interview protocol is a must
- Sometimes important questions need to be buried in less important questions
- Be sure you ask everything you need but nothing more (it is hard to go back)
- Beware the grand tour question
- Design follow-up questions

Example:

Social Representations of Madness among young people in the UK.

- *How would we start exploring literature regarding this topic?*
- *What kind of questions might we ask our participants?*
- *What would we have to be careful about?*