Tips For Designing Test-Questions

When designing prompt questions for a usability test, focus on your *key* objectives: "What am I trying to learn?". Tip: keep the objective specific and smaller scale. Focused feedback can more effectively influence product-change decisions.

Question Categories

1. **In-test questions.** A set of questions directly related to your testing objective. In-test questions include both general questions and specific questions about your product, or a prompt for the user to engage in a certain activity (i.e., creating an account, purchasing a product, etc.).

2. **Post-test questions.** A set of questions you ask at the end of the session. These might include clarifying questions, or overall experience questions (i.e., "If you could change one thing about your experience, what would it be?").

Key things to remember when creating test prompts:

- Don't provide too many details
- Don't provide too much guidance

Your objective should be to observe how users engage with your product when they have no prior knowledge or experience of it.

There may be times when you need to give more specific prompts to your tester if you're looking for feedback on particular features and you want to ensure your tester provides it to you. Here is an example of the difference between general and specific prompts:

Scenario: Company A is an eCommerce platform and wants to know how a user moves through the checkout process and whether there are any challenges encountered:

- Example of a **general** prompt for determining a user's experience with the entire check-out flow:
    1. *"Find an item you'd like to purchase and go through the checkout process. Stop when you get to the section requiring your payment details. How easy or difficult was this process? Was it what you expected?"*

Scenario: Same Company A, has just re-designed the process for adding and removing items from the cart, as well as selecting a shipping option, and they want to make sure to gather feedback on these new features:

- Example of **specific** prompts for determining the user's experience with **particular** features (the checkout cart and shipping):
  1. *"Add two items to your checkout cart. Before checking out, remove one item and replace it with another item. How easy or difficult was this process?*
  2. *Now move onto shipping. What shipping options are available to you?*
  3. *Now select the next day shipping option and continue with checkout. How easy or difficult was this process?"*

Test Questions Templates

General questions that could be helpful for all testing objectives:

1. What do you think about this design?
2. What prevents you from completing a task?
3. How would you describe your overall experience with this product?
4. If you could change one thing in this product, what would it be and why?

The following are examples of prompts/questions for certain product categories.

General Website/App Template
Company Website Overview Template
eCommerce Template
Booking Template
SaaS Template

General Website/App Feedback Template

In-test questions:

1. What's the first thing you notice on this website/app?
2. What do you think you can do on this site?
3. What products or services are offered on this site?
4. Who is this site intended for?

General task-prompt questions to see how a user would interact with your site:

1. Imagine that the products and services offered on this site are intended for you. Do whatever you think you are supposed to do on this site (e.g. buy a product, make a booking, create an account, etc.). What is your experience like?
2. *Optional: add specific prompt directives if you'd like to gain feedback on the user's experience on something specific.*

Post-test questions:

1. How would you describe your overall experience with the product?
2. What did you like the most about using this product?
3. What did you like the least?
4. What, if anything, surprised you about the experience?
5. What, if anything, caused you frustration?
6. What, if anything, would you change?

Company Overview Template

Prompt 1: Without leaving the homepage – explain what is being offered on this page.

- For whom is the offer on this page intended?
- Which is the main target group of this page?

Prompt 2: Which three words would you use to describe this page? Please explain briefly your answer.

Prompt 3: Find on Google, the website of a company offering a similar service.

- Now compare the websites of the two companies.
- Name at least 3 differences.
- Which company would you choose and why?

Prompt 4: Now go ahead and try to find a way to contact the people behind the original site and explain what exactly you would do to get in contact.

Post-task question: How would you rate your overall experience with this website? Please explain briefly your answer.

Post-task question: How trustworthy do you feel this company is?

Post-task question: What, if anything, is unclear about this company, based on what you have experienced with their site?

Post-task question: If there's one thing you could improve on this site, what would that be?

eCommerce Template

Prompt 1: Take a look at this site and without clicking on anything yet, tell us what you think it is.

- What's the first thing you notice?
- What can you do on this site?
- What products or services are offered on this site?
- Who is this site intended for?
- How often do you use sites similar to this one? *(Feel free to list names of competitors)*

Prompt 2: Now think of a product that you can purchase on this site and try to find that product or service on this page. Stop as soon as you've found a product that you'd purchase. Describe the process and what you're experiencing.

- Is the process what you would have expected?

Prompt 3: Purchase the product you just found. Go as far as possible without entering any payment details.

- Is the process what you would have expected?
- *(Optional specific feedback question example):* What shipping fees apply to a delivery at your home?

Post-task question: How would you rate your overall experience with these tasks?

Post-task question: What would you improve about your experience?

Booking Template

Prompt 1: Take a look at this site and tell us what you think it is. Don't click on anything yet.

- What's the first thing you notice?
- What can you do on this site?
- What products or services are offered on this site?
- Who is this site intended for?
- How often do you use sites similar to this one?
- What sites, if any, have you used to book travel and accommodations? *(You can list your competitors)*

Prompt 2: Imagine, you want to go on a trip to Europe with your spouse and your two children, aged 10 and 12. You are searching for an affordable apartment in Venice, Italy, for the last two weeks of next month.

- Try to find 2-3 affordable apartments fitting your needs and compare the different offers.

Prompt 3: Go through the whole booking process under the above circumstances until you reach the checkout page, without entering any data into it.

Prompt 4: Find out how the cancellation would work and how much you have to pay for canceling a booking just a few days before departing.

Post-task question: How would you rate your overall experience with this website?

Post-task question: If there's one thing you could improve on this site, what would that be?

SaaS Template

Prompt 1: Take a look at this site and tell us what you think it is. Don't click on anything yet.

- What's the first thing you notice?
- What can you do on this site?
- What products or services are offered on this site?
- Who is this site intended for?
- How often do you use sites similar to this one?

Prompt 2: Which three words would you use to describe this page/app/site? Please explain briefly your answer.

Prompt 3: Please explain the prices of the service packages in your own words.

- Are there any differences between the individual service packages? If so, please describe the differences in your own words.

Prompt 4: Create an account and do whatever you think you're supposed to do and see how far you can go without entering any payment information.

Prompt 5: Suppose you aren't satisfied with the service offered on this page. Find out what you can do on this page to get your money back.

Post- task question: How would you rate your overall experience with this website?

Post-task question: If there's one thing you could improve on this site, or about your experience with the tasks, what would that be?