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A UX Research framework to speed up your design process

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designers, we always collaborate with researchers. We all know how important it is to deeply understand the problems we are solving and to uncover insights that will drive innovation with the products we are building.

For a few months, I've started working on a research framework template to have everything I need in one place when I begin a new project. It helped me to quickly

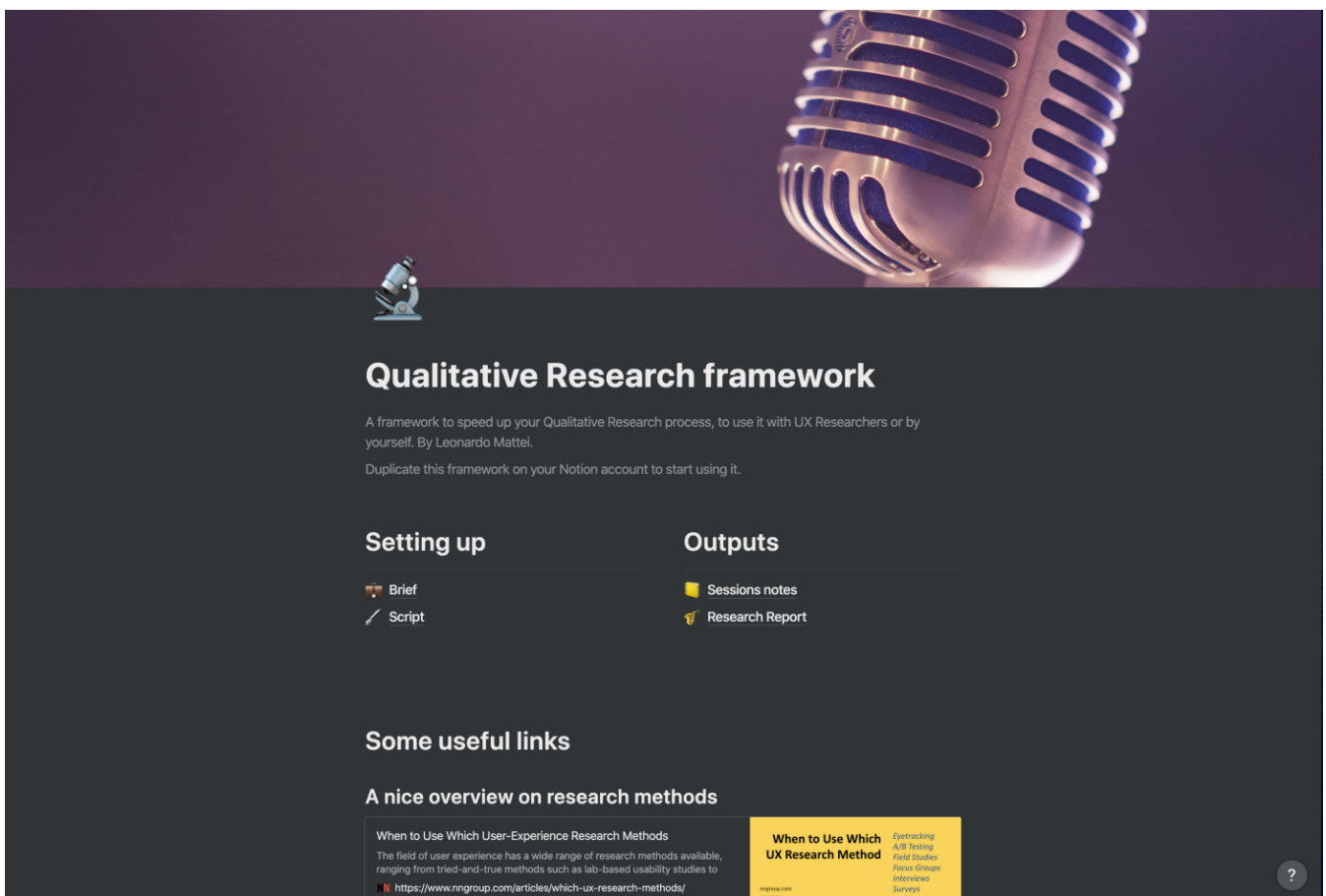


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The homepage

This is the core of your research project. On the left, you set it up by collecting the necessary information in the brief and writing the script(s).

On the right, you gather your outputs. You have a collection of session notes and the research report to be filled. I also included a handy list of interesting articles that I found about UX Research that cover various topics from using the most appropriate research method, to recruiting users, to asking the right questions.



The brief

Here you find everything you need to know to execute your research piece. Set it up by answering key questions to make sure the project is framed properly. Remember to always include:


1. What are the objectives of the research? What do you want to find out? Why do you want to find that out?




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3. What's the plan? How are you going to execute this research?


Finding users is always tricky. There are many variables depending on the company budget for research and the type of research that you need to do. In case of a low budget you could consider a few things: are you organising field studies? Try with guerrilla testing, go where your users are and ask them for 30 minutes of their time over a coffee (coffee is on you!). Do you need to organise in-house user sessions? Have you tried tweeting about it? Many people would be keen to help with small incentives. Have a look at [this article](#) for more in-depth information.



Brief

Objectives

What are the objectives of the research? What do we want to find out? Why?


 Example:

1. Validate the checkout journey.
2. Find out how people feel about the visual style.

1. Your objective

Methodology


How do we run it? How many people do we need to interview?

 Example:

In-house usability testing with 7 people.

Plan


What's the timeline? When do the sessions happen?

 Example:


3 users on the 27/04 and 4 users on the 28/04. Report to be completed at the end of the W/C 30/04.

Demographics

What's our target audience for this research? Why?

 Example:

- 18 to 50 years old



The script

This is your discussion guide, remember to print it out and bring it with you during your session. A few tips on what to include:

- The introduction is very important to put your participants at ease. Introduce yourself and mention that the discussion between you and them is going to be



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- If you are testing prototypes or live products, remember to say the magic sentence *“We are not testing you, we are testing our product. There are no right and wrong answers, we are only genuinely interested in your honest feedback”*.
- Make sure your script doesn't include any leading questions. If you wrote something like *“Does this make sense?”* swap it with *“What do you think of this?”*. There is a great article by [Erika Hall](#) for A List Apart about interviewing humans, [read it here](#).
- Don't be afraid to go off-script. The session shouldn't feel like you're just running through a series of questions and you jump to the next one once they've replied. It's important that you ask the questions you wrote down, but dig deeper into them, ask *“why”* many times. If you are uncovering something interesting then go ahead and keep digging deeper until you feel like that topic is well explored.
- At the end of the script, ask your note taker if they have any questions for your participant. You might have missed something or they might have something interesting to ask based on everything they heard and wrote down.



Script

0. Introduction

Present yourself and tell the user what to expect during the session. Something like:

💡 Hello, thank you for being here. I'll start by introducing myself. I'm (name), I'm a researcher (or designer) for (Company). You are here today because we are interested in helping people (add your project's mission), so your feedback is really important to us.

Bear in mind that we are not testing you, we are testing our product, there are no right or wrong answers, you can be completely honest and tell us what you think.

The interview will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes, if you need a break at any point just let me know.

Do you have any questions so far?
Notice that I won't answer your questions during the interview because I'm really interested in what you think and what you would do if I was not here. But I'll be able to answer your questions at the end of the session.

[if testing a prototype] Today you are also going to use a device. Bear in mind that you are going to interact with a prototype, so it might not behave as expected and you can't input any data.

Just to let you know the session will be recorded if that's ok with you. It's just for internal use, we won't share it anywhere and we won't even store your name.

1. AddSectionTitle






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THE NOTES

This is your repository of notes taken during user sessions. If you facilitate the sessions yourself, I'd recommend always bringing someone with you to take notes, so you can focus on the discussion with your user. Bonus points if the person you bring is not from the design department. Bring developers, product managers, legal people and why not —the CEO. Having them to directly watch users hugely benefits your organisation, as they will start to feel more connected to them and develop empathy. Remember that the entire organisation exists because it solves problems for its users, so it's very important that everyone can directly observe how people feel and what they think when interacting with your product.

At the end of the session, take 5 minutes to debrief with your note taker. Have a discussion on the interesting points and on what you both noticed. Spend some time to add key points to the notes that you can review later when you'll do the highlights.

 Add icon  Add cover  Add discussion

DD/MM/YYYY - #usernumber - ProjectName

Session info
Moderator: @
Note-taker: @
User number:
Video recordings:
What has been tested:
Session script:

User background
Add here the user's background and demographics. Please don't add their name, you don't really need it and it's not GDPR compliant. Please don't add the gender unless it's really relevant; you can refer to them by using 'They'.

Highlights
Add here the highlights of the session.

Full Notes
The note taker will write here as much as they can.

?

Report




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...the summary, simply, and makes the most important things easy to remember yourself “What do I need to remember if I only have 2 minutes to read this?” when completing it.

Spend some time to add all the relevant outcomes. How are you going to use the insights? Do you collect them on a priority list in collaboration with your team? Do they become product backlog items?

Research Report

Short Summary
In a short paragraph, write the most important points of the research. What have we learned? What do I have to remember if I only have two minutes to read this?

Research Goal
What were the objectives of the research? What did we want to find out? Why?

Research Methodology
How did we run it? How many people we interviewed??

Key insights
What are the most important things we've learned? Why are they important?

All insights
What are all the things we've learned?

Opportunities
From the business perspective, what opportunities do we predict, addressing what we found out?

Recommendations
What's the plan now? How do we implement the insights? Why?

• • •

And that's it! I've been using this template for a while now and still improving it, but I feel like it could be useful for other designers too, so I decided to share it with you. I hope it will speed up your process a little so you can focus on the important things :).

Here is the Notion page that you can duplicate to your account to start using the framework: <https://www.notion.so/leomattei/Qualitative-Research-framework-5160d016b4d74830aada1ba3fe80b007>



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I'd love to know if you find it useful, how you use it, how you've changed it and what you've achieved. Share your thoughts and feedback with me on [Twitter](#).

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References

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