

Adam Robitaille
Affinity Mapping
Sunny Safari





Stage One — Initial Coding:

I could create codes before or after grouping the data. It occurred to me that some sort of code set had already been forming in my mind before I began the exercise. I originally thought I might write data on different color sticky notes, but that would visually lock each data point into a category. So I wrote them all on the same color notes to avoid locking them in too soon. The first themes are:

1. Fears and failure

- Intimidation and fear tended to result from prior failure, or the perceived difficulty of the domain. Failures resulted from lack of knowledge, or in some cases neglect.

2. Dollars

- Most interviewees reported favoring propagating to buying of new plants, although plants were considered a good gift when going to a dinner party.

3. Learning

- Trial and error and experimentation were repeatedly emphasized. Also shared were tools and resources used.

4. Good to Have

- Interviewees shared what they would have benefitted from when troubleshooting, such as diagnostic information, as well as some statements of app features they would consider musts.

5. Stories

- What plants mean to people emotionally can be quite profound as it turns out. The winner is Fred the Lima Bean plant, grown by Amanda from a school project from age 10 to 17, killed by her dad through scorching in the sun when Amanda went to summer camp.

6. Benefits

- Benefits are both tangible, such as growing herbs to eat, or less tangible, such as beauty, relieving stress, cleaning the air

7. Climate + Weather

- Represented are Arizona, Hawaii just moved to Texas, and three New Englanders with marked change in seasons affecting how things grow.

8. Uncertainties

- I ended up putting all these data into categories that fit them pretty well.

9. How-to Actions

- Nitty gritty day to day. Water, fertilizer, sun

10. Explore

- Areas the respondents were interested in learning more about.

I had a bit of a bumpy lurchy time securing a 5th interview last week, so I began this process with only 4 interviews completed. It seemed prudent to wait until I could include the 5th before I went on to the New Codes phase of this assignment.

Stage Two — New Codes:

After I encoded the 5th interview into the Stage One themes, I began looking for new themes. The patterns that emerged among several Stage One themes are as follows:

1. **Time-span related:** Reveals that plant-keeping skill grows over a span of time
 - As with other living, growing things, we're dealing with time spans varying from a couple hours to years.
2. **Failure: Lack of Knowledge**
 - What to do when things go wrong can be hard to figure out.
3. **Failure: Accident**
 - Sometimes you just let things get past you.
4. **Region-Specific**
 - Not everything you can do, you should do, and that applies to what is available in your region.
5. **Source of Knowledge:** Experience, Word of mouth, Published digitally, Product packaging
6. **Also Marked:** Water, Sun, Fertilizer, Propagation and Seasonal Change.

Instead of taking these secondary themes out of their original categories, I chose to use a two-tiered theme system. The sub-themes are easily scannable because of the color code even though they're spread among multiple themes.

Some of the data in the first tier themes didn't fit into a second-tier theme, and these I moved to the top of the theme's space, to emphasize that they weren't less important than the double-themed data.

I think the themes and cross-themes I have identified will serve me well as I continue to process and use this data.