

## **Using Primary Data**

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I analyzed the emergent themes from a group of people profiled in Lifehacker's, *How I Work series*, using qualitative data methods. I purposely selected the first 10 professionals of entrepreneurs, economists, hosts of podcasts and shows, and people who work in creative and technical fields-from the interview, "The Best 'How I work' interviews of 2019." This interview series consists of professional profiles of different people and how they approach their careers, balance their work-life and learn about their work habits. The types of themes I've found are morning routines, organizational management, digital tools for productivity and work collaboration, etc.

The 10 interviewees included in coding the qualitative data include: Richard Garriot, aka Lord British-game designer/private astronaut, Benjamin Ho-behavioral economist, Mackenzie Brown-cybersecurity consultant, Jad Abumrad-Radiolab co-founder and host, Matt Saincome and Bill Conway-founders of Hard Times/Hard Drive, Sirita Wright-cannabis media entrepreneur, Janet Varner-actress, Will Shortz-New York Times crossword editor, and Jim Cantore-Meteorologist. My approach to coding the interviewees was reading their individual interviews, highlighting their structure, technical tools, collaboration, routines, work balance, identifying patterns and common responses to the same questions.

According to Data Management Expert Guide, "Qualitative coding is a way of indexing or categorizing the text to establish a framework of thematic ideas about it. In qualitative research, coding is "how you define what the data you are analyzing are about" (Gibbs, 2007). Coding is a process of identifying concepts and finding relations between them. Some interviews were shorter than others and the same questions were not addressed to all interviewees.

Majority of the professionals wake up early in the morning to tackle their day and handle family responsibilities. According to Douglas, the early hours can be among the most productive. Abumrad states, “I wake up at 5 a.m. to listen to hours of tape a week, I like listening to tapes at that early hour when the kids are asleep and the house is quiet” (Douglas, 2019) After waking up and doing my morning routine, I went through my emails and calendar for the day. (Wright, 2019). When I awake in NYC, I am an hour ahead of my Austin staff. This allows me to help get the kids off to school without a rush (Garriott, 2019). I wake up around 6:30 a.m., by 7:30 a.m.

I have checked email and Slack and Twitter (Judge, 2019). I wake up every day at 3:15 a.m., which is the middle of the freaking night, and that’s the hardest part about my job. Getting up those early wears on you. The first thing I do after I’m up, I go down to my computer and read all the data about the weather that day (Cantore, 2019). Waking up early offers benefits to increase productivity, focus, tackling responsibility and improved time management. Several of the professionals use organizational tools to enhance their work efficiency and productivity. These tools range from simple to do lists, checking emails, to complex project management systems. I like to make lists on paper of what I have to get done that day. I’m incredibly old-fashioned in so many ways. We have a shared Google calendar, but I just copy everything from it onto my paper list (Judge, 2019).

I layer tools to help me stay on track. I have weekly and monthly Trello boards, and all of my calendars are synced to one main calendar. I set my schedule weekly and look at my calendar daily. I am a big believer in time blocking, batching tasks and using productivity tools like the Pomodoro chrome extension (Wright, 2019).

OneNote notebook list for everything project and personal wise, then a separate white board for critical to-do items for the week, then a chalkboard of the month that breaks down travel, gigs, appointments, and the necessary recharge days. I am addicted to making lists (Brown, 2019). I use Todoist to capture and organize tasks. But to-do lists quickly become guilt lists. So, if something really has to get done we just put it in the calendar and trust (Abumrad, 2019).

Organizational tools are essential for professionals to manage their time efficiently, improve overall productivity and enhance their work performance. Many of the professionals rely on digital tools to enhance communication, collaboration, streamline workflow, and increase accessibility. To prioritize paying freelancers, the site's backend is set up to automatically to deposit a freelancer's payment into their bank account the moment that their work is published on the site—a technology that Matt recently launched for other media sites, under the name Outvoice (Saincome, 2019). We use Google Docs and write questions collaboratively and then use Google Docs to talk to each other during the interview.

Scripts are also written in Google Docs for easy collaborating. We transcribe our interviews using Trint. During our first edit-using edit audio Pro Tools, we play the clips of the guest and read the narration (Judge, 2019). Dropbox keeps all my files synced across all my devices. Microsoft Office, Google Docs, and Google Inbox (RIP) all work well across devices. So does Overleaf, a cloud-based service for writing LaTeX (for writing scientific papers) which works surprisingly well even on a phone (Ho, 2019). Digital tools offer a range of benefits for professional productivity. These tools help with various tasks and have become indispensable for professional productivity.

Some of the professionals work directly with a partner and collaborate with others to achieve common goals. The only full-time workers are founder and editor-in-chief Matt Saincome, and co-founder and managing editor Bill Conway. Other editors are all part-time (Saincome, 2019). With her media company EstroHaze, Sirita and her co-founders offer women of color a space to learn about the numerous lifestyle and business opportunities that the cannabis industry offers (Wright, 2019). I'm surrounded by incredibly talented coworkers.

The Optiv team and I engage with simplicity and approach security from the inside out. My work shadow partner Curtis Fechner has helped me grasp the art that is enterprise incident response (Brown, 2019). An aspect of modern work is when professionals collaborate with others to increase innovation, enhance communication, pool expertise and perspectives, build relationships-all leading to greater efficiency and an engaged work environment.

Despite their varied professions, these individuals rely on early morning routines, organizational and digital tools, and team collaboration. This group of professionals are hardworking, dedicated, committed, focused and consistent with their work performance. Many of them work long hours, collaborate with other professionals, are passionate about their roles and maintain a work-life balance to the best of their abilities, and still find the time to recharge with books of leisure. These patterns reveal the importance of discipline in varied professions, and the high-level presence of being in physical or virtual spaces.

Highlighting the emerging themes is useful for professionals entering into creative and technical fields and entrepreneurship. Professionals who utilize their day efficiently by early morning rise, utilize organizational tools and digital resources and engage in collaborating with others demonstrate a multifaceted approach to productivity. These habits collectively display

disciplined professionals who value collaboration, proactive planning, and leverage technology resources to achieve success.

## References

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