Informational interviews are an invaluable tool for Learning and Instructional Designers (you all!) looking to gather insights and perspectives relevant to designing a product, curriculum, or high-quality learning experience for different ages and contexts. Conducting these interviews requires light logistical planning (most of which has already been taken care of), effective communication, and active listening skills. Here's a step-by-step guide along with examples that use Post Secondary Pathways Track [HS Track] as the experience to help you conduct your Track's upcoming informational interviews successfully and what you'll need to submit:

1. Define Your Objectives:

Before reaching out to potential interviewees, clearly define what you aim to achieve through the informational interviews. Identify specific questions you want to answer and the insights you hope to gain to inform your design process.

Example:
- *Objective*: To understand the preferences and needs of high students post secondary pathway options and what they need in order to transition successfully and make an informed decision on what is next for them.

2. Identify, Select, and Research your Interviewees:

Identify individuals who possess the knowledge, experience, or perspective relevant to your design project. This could include professionals in the field, educators, students, or potential end-users. Consider diversity in perspectives to gather a comprehensive range of insights.
- *This portion of this deliverable has already been taken care of for your Track and you should already have a Google Calendar Invite (or it's in coordination) for your Interview date and time. Ideally you would want everyone on your team to make the agreed upon time and date. If there are any questions or concerns, contact your Team Lead. See the DCP Weekly Agenda for who you're interviewing, when, and information about them.*

3. Prepare Interview Questions and Instruments: (THIS IS THE SUBMISSION!)

Develop a list of open-ended questions of ~10 questions that will prompt interviewees to share their experiences, opinions, and suggestions. Tailor your questions to the interviewee's expertise and the specific aspects of your design project. If you are doing a Focus Group, the list may not be as long given you may alternate asking specific questions to specific people in their group [BoardRoom Track only].

Example Questions:

- Can you provide insights into the unique challenges students face when transitioning from high school to post-secondary education?
- What strategies has Cristo Rey De La Salle High School implemented to support students in exploring and selecting post-secondary pathways?
- How do you envision the role of mentorship and career guidance in helping students navigate the post-secondary transition successfully?
- In your experience, what are the key factors that contribute to students' success in pursuing post-secondary education?
- Could you share any success stories or best practices from Cristo Rey De La Salle High School that have significantly impacted students' understandings of what are their options after finishing high school? What should students know and why?
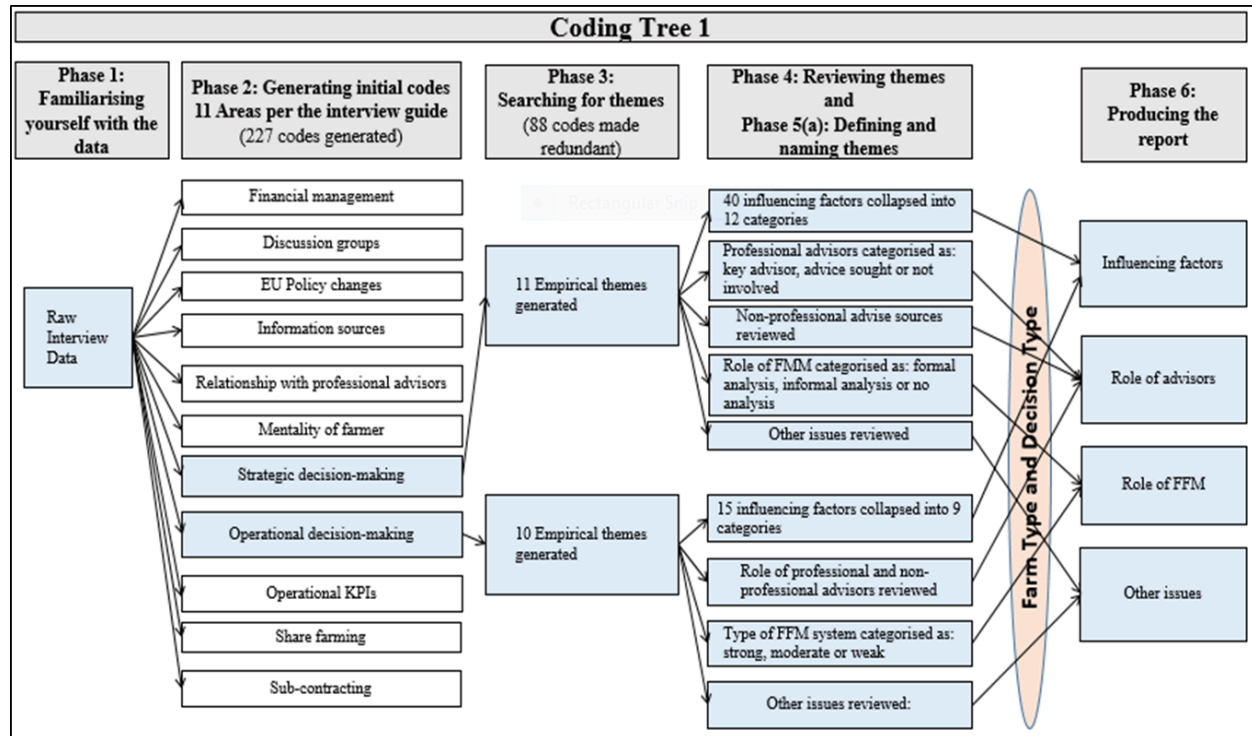
4. Conducting the Interview:

- **Set Up the Meeting:** Schedule a convenient time for both you and the interviewee. Confirm the meeting details and ensure you have a quiet and distraction-free environment for the interview. (These will take place on Zoom and will be coordinated by Randy)
- **Introduction Script:** "Hello [Interviewee's Name], I'm [Your Name], a [Your Year/Major] student at UC Berkeley. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview."
- **Mandatory - Verbal Consent for Recording:** **"We have x amount of time scheduled for this interview and we will plan to end the interview by that time regardless of whether we have asked all our questions or not as to respect your time. Before we proceed, I'd like to request your verbal consent to record this interview and transcribe your answers for research purposes. Is that okay with you?"**
  - Once you have their okay, someone on your team can start the recording of the interview (whoever is hosting the Zoom call or make arrangements on who will moderate this task as forgetting to record sometimes happens!)
  - Most have already agreed to participate, but it's important to get consent when engaging in this kind of research task of conducting an interview. If they disagree, someone will need to take notes on their responses manually and then synthesize after.
- **Take Turns Asking Questions:** Depending on how many of you attend the interview, take turns asking one question at a time and feel free to ask follow up if the answers aren't as elaborate.

5. Analyze and Synthesize Insights (Coding Qualitative Data) (THIS IS THE SUBMISSION TOO):

After conducting the interviews, review your notes and recordings to identify common themes, key insights, and areas of divergence. Refer to the links that were shared with you by Dr Pacheco on coding qualitative data for interviews. Organize the information in a way that facilitates analysis and synthesis. It may be helpful to add these onto your MindMap, although

not necessary. This will enrich the 3 key workshops/lessons your team decides on and can happen prior or DURING the middle of designing. Here's a visual model of coding development, but you do NOT need to create anything like this. Instead, you submit it in writing per my example at the end of this guide.

Coding Tree 1

| Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data | Phase 2: Generating initial codes 11 Areas per the interview guide (227 codes generated) | Phase 3: Searching for themes (88 codes made redundant) | Phase 4: Reviewing themes and Phase 5(a): Defining and naming themes | Phase 6: Producing the report |

Raw Interview Data

Financial management
Discussion groups
EU Policy changes
Information sources
Relationship with professional advisors
Mentality of farmer
Strategic decision-making
Operational decision-making
Operational KPIs
Share farming
Sub-contracting

11 Empirical themes generated
10 Empirical themes generated

40 influencing factors collapsed into 12 categories
Professional advisors categorised as: key advisor, advice sought or not involved
Non-professional advise sources reviewed
Role of FMM categorised as: formal analysis, informal analysis or no analysis
Other issues reviewed
15 influencing factors collapsed into 9 categories
Role of professional and non-professional advisors reviewed
Type of FFM system categorised as: strong, moderate or weak
Other issues reviewed:

Farm Type and Decision Type

Influencing factors
Role of advisors
Role of FFM
Other issues

Note: The person who records the Zoom call can ask Zoom to "Record to the Cloud" or "Record to Desktop" which will give you an audio file, video file of the meeting, as well as a TTV file or the Text Transcript with everything that was said. While not always accurate, this is why it's important to go in and fill in the blanks, and ask questions as clearly as possible.

6. Apply Insights to Design Process:

Utilize the insights gathered from the informational interviews to refine your design concept, make informed decisions, and address potential challenges. Consider how the perspectives shared by interviewees can enhance the effectiveness and relevance of your product, curriculum, or learning experience. The idea is that the information that you gathered from your interview and these professionals enriches your workshop idea and design.

7. Express Gratitude:

One person from your time is tasked with sending a thank-you email or message to the interviewees on behalf of your entire track, expressing appreciation for their time, insights, and contributions to your project. Maintaining positive relationships with interviewees may open opportunities for future collaboration or networking!!!

Great! So, What are we Submitting?

The final submission for this group deliverable will be:
A) The final list of interview questions your Track asked
B) Finding (and coding, per Dr. P's support sessions) **3 themes** that you analyzed based on the interview responses. This can go on a Google Doc. This data comes directly from the responses by going through the transcript/notes you took on the interview. A few sentences on how you'll incorporate it into your plans. Here is an example of how it should look like:

- **Theme/Idea 1: High School Students Need Post Secondary Pathways Communicated Early in their HS Careers**
  - The Interviewee expressed across the different questions we asked the importance of communicating what different options HS students have as early as their freshman year, if possible. This allows for students to have exposure, and give them their HS years to really contemplate what it is they would like to do once they finish high school and consider the different paths, such as attending a community college vs. a four year, or going into the workforce, etc.
  - We will incorporate this into the design process by potentially doing a workshop or honing in further on the different avenues HS students can take and informing them of what their options are. Activities they can do as part of this workshop include breakout rooms for the different options, doing a career assessment you find online, or even just sharing amongst each other what their goals are and how they plan to achieve them.
  - **Give 2-3 quotations said by Interviewees that substantiate this theme.**
- It should not be super long. It should be brief, to the point, and underscore how it informs your product design! (Doesn't need to be reflected on the final, but is considering how it could enrich what students are actually learning from your module).

If this is the first time you are engaging with a structured/formal informational interview for research purposes, just remember to approach each interview with curiosity, empathy, and a genuine desire to learn from others' experiences. Oftentimes that can go a really long way when working with these individuals who are sharing their time and expertise with us. The idea is that this hopefully gives you all a greater sense of agency that what you are crafting and creating will exist alongside a transformative career readiness curriculum that Instructors from the Conectado team will facilitate when our next bootcamp comes up this Summer, and which you all will have the chance to facilitate and implement with students as well. 🙂

Happy Interviewing!