



Background: Basecamp is a real-time project management tool that helps teams and businesses collaborate and manage their work. This product boasts over 3 million users and is known for its ease of use when collaborating. It has product integration with Slack, Mailchimp, and Salesforce. While Basecamp provides a range of features and tools, users report a feeling of overwhelm from notifications and reports, a desire for further integrations, and when **I spoke with their Head of Customer Support, I discovered that there has “been an uptick in requests about the to-do feature” and that most commonly, users are expressing frustrations regarding adding items to an established to-do list.**

After completing secondary research, my next steps include a user survey followed up with user interviews based on the survey results. I created a user survey, but before I send it out, I want to make sure I am getting the best data possible by auditing the usability of the survey itself by completing a few preliminary cognitive interviews.

Interview Goal: To validate the questions included in the User Survey for Basecamp users as a part of the research for the To-do list feature.

Method: 1:1 interviews with survey participants during which they are asked to answer each question individually followed by 3 clarifying questions to determine if the questions are clear and will obtain relevant data.

Clarifying Questions:

- In your own words, what is this question asking?
- How did you arrive at your answer?
- On a scale of 1-5, one being not at all and 5 being completely, how sure are you of your answer?

Survey Questions:

1. When do you add items to your to-do list?
 - a. Only during work hours
 - b. Anytime I think about it

- c. At a scheduled time in a day
 - d. Other:
2. How often do you add a to-do list item to a project
- a. Multiple times in a day
 - b. About once a day
 - c. One to four times a week
 - d. Only when I create a new project
 - e. Rarely
 - f. Never
 - g. Other:
3. How do you typically navigate to your to-do list?
- a. I access the dashboard, then a project, then the to-do list
 - b. I have a bookmarked shortcut
 - c. I use the search function to find the project or list I am looking for
 - d. Other:
4. Do you have a personal to-do list on Basecamp?
- a. Yes, one
 - b. Yes, multiple
 - c. No
5. Are there any other tools you are using for your project related to-do lists? (Please check all that apply) *
- a. Pen and paper
 - b. Post-it
 - c. Physical board
 - d. Other physical tool
 - e. Digital Note
 - f. Voice note
 - g. Other:
6. On a scale of 1-10, how much effort* do you feel is required to add a new item to a to-do list in Basecamp?
- *Effort includes the time it takes to create and add an item to a to-do list, as well as any difficulty or frustration you may experience during the process.*
7. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience using the to-do feature on Basecamp?

Results:

| Survey Question Number | What is the perceived question? | How participant arrived at the answer: | On average, How sure is the participant? (1 unsure - 5 sure) |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| 1 | "what it feels like it's asking me is: Do I have a set time when I make to do lists and plan to make to do lists? Or do I make them whenever I think of it." | They thought through their day and pictured themselves adding something to a to-do list | 5 |
| 2 | all participants reported understanding this question as regarding the frequency of activity on their lists | "I thought about my process and recognized that it's not super routine. That's more of a like, you know, I feel better if I do it every day but I don't always do it every day. Kind of like the in-between answer felt right." | 4 |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is most convenient • how do I feel like it's, it's not technically asking where I store them? But I absolutely think of that first thing. But also, like, you know, like, how do I find them once I've dropped them? Or how do I find them once maybe they're not at the front of my brain. | "Occasionally I use the Notes app. And so I thought about how I use that" | 4 |
| 4 | am I intentional about separating my personal items from my work items? Or am I do they kind of wind up sharing the same task management space? | Participants reported that the wording of this question lead them to reflect on how separated they kept their personal and professional lives | 5 |
| 5 | What other mediums do you use for task management | "Looking around my physical space" | 5 |
| 6 | I am embarrassed to admit that I think it's like I'm for it most like no it's not hard, but it feels hard to me. I feel ridiculous saying like three or four but that's where I'm at. | how challenging I personally find it to use a digital task management tool instead of a physical one or just just in general. You know what my personal level of resistance would be? | 5 |
| 7 | What are your general thoughts about to-do lists | what's most important to me? | 5 |

Insights:

1. This question was tested as very straightforward and participants were quick to answer.
2. The term “project” seemed to **lead users to reflect on whether or not they should be separating personal and professional projects** and how they could better utilize lists in general. May have risks regarding the data being skewed by what participants think the answer should be.
3. Opportunities to **clarify that we are asking about the process for the user when accessing their lists** rather than where to-do lists are literally stored (Basecamp).
4. Potential risks include **users perceiving the question to be more about weather or not they have good work/life balance** rather than “is there a need for a personal note space”
5. This question seemed clear and participants answered quickly and confidently
6. This question seems to be leading based on morality with participants feeling there is a right and wrong answer. One participant reported feeling embarrassed by her honest answer. **Users are likely to report low effort because they may think it's the answer they're supposed to give**
7. This is the only open ended question on the survey and as such, poses a risk for data that doesn't fit within this study but users were not hesitant to answer.

Next Steps:

- Revise questions 2, 4, and 6 to clarify the information I am looking for and remove opportunities for moral reflections
- Revise question 3 to more closely reflect the goal of examining how users are currently accessing their to-do lists within the Basecamp app