

# The 5 whys



This simple research method will help you gain insight into the deeper motivations and assumptions that underlie a person's behaviour.

The 5 Whys technique is used to get to the heart of a person's motivations and thoughts. By giving the interviewee the time, space and conditions to look at things more deeply, you will end up identifying key ideas. The results lead to essential answers to complex problems. It can be an excellent method to use to address the root causes of a problem from a human and emotional perspective.

## HOW?

1. Start by asking a fairly broad question about the habits or behaviour of your interviewee participant, then ask "why" in response to their answer five times in a row.
2. Keep in mind to always open the dialogue by asking open-ended questions.  
You can vary the way you formulate your "why". For example: "For what reason..." or "What drives you to...", etc.
3. Adopt a "funnel" approach: the questions you ask are not aimed at opening the field of possibilities, but to continue to specify and inspect in depth. So rather than "Is there another reason why...", try "And, on this point, could you clarify why...?".
4. Write down what you hear, paying particular attention to moments when you feel you are making progress towards a deeper understanding. Remember that you may not reach the essence of the problem until the fourth or fifth "Why".