



How to Plan Good Projects

How to Do a Test

The “do a test” method is good if you want to find out what people know or can do. Sometimes it is not easy to learn what you want to know about people’s skills with the “watch and listen” method. For example, pretend you want to know what people would do if there was a kitchen fire. You may have to wait for a long time for a kitchen fire to happen when you are there.



In “watch and listen” research, you look at what people do normally. With the “do a test” method, you look at what people do in a situation that *you* set up or control. It is always important to get people to say it is OK to do a test with them.

A lot of times this method is used to compare two or more groups of people who differ in one important way. The groups may differ in ability, experience or some other way.

Paper and pencil tests

We may plan a paper and pencil test to find out what people know or have learned about some topic. This kind of test only works if people can read and write. If people can not read, you can read them the test out loud and write down their answer.

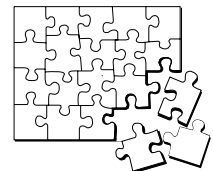


Questions should be fair and clear, just like with the “ask people” method.

When we do this kind of project, it is important to test enough people so that differences between people do not matter. Researchers think you should have at least 30 people for this kind of project, in order to get true answers.

Activities and role play

Tests do not always use paper and a pencil. You can make up puzzles or activities or have people role play what they would do.



For example, if you wanted to see if people know what do if their kitchen was on fire, you could set their kitchen on fire. But this would be dangerous and cost a lot to fix up.

So we can ask people to *role play* what they would do if their kitchen was on fire. This will tell us if they know what to do.

It does not tell us if they would actually do this with a real fire.

Sometimes people do different things in a scary situation, than in a role play when they are calm. This is a limit of the “do a test” method. The more like the real world we can make our test, the more we can rely on our results to be true.



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