



NEED FINDING
PEOPLE SHADOWING

People Shadowing means becoming someone's shadow for a while. Following someone, or a group of people, as they live their everyday life, or go about their daily work helps to understand the environment they are part of. It also allows for observation for yourself the contextual details that can influence a person's behaviour and motivations.



FORMAT
Template



TIMEFRAME
1 day



GROUP SIZE
2



FACILITATION LEVEL
Medium



REQUIRED MATERIALS
Paper, Pen, Camera

STEPS

1

Determine a set of important questions before starting shadowing: notWho to follow?notHow to be actively involved when you get there?notThe kind of information you're looking out for, and the ways in which you might want to record what you find. rn

2

Visit and accompany the target person in her/his natural environment.

3

Take notes and photos, and fill out the template for the person you follow. But also ask your team to fill out a similar sheet for each person they follow. This is a structured way to compare your observations across the various 'participants' you and your team shadowed.

4

The qualitative data collected is analysed to determine typical or important routines, limiting factors, etc.

Benefits

- It helps to familiarise yourself with a certain practice or group of people.
- Observing people can reveal hidden aspects that might be the core issue or even possible solution.
- Your observations can act not only as inspiration but also a guide to help reach the core of how your work impacts people whose lives you want to make a difference to.

Tips

It might be a good idea to ask a person's permission in case you want to follow them closely, though it is also possible to just observe the participant from a distance. This may depend on what is socially accepted within the specific situation or culture. It is important to respect the person's space and make sure they are comfortable.

Sources

1. DIY Toolkit