

FIVE CONVERSATIONS

Module 3: Step-by-Step Roadmap | Stage 4 – What am I really testing?

Testing assumptions about an idea through direct conversations with the community

Activity Focus and Goals:

- Move from assumptions to evidence by talking directly to people in the community
- Practise asking open, non-leading questions about real problems
- Identify patterns across several conversations that confirm or challenge the original idea
- Build comfort with informal, low-stakes outreach
- Connect community insights (Stage 2) with assumptions about the idea (Stage 4)

Materials Needed:

- Five Conversations Tracker (page 2 of this Lesson Plan)
- Pen and paper, or a notes app
- A short list of 3–5 potential contacts
- The four guiding questions (provided below)
- 1–2 weeks of calendar time for informal conversations

Learning Objectives:

- Identify people relevant to testing an idea
- Conduct a short, structured conversation using open questions
- Record what was heard, separately from personal interpretation
- Recognise patterns across multiple responses
- Connect conversation insights to a personal next step

Structure and timing of the activity: In groups (3 – 5 people) or individually:

Step 1 (15–20 min, in session): Each participant chooses 3–5 people from their network or community who experience the problem they want to address or who can provide honest feedback. Each person writes down what they hope to learn. The group then reviews the four guiding questions: “What is difficult right now?” “What frustrates you about it?” “How do you currently deal with it?”, and “What would make things easier, or have you tried anything else?”

Step 2 (1–2 weeks, outside session): Participants hold short, informal conversations (5–10 minutes each) with the people they identified, using the four guiding questions as a loose script. After each conversation, they fill in one row of the Five Conversations Tracker.

Step 3 (15–20 min, follow-up session or self-review): Participants review their completed Tracker and look for patterns: things people repeatedly struggle with, solutions that are too expensive or hard to access, and needs that remain unmet. In a group setting, participants share in pairs or small groups what surprised them most and what it means for their idea; in self-learning mode, this is written down as a short personal note.

(Self) assessment:

- Did I speak with at least 3 different people?
- Did I record what I heard for each conversation, separately from my own interpretation?
- Can I name at least one assumption that was confirmed or challenged by these conversations?

Resources and useful materials:

- Five Conversations Tracker (page 2 of this Lesson Plan)
- Module 3 reflection slide: “What is difficult right now? What frustrates you? How do you solve it? What would make things easier?”
- IDEO Design Kit – free guidance on interviewing and observation for human-centred design

Notes, comments, recommendations for users (trainers/ learners):

- Frame the conversations as curiosity, not as a test of competence – there is no “right” outcome.
- Participants choose people they feel safe approaching, and are never asked to disclose personal, financial or migration-related circumstances during the conversation.



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FIVE CONVERSATIONS – TRACKER

Use this Tracker after each of your five conversations. Write down what you heard in the person's own words as much as possible, then add your own interpretation in the third column.

Person	What I Heard	What It Means