Organizational Informant Interview Guide

Preparatory Steps

1. Walk potential participant through the consent form

2. If approval obtained for recording, make sure to state the participant ID#, date, location, and type of interview on the recording before beginning the interview.

Background/Setting the Stage (10 minutes)

Thank you for your willingness to sit down with me for an interview. To give you a sense of what we will be discussing today, I am interested in learning about how you think about personal data and identity theft in your work, your experiences working with people who report being victims of identity theft, and the policies or practices that guide you in that process. My approach is relatively open-ended. There are no right answers. I am most interested in hearing stories about your experiences. Before diving into questions about data and identity theft, I'd like to know a little bit more about you and your background.

1. How did you come to work for [*insert organization name*]?

2. Can you describe for me a typical day for you at the office?

3. What are the most rewarding parts of your job?

4. What are the most frustrating parts?

Now I'd like to move to talking about personal data and identity theft.

5. How do you define identity theft in the context of your work?

To clarify, when I refer to identity theft throughout the rest of the interview, I am most interested in financial identity theft, where someone uses someone else's personal data without their permission for financial gain.

6. How does identity theft come into play in your work?
    a. Can you share with me a recent example?

Detection (5-10 minutes)

7. How, if at all, do you or other people at [*insert organization name*] proactively identify potential cases of identity theft?
    a. What tools or resources do you or others employ? *[Prompt regarding technologies/algorithms]*
    b. What sources of data do you or others draw on?
    c. What laws come into play?

8. Can you share with me a recent example of how you or [*insert organization name*] were involved in proactively identifying a case of identity theft?

Resolution (20-30 minutes)

9. Can you walk me through the steps you take when someone reaches out to [*insert organization name*] claiming to be a victim of identity theft?
    a. How do you know if they are actually identity theft victims?
    b. How do you decide if they are telling the truth?
    c. What tools or resources do you employ?
    d. What parties do you interact with?
    e. What laws come into play?
    f. What steps do you expect the individual to take?
    g. What steps do you and others at [*insert organization name*] take?

10. What kinds of evidence or data, if any, do you look for in making a decision?
    a. Financial records?
    b. Police reports?
    c. Other affidavits or identity theft reports?
    d. Other evidence or data?

11. How do you distinguish between cases of identity theft and other instances of inaccurate personal data?

12. Describe for me what happens once you have determined that someone is a victim of identity theft.
    h. What goals do you and others you work with typically have in mind?
    i. What tools or resources do you employ? *[Prompt regarding technologies/algorithms]*
    j. What sources of data do you draw on?
    k. What parties do you interact with?
    l. What laws come into play?
    m. What steps do you expect the individual to take?
    n. What steps do you and others at [*insert organization name*] take?

13. Tell me about a recent case of identity theft that you were involved in resolving that you found to be particularly simple or straightforward.

14. Tell me about a recent case that you found to be particularly difficult or complex.

15. What are the biggest challenges or obstacles you and your clients face to resolving identity theft cases?

16. Which types of cases or clients do you find the most challenging to resolve?

Consequences (10-15 minutes)

17. In your work, what do you see as the consequences of identity theft?
    [Probe about financial and material consequences]
    [Probe about emotional consequences]
    [Probe about legal consequences]
    [Probe about health consequences]
    [Probe about individual, organizational, and societal consequences]

18. A lot of the research I have encountered suggests that many if not most of the consequences of identity theft derive from the process of resolving one's case. What do you think about this?
    a. Do you agree?
    b. Why do you think this is?
    c. What are the implications of this?
    d. What, if anything, should be done differently?

Broader Implications (10-15 minutes)

19. What do you think of the expectations placed on individuals for resolving identity theft?
    a. Are they reasonable? Excessive?
    b. Should more or less be expected of them? Why?

20. Businesses, policymakers, and the media often focus on educating consumers so that they can be responsible for their personal data. To what degree do you think people should be responsible for the data associated with them?

21. What roles or responsibilities, if any, do you think businesses or government should take with regards to resolving identity theft?

22. What is your impression of the current state of regulation regarding identity theft?

23. What do you see as the biggest challenges facing legal service providers like [*insert organization name*] when it comes to resolving identity theft?

24. If you could give someone one piece of advice about identity theft, what would it be? Why?

25. If you could change one thing about how the system for resolving identity theft works, what would it be? Why?

Final Statement (5 minutes)
Thank you so much for your time. This has been extremely helpful. My main goals for this interview were to understand:

- How you define and think about personal data and identity theft.
- How you and [*insert organization name*] evaluate and resolve possible cases of identity theft.
- What you perceive as the potential impacts of identity theft on those who experience it.

Is there anything I should have asked you in relationship to these three themes or anything else that I didn't cover that you think is important for me to know?

Finally, can you think of someone else who works or has worked in an area related to identity theft resolution that you think I could benefit from talking to?

Likewise, if you have any questions or if you think of anything else you would like to share with me, don't hesitate to reach out to me:

[*Give them business card*]

Thank you so much!