Running a Data Jam

go.wisc.edu/datajam

Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

Data Jams are collaborative workshops for research project teams to engage in the qualitative data analysis process. These workshops build capacity in qualitative data analysis while providing a space for teams to advance their research/evaluation project through rigorous team-based analysis.

This agenda template assumes all Data Jam participants can convene in the same physical space for two full working days (about 16 hours). The schedule can be shortened to about eight hours depending on the complexity of the data and research questions, the analysis experience of the participants, and the status or existence of previously established themes or topics in the data. We do not recommend attempting Data Jams under six hours to ensure ample time for data analysis.

Data Jams can be done virtually (e.g., via Zoom) with some adjustments. The Data Jam can also be broken up into a series of sessions; each session should be at least four hours to ensure proper space for meaningful engagement with the data and the analysis process.

Agenda overview

Day 1

Time	Agenda item	Goal
8:30–9 a.m. *30 minutes*	Set-up at location	Participants understand the structure and goals of the Data Jam and understand what to expect from the day(s). Integrate icebreakers as needed.
9–9:20 a.m. *20 minutes*	Introductions, review agenda, review research and analysis questions	
9:20–10 a.m. *40 minutes*	Introduction to data analysis software	Participants understand which QDAS functions to use and are able to use them. Participants understand the analytic techniques they will use, and how they can bring them to life via their work in the software.
10–10:15 a.m. *15 minutes*	Break	
10:15–10:30 a.m. *15–30 minutes*	Setting analysis ground rules using QualPal cards	
10:15 a.m.–noon *1 hour 45 minutes*	Group analysis work	Participants analyze data based on a concrete analysis question/ analytic task.
Noon–1 p.m. *1 hour*	Lunch	
1–2:15 p.m. *1 hour 15 minutes*	Group analysis work	
2:15–2:45 p.m. *30 minutes*	Group writing work	Participants document their findings and questions and discuss them with the other groups.
2:45–3 p.m. *15 minutes*	Break	
3–4 p.m. *1 hour*	Group discussion	

Day 2

Time	Agenda item	Goal
9 a.m.–noon *3 hours*	Group analysis work, optionally prefaced by introducing additional QDAS functions	Participants analyze data based on a concrete analysis question/ analytic task.
Noon–1 p.m. *1 hour*	Lunch	
1–2 p.m. *1 hour*	Group analysis work	
2–2:45 p.m. *45 minutes*	Group writing work	Participants document their findings and questions and discuss them with the other groups.
2:45–3 p.m. *15 minutes*	Break	
3–4 p.m. *1 hour*	Group discussion and wrap-up	

Day 1

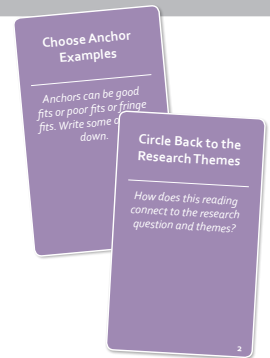| Time	Agenda item
8:30–9 a.m. *30 minutes*	**Set-up at location** Anticipate working in groups of 2–3 people. Ensure you have enough computers with the data analysis software and enough display monitors (with the necessary cables) to accommodate this arrangement. There should also be a large display or projector you can use for demonstrations. Make an abbreviated agenda available, as well as the research questions and the analysis questions (we recommend using a Google Doc). The Google Doc will also be used for writing and sharing the Data Jam end products.
9–9:20 a.m. *20 minutes*	**Brief introductions of facilitators and participants; icebreaker as needed.** **Brief introduction of the day's outline (this agenda)** • Emphasize the Data Jams goal: to build capacity in qualitative data analysis while advancing your project through team-based analysis. Introduce the research and analysis questions, and the intended end product. **Mention use of Google Docs (writing, sharing, commenting)** • Having a shared written product at the end of the Data Jam ensures teams synthesize their analyses and have an objective to work towards, and facilitates shared learning among the group. **Show and discuss previous Data Jam products (see Toolkit at go.wisc.edu/datajam)**
9:20–10 a.m. *40 minutes*	**Introduction to the data analysis software (example)** Basic overview of the data analysis software's key functions participants will use in the Data Jam. We use MAXQDA, and typically demonstrate the features below, with adaptations based on the analytic method and data type used. • Broad overview over the user interface (The Four Main Windows). • Creating codes, editing the code system, code colors. Use of a "not sure" code for text that may be off topic, vague, or otherwise not easily coded. • Coding and revising coded segments. Writing code comments. Interacting with the coded segments window. • Using document memos and code memos for process documentation, note-taking, and draft definition writing. **The facilitator should model the general analysis steps groups will perform.** *Note:* This introduction can run over time due to questions/discussions. That's okay! Adjust time for analysis as needed. If you do a data jam with a stable research team, you could schedule a prep meeting that covers all Data Jam content until here, and another meeting where your team jumps right into analysis.
10–10:15 a.m. *15 minutes*	**Break** **Make sure to incorporate break time into your agenda — qualitative data analysis is hard work!**

Day 1 *continued*

Time	Agenda item
10:15–10:30 a.m. *15–30 minutes*	**Setting analysis ground rules using QualPal cards** QualPal is a set of analytic techniques that make up the building blocks of qualitative analysis (for example, reading text sentence by sentence; questioning existing interpretations; taking notes of hunches). Use this time to introduce the analytic techniques that you will be using for the analysis task during the data jam. If participants are already familiar with QDAS, you can shorten the software introduction and expand this section to include building up workflows with the QualPal cards, or do gamified analysis group warm-ups using QualPal (for more information, check out the QualPal Facilitator Guide in the Toolkit).
10:15 a.m.–noon *1 hour 45 minutes*	**Group analysis work** Split participants into groups of 2–3 and assign tasks (e.g., one analysis question per group, or one interview per group). It is crucial for this step to limit the scope of the analysis to avoid overwhelming analysts, and to help the facilitator focus the teams on the given task. Teams start analyzing data with facilitator support.
Noon–1 p.m. *1 hour*	**Lunch**
1–2:15 p.m. *1 hour 15 minutes*	**Group analysis work** Continued analysis in groups. Now may be a good time to introduce additional QDAS functions (such as mapping functions) to assist with sub-code generation.
2:15–2:45 p.m. *30 minutes*	**Group writing work** Groups begin writing descriptions and definitions for codes and sub-codes. This may include selecting "anchor" quotes that are particularly representative of the code or sub-code. Writing can take place in the software itself (e.g., memos) but should be transferred to the Google Doc for sharing with other groups. *Note:* This writing activity may depend on your anticipated end product for the Data Jam.
2:45–3 p.m. *15 minutes*	**Break**
3–4 p.m. *1 hour*	**Group discussion** Groups review other groups' writing and provide comments. Each group can share out about their main findings thus far. Discussion of how each group's work relates to the research project as a whole. Additional discussion about what questions still remain, what would people like to know next, and next steps for analysis for Day 2.

Day 2

Time	Agenda item
9 a.m.–noon *3 hours*	**Group analysis work** Continued analysis in groups. Focus on solidifying sub-codes and sub-code definitions. Groups should also review all "not sure" coded segments — these may now have a place in the coding scheme. You may also introduce other software functions at this time. Encourage breaks as needed.
Noon–1 p.m. *1 hour*	**Lunch**
1–2 p.m. *1 hour*	**Group analysis work** Continued analysis in groups.
2–2:45 p.m. *45 minutes*	**Group writing work** Groups finalize their code and sub-code definitions. They should have "anchor" quotes for each sub-code. They should explicitly state which topics are included or excluded, and (if relevant) where similar topics are coded instead. Writing can take place in the software itself (e.g., memos) but should be transferred to the Google Doc for sharing with other groups.
2:45–3 p.m. *15 minutes*	**Break**
3–4 p.m. *1 hour*	**Group discussion and wrap-up** Groups review other groups' writing and provide comments. Each group shares their main findings thus far. Discussion of how each group's work relates to the research project as a whole. May have each person discuss something interesting, something surprising, and something to remember from the data. **To end the Data Jam, discuss what questions of the data still remain and next steps for the research project.** Some next steps may include: • Merging the analysis files into one project file • Establishing how the analysis will proceed — are there certain questions or interviews to focus on next? • How team-based future analysis may be — will you continue working in groups of 2–3 during analysis? How will your group check in with each other as analysis proceeds?

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