Sample Market Validation Questions

Conversations with potential customers and other stakeholders are a key activity for any entrepreneur at any stage. But what you say, and how you say it, are much more important than simply getting in front of someone if you want to avoid inserting any type of bias or getting false sentiments! We've pulled together a list of starter questions to help you plan for these conversations

Intro/Icebreaker Questions
- Specific qualifying questions related to what you want to learn:
  - When did you first hear about [X]?
  - How did you first become interested/get involved in [X]?
  - How much time do you spend on [X] in a given day/week/month?
  - Who handles [X]?
  - Tell me about your role at company [X].
  - What are your top responsibilities related to [X]?
  - How long have you been working with company [X]?
  - With what department and business unit are you affiliated?
  - How many people report to you?
  - To whom do you report?

What problems do potential customers recognize?
- Could you walk me through [X] process from start to finish?
  - Ask follow-up questions as they speak:
    - Who is involved in the process? / How long does it take? / Etc.
- Of problems x, y and z, which would you say is your top challenge?
- Can you walk me through a typical day in your work?
- How do you currently do [X]?
- Do you find it hard to do [X]? Why?
- How important is [X] to you?
- What keeps you from doing [X]?
- What's the hardest part of your day?
- What's the hardest part about being a [demographic]?
- What are the top 3 challenges for someone in your position?
- What are some unmet needs you have?
- What product do you wish you had that doesn't exist yet?
- What tasks take up the most time in your day?
- What could be done to improve your experience with [X]?
- What keeps you up at night related to [X]? Why?
- What is the first thing you would change about your work?

What are the effects of not solving these problems?
- Why is this a problem?
- What happens when [X] is not done?
- Roughly how much time does solving problem [X] currently take?
- Roughly how much money has been spent on solving problem [X] over time period y?
- How many people are affected by problem [X]?
- How do you feel about the current situation?
- What would be the impact of solving problem [X]?
- How would doing your job/day/task be different if you had isolution y?
- What percentage of day/week do you spend fixing problem [X]?
- How much would you be willing to pay an external contractor to solve problem [X]?
- If you had a solution to problem [X], what would it mean to you?

How are potential customers currently solving these problems?
- How do you currently solve [X] problem?
- What do you like about your current system/process?
- What could be improved with the current system/process?
- What other options for solving this problem have you explored?
- What other possible solutions are you familiar with?
- What has held you back from changing to something else?
- Tell me about (problem).
- What are you currently doing to solve this problem?
- How do you typically work around this problem?
- Do you expect this problem to improve, worsen or stay the same in the upcoming year?
- Are there, in your perspective, ways technology can help with this problem?
- Tell me about the last time you did [X]?
- How do you do [X]…why did you choose this method?

What would prevent adoption of your solution?
- What other options for solving this problem have you explored?
- What do you like about your current system/process?
- What could be improved with the current system/process?
- What has held you back from changing to something else?

What sources do potential customers use to get relevant information?
- What sources do you use to get information about [X]?
- From which sources do you typically learn about new products or technology?
- Where do you get new information on [X]?
- What are some of the blogs, websites or publications that you read?
- Who are your influencers, or who do you take advice from?
- Who are some industry visionaries that you respect?

How do potential customers make purchase decisions?
- Tell me about your company's decision making process for [X].
- Who is involved in decision making?
- Tell me about the last time you were involved in purchasing [X].
- If you identify the need for a new product in your department, how does your team typically go about purchasing the solution?
- All things considered, what is the typical length of the approval process?
- What does the corporate purchasing process look like?
- How do you typically purchase new tools?

Closing Questions
- [Summarize some of your key takeaways] – is that accurate?
- It sounds like [X] is very important to you, while y is not. How accurate is that?
- What else should I know that I didn't ask?
- Do you know anyone else I can speak with who might also have this problem?
- Are you open to a follow-up conversation?
- Can I keep you in the loop as our company progresses?