



FOCUS GROUP

WHAT IS A FOCUS GROUP?

A structured discussion protocol that brings together a group of people, typically unfamiliar with each other but with a common interest, to give their opinions on a particular topic or area.

A FOCUS GROUP IS ORGANIZED

- » generally for groups of six to eight.
 - » with a facilitator experienced in focus-group processes.
 - » as a facilitated interview-based interaction that also allows for group discussion.
 - » to be brief; however, it should last at least one hour.
 - » to record the discussion and its outcomes.
- › draw people into conversations in a group environment.
 - › foster an atmosphere that enables information sharing.

USE IT TO

- » test assumptions for improved decision-making.
 - » test target audience response/reaction to products/services/campaigns before they are launched.
 - » support development of a strategic focus.
 - » encourage participants to build on each other's perspectives.
- » Prepare an introduction script that
 - › explains the purpose.
 - › explains how the focus group will be conducted.
 - › describes the facilitator's role.
 - » Make sure you explain to participants how you will capture their opinions.
 - » Consider using consent forms, especially if the focus group is to be audio or video recorded.
 - » Select a room that is conducive to discussion.
 - » Prepare minutes or a summary document in a timely fashion (within three to five days after the focus group session is completed); review carefully before making decisions about next steps.

HOW TO USE IT

- » Find an experienced facilitator who can
 - › be objective.
 - › listen well.

FOCUS GROUP VS QUESTIONNAIRE

Focus groups can capture more qualitative information than a questionnaire because discussion is organized around an interview approach. Questionnaires, however, are better for reaching a much larger audience; you don't have to schedule face time (virtual or face-to-face).

FOCUS GROUP VS INTERVIEW

A key difference between focus groups and interviews is that focus groups include multiple participants, which allows a discussion with several perspectives about a project or a topic. Unlike interviews, focus groups allow participants to build upon one another's responses and come up with ideas they may not have thought of on their own.