Focus Groups

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	FACILITATORS	CATEGORY	DURATION	LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY
5-10	Moderator, Decision-Maker, Note-Taker	Empathize, Define, **Ideate**, Prototype, Test Phase	Depends on topic	Simple

Description

What is a focus group?

"A focus group is a gathering of deliberately selected people who participate in a facilitated discussion intended to elicit consumer perceptions about a particular topic or area of interest." (DeVault 2019).

It is a moderated discussion focused on the interactions and confrontations between the participants. A Focus Group gives deep insights in the world of consumers, the knowledge of their behavior and motivations and their problems. Participants: People who are selected because of their heterogenic needs. Consumer perceptions: The feelings, thoughts, persuasions and attitudes of users. Aim: The main idea of a focus group is to identify the consumer perceptions of a product, service or deployment.

When using focus groups?

‣ …generate new ideas from external people.

‣ …gather innovative ideas for a new product.

‣ …develops a new campaign.

Different focus groups:

‣ Two-way focus group: One focus group is discussing a specific topic while another focus group observes them and comments on what they see.

‣ Online focus groups: Users attend remotely.

‣ Mini focus groups: The focus group consists of 4 or 5 Participants.

‣ Client participant focus group: A Member of the company being studied observes the discussion or attends (depends on the context).

‣ Dual moderator focus group: The focus group is guided by one moderator and the second moderator takes notes.

Materials

You can use different materials. You choose your material in context of your topic. For example, if you would like to collect ideas for a new product in form of a mind map than you can choose post-its and led the participants write down their ideas. The following list shows possible workshop materials:

‣ Workshop bag

‣ Post-Its

‣ Cardboard

‣ Flipchart Paper

‣ Markers

‣ Pizza boxes

‣ Scissors. Paper, Pencils

Preparation

To be well prepared, there are three different formats which should be used for having a good structure of the focus group.

Engagement Quesions (easy)	Exploration Questions (deeper)	Exit Questions (ready-to-go)
Introduce everyone	Questions about the topic	Guideline is finished
Make participants aware of the topic	Questions about feelings and opinions	Ask wether sth. was forgotten/hasn't been mentioned
Example: "Welcome everyone, why are You interested in this topic?"	Example: "Why do You think that?" "What might be a solution for this problem?"	Example: ""Is there any comment You want to share with us?"

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Choose topic of Focus Groups

2. Plan place and time

3. Search for potential participants

4. Find a moderator

5. Prepare a guideline

6. Recruit Participants

7. Perform Focus Group

8. Analyze the session

Remarks, Tips, Limitations

Choose a moderator who is used to perform interviews. A good moderator knows how to interact with the participants and help them to feel comfortable in an unfamiliar situation.

Strengths: Cheap method to gather results easy and quick. Moderation is also easy. The interviews technique is flexible.

Weaknesses: Participants are easy influenced. Group dynamics might screw the results, if someone speaks much more often than others. The results are not representative (not spreadable to the population).

References

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