

FOCUS GROUP CHECKLIST

Decide if you need to use a focus group:

- Your organization is planning a new program or service
- Your organization wants opinions, not just whether people agree or not
- You have questions that can't easily be asked or answered on a written survey
- You know, or can find, someone who is an experienced and skilled focus group facilitator
- You have the time, knowledge, and resources to recruit willing participants in your region

Before you begin:

- Recheck your goals for the focus group input
- Find a good facilitator
- Decide who should be invited
- Decide on meeting particulars (day, place, time, length of meeting, how many groups)
- Prepare your questions
- Recruit your participants

When the group meets:

- Thank people for coming
- Review the purpose of the group and goals of the meeting
- Explain how the meeting will proceed and how participants can contribute
- Set ground rules
- Encourage open participation
- Set the tone by asking an opening question and making sure all opinions are heard
- When all your questions have been asked, ask if anyone has any other comments to make
- Tell the group about any next steps that will occur and what they can expect to happen now
- Thank the group for coming!

After the meeting:

- Make a transcript or written summary of the meeting
- Examine the data for patterns, themes, new questions, and conclusions
- Share the results with the board and staff
- Use the results