**Build Your Own Interactive Focus Group Protocol**

**2021 LANLF Evaluation Institute**

**May 6, 2021**

**Steps:**

1. Articulate the **evaluation goals**​
2. Assign **activities** to each goal​
3. List **materials** needed to complete each activity​
4. Assign **timeframe** to each activity

**Step 1:** Articulate the evaluation (or focus group) goals – what is it that you hope to learn from the group of people you’ll convene?

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

**Step 2:** Assign activities to each goal – how do you plan to collect data related to each goal? Are there some questions you want to ask that might be better suited to individual answers (private/intimate)? What questions could benefit from a bit of brainstorming?

Here are some possible activities – feel free to create new ones!

* Gingerbread Person – individual or group  ​
	+ Expresses sentiments about something (feeling)​
* Speed Dating – pairs ​
	+ Short questions ​
	+ Answer with a partner (more private than large group discussion)​
* Group Lists – groups of no more than 5 (usually) ​
	+ Less private, but gives opportunity to brainstorm​
* Individual Answers – individual ​
	+ Entirely private​
	+ Opportunity to share freely​
	+ Can be drawn, listed, paragraph, bullets, etc. ​
* Plus and Delta – big group, individual, smaller groups​
	+ Gives participants a chance to voice thoughts about program in question

Use the space below to brainstorm what activities may help you answer your questions above.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Goal Number | Activity(ies) |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

Note: Some activities can hit on more than one evaluation goal. This is perfectly fine.

**Step 3:** List materials needed to complete each activity​ – will the group be held in person or virtually? Materials will differ greatly depending!

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **In-person Materials** | **Virtual Materials** |
| **Gingerbread Person** | either flipchart with gingerbread person drawn **or** printouts of gingerbread person, markers either way​ | Jamboard or equivalent |
| **Speed Answer Round** | flashcards, tape, markers, questions printed or written on the board​ | Jamboard or equivalent |
| **Individual Answers** | flashcards, questions printed or written on the board, pens | Jamboard or equivalent, survey through surveymonkey |
| **Group List** | flashcards, tape, markers, printed out “box” or a visual that shows the activity we’re doing​ | Jamboard or equivalent |
| **Plus and Delta** | flipchart, markers, also pens, paper for those who may not want to share out loud​ | Jamboard or equivalent |

\*As you add activities, make sure you brainstorm about what materials you’ll need!

Use the space below to brainstorm what participants may need to be able to complete each activity.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Goal Number | Activity(ies) | Materials Needed |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**Step 4:** Assign a timeframe to each activity – how long do you want to spend in/on each activity? Note: Virtual groups tend to take a little longer than in person based on having to explain/teach the technology. Make sure to account for that in the protocol.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal Number | Activity(ies) | Materials Needed | Time Allotted |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Total Time (should be about 15-20 minutes less than the total time you have for the focus group total) |  |

This is entirely subjective – you can ultimately decide however much time you’d like to give your participants in each activity. When trying to decide on this, think about how long it might take you to answer the question/do the activity and then multiply that by about 1.5 or 2 (for someone who’s never seen the question before, needs a little time to think, craft a response, and then complete the activity).

**Finalizing the protocol:** Congratulations! You’ve got all the ducks, now you just need to organize them in a row. In other words, all that’s left is to arrange the activities in a way that makes logical sense for the group. As a note, your evaluation goals do not need to be addressed in order. Remember to open with an introduction (why are you collecting this data, what do you hope to do with it), informed consent, and perhaps a small icebreaker and to close with a “thank you” and remind folks where they might find the results, if they are interested.

Note: It’s recommended to “sandwich” individual answer questions, which tend to be a bit more intimate, in the middle of the protocol. If asked too early in the group, folks may feel too shy to answer truthfully, while asking too late in the group could send participants off without closure.

Use the skeleton of a protocol below to create your final script.

**[Insert Title of Focus Group ex. Focus Group with Albuquerque Youth]**

Date: [Insert Date and Time of Focus Group]

Location: [Insert Location]

**Evaluation Goals:**

1.
2.
3.
4.

**Protocol:**

**[Start Time]** **Welcome** – Thank everyone for joining the session.

**[Start Time + 5 minutes] Activity 1** **– [Replace this text with your activity and how you want to describe it]**

[**Goal: Indicate which goal this activity pertains to**.]

[Materials: Replace this text with materials needed for your activity]

**[Activity 1 Time + 20 minutes] Activity 2 – [Replace this text with your activity and how you want to describe it]**

[**Goal:** **Indicate which goal this activity pertains to**.]

[Materials: Replace this text with materials needed for your activity]

**[Time] Activity 3 – [Replace this text with your activity and how you want to describe it]**

[**Goal: Indicate which goal this activity pertains to**.]

[Materials: Replace this text with materials needed for your activity]

**[Time] Activity 4 – [Replace this text with your activity and how you want to describe it]**

[**Goal:** **Indicate which goal this activity pertains to**.]

[Materials: Replace this text with materials needed for your]

**[End Time] Conclusion of focus group** – Thank participants for their time and let them know if they can expect to receive a copy of the results/findings/report.