

Handout 4. Focus Group Planning Tool

Research Question(s):

Related Dimensions:

1. **Introduction.** Write your introduction. Be sure to include a “thank you” statement, introduce the purpose of the focus group, lay out expectations and format, and include any information about confidentiality.

2. **Opening Questions.** Write opening questions for your focus group. Annotate which research questions or subquestions the opening questions align to. Remember to keep your opening questions broad. Respondents should be given the chance to think about an experience broadly first. Number your questions so you can link them to the probing questions below.

3. **Probing Questions.** Craft your probing questions, labelling them so they connect to your general questions above (#2). Probing questions should help respondents talk about the dimensions of the constructs in your research question. Be careful not to “lead” respondents in their answers. Probing questions should be open ended and guide respondents to think deeper about a specific subject.

4. **Participants.** Who are the key stakeholders that you will recruit? List any concerns you have about focus group member interaction. How are the focus group respondents homogenous or heterogeneous?

5. **Logistics.** How long will the focus groups take? Where will you hold them (consider respondent response and comfortability with the physical space)? Will you provide transportation, compensation, and so on? How many researchers will attend (at least two is recommended)? Will you record it? Who will do transcriptions and coding (1 hour of recording = 2 hours of transcription = 1.5 hours of analysis)?