Focus Groups

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What Are Focus Groups?

Question

Group

Moderator
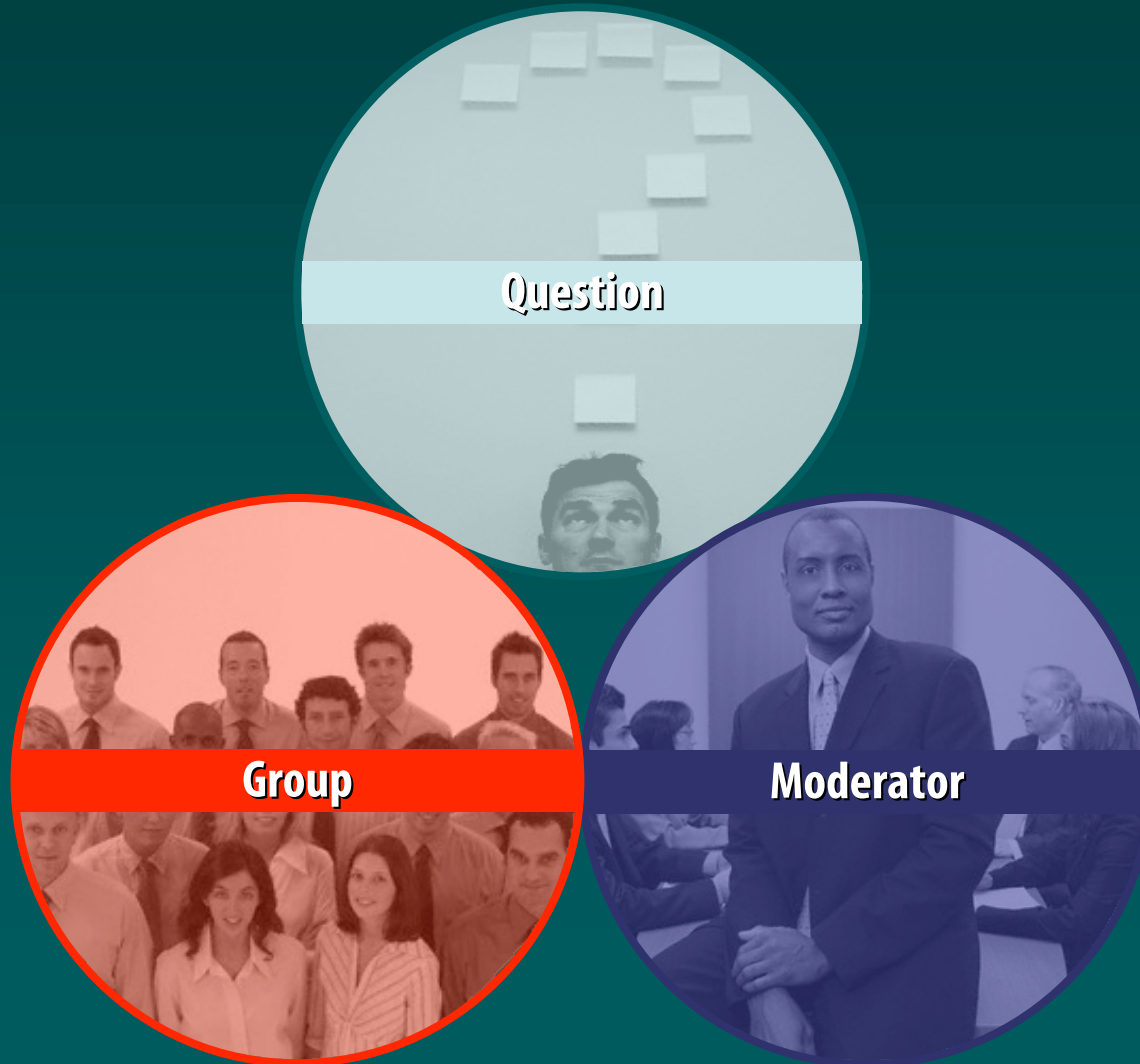
Doing a Focus Group

- Venue
- Before the Focus Group
  - Discussion Guide
  - Prescreen and Recruitment
- During the Focus Group
- After the Focus Group
  - Data Analysis

Prescreen and Recruitment

Prescreening Questionnaire

Keyboard Focus Group Screener

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

Address: _____

Hello, I'm from the University of Calgary. We're conducting a survey among people in the area about computer keyboards and I would like to ask you a few questions.

Q1. Have you ever used a computer?

      Yes – continue

      No – terminate and tally

Q2. Have you ever used a keyboard to work with a computer?

      Yes – continue

      No – terminate and tally

Q3. Approximately how many words do you type in a minute? (READ LIST)

      0-30 wpm – group 1 (4:00 pm)

      31-60 wpm – group 2 (6:00 pm)

      61+ wpm – group 3 (8:00 pm)

Q4. Sex (by observation)

      Male – check quotas

      Female – check quotas

We would like you to come by our facility at the University of Calgary for a group discussion regarding your experience with computer keyboards. This discussion will be held at the iLab meeting room on November 1, 2007 at 4:00/6:00/8:00 pm and will last approximately 2 hours. We are only interested in your opinions. For your participation, we will give you $40 in cash. Would you be willing to participate? (If yes, record information on first page of screen. If no, thank and terminate).

Rescreen and Demographic Survey
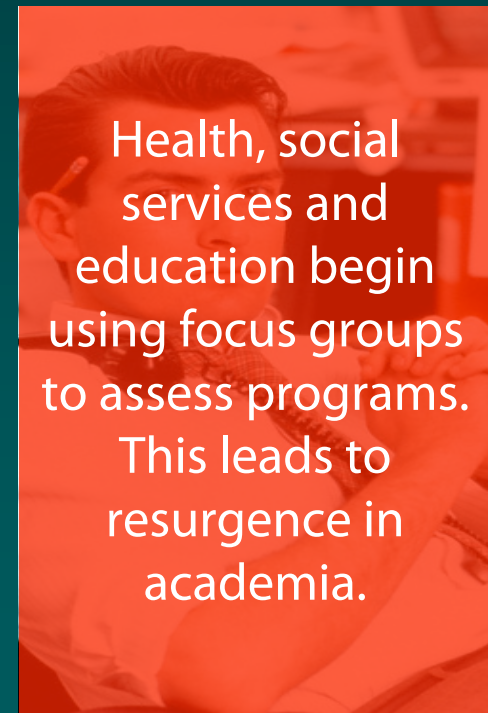
Focus Groups: A Brief History

1940's

Merton develops focus group interview technique during World War II to assess propaganda campaign

1960's

Industry picks up on focus groups to assess products and advertising

1980's

Health, social services and education begin using focus groups to assess programs. This leads to resurgence in academia.

Role of Focus Groups

Planning & Feasibility	Requirements	Design	Implementation	Test & Measure	Post Release
Getting started	User Surveys	Design guidelines	Style guides	Diagnostic evaluation	Post release testing
Stakeholder meeting	Interviews	Paper prototyping	Rapid prototyping	Performance testing	Subjective assessment
Analyse context	Contextual inquiry	Heuristic evaluation		Subjective evaluation	User surveys
ISO 13407	User Observation	Parallel design		Heuristic evaluation	Remote evaluation
Planning	Context	Storyboarding		Critical Incidence Technique	
Competitor Analysis	Focus Groups	Evaluate prototype		Pleasure	
	Brainstorming	Wizard of Oz			
	Evaluting existing systems	Interface design patterns			
	Card Sorting				
	Affinity diagramming				
	Scenarios of use				
	Task Anaysis				
	Requirements meeting				

UsabilityNet, 2006

Discussion Guide

Keyboard Focus Group – Discussion Guide

1. Introduction
1.1. Moderator
1.2. Purpose: To understand your experiences with current computer keyboards
1.3. Mikes
1.4. Confidentiality: Your participation in this focus group will only be shown to the researchers working directly with the project. A final report will be developed using aggregate descriptions and individual quotes will only be used in anonymous form.
1.5. Introductions: first name, kind of work done, experience with computer systems
2. Warm-up Discussion
2.1. What kinds of keyboards have they used?
2.1.1. In general use
2.1.2. Specifically with computers (if not identified in 2.1.1)

2.2. How good are they as typists?
2.2.1. How many years of experience
2.2.2. Frequency of usage
2.2.3. Have they taken typing courses?
3. Keyboard Discussion
3.1. What do they like about the current keyboard styles
3.1.1. Ergonomics
3.1.2. Functionality
3.2. What do they dislike about current keyboard styles
3.2.1. Ergonomics
3.2.2. Functionality
3.3. What would be the one change you'd like to make to a keyboard?
3.3.1. Probe specifically for:
3.3.1.1. Changes to the layout of the keys
3.3.1.2. The positioning of the keys
3.3.1.3. Improvements to the speed of typing
3.3.2. The likelihood of buying a new keyboard based on that improvement (and discarding the old keyboard)
4. Summation – advice to a keyboard maker

Research Question

For the research team

The goal of the focus group is to understand the dissatisfaction users may be experiencing with the current keyboards and how the development team could improve on the current keyboard layout.

For the focus group participant

We're investigating how to improve the current computer keyboard and we'd like you to help us by letting us know how you feel about the current computer keyboards, what things you're satisfied with and what things you're not satisfied with.

The Keyboard

Projective Technique: Personality Association

Debrief

Role of Focus Groups (II)

	Academic Research	Product Marketing	Evaluation Research	Quality Improvement
Problem Identification	Generating Research Questions	Generating New Product Ideas	Needs Assessment	Identifying Opportunities
Planning	Research Design	Developing New Products	Program Development	Planning Intervention
Implementation	Data Collection	Monitoring Consumer Response	Process Evaluation	Implementing Interventions
Assessment	Data Analysis	Refining Product or Marketing	Outcome Evaluation	Assessment Redesign

McDonagh-Philp and Bruseberg, 2000

Benefits of Focus Groups

- Ability to access group meanings, processes and norms

- More efficient than an individual interview

- Useful as a secondary research method

Disadvantages and Misuses

- Cannot access individual opinion

- Not effective for generalizing to larger population

- Not used for usability evaluation (although a case can be made for visualization evaluation)

Data Analysis

- Transcription
- Coding / Indexing
- Analysis