

Running a Focus Group

This is your chance to run a focus group. Listed below is a focus group discussion guide.

For this activity, you need to select one person to be the moderator to run the group. Ideally, they should be the only one to have the discussion guide open in front of them. Also select one person to record the key points of the focus group discussion (that is, to act as a 'scribe').

The purpose of a focus group is often to probe beyond “top-level” answers and to gather some real insights into the behavior of the target market. Therefore, don’t hesitate to go beyond the scope of the discussion guide for a short period if you are uncovering some interesting and relevant information.

Focus Group Discussion Guide

- Welcome – today we will be discussing various aspects of mobile and smart phones.
- Who here has a smart phone? How long have you had one?
- How often do you use your phone? For what purpose do you use your phone?
(Probe – other than for phone calls and text messages, what else is the phone used for?)
- How often do you get a new phone? When do you think you will be getting your next new phone?
- What makes you decide that it’s time to get a new phone?
- What are the 2-3 main features that you look for in a phone?
- Other than the phone’s features, do you consider what type of phones your friends have?
- Do you tend to be loyal to the same brand of phone?
- When shopping around for a new phone, what information do you gather and from where do you gather it (that is, ads, internet, talk to friends)?
- When shopping around for a new phone, how many stores would you visit?
- How influenced are you by in-store salespeople and special offers?
- Thank you for participating.

Student Discussion Questions

1. How smoothly did the focus group run? Were there any problems with running the group?
2. What were the key findings of the focus group?
3. How valuable would this information be for mobile and smart phone companies?
4. What do you see as the limitations of this style of qualitative market research?
5. What suggestions do you have for improving the above group discussion guide?