

Focus Groups

Focus Groups

- A group of participants have a discussion on a topic directed by a researcher.
- Pros
 - Get group opinion about issues
 - Efficient way to test early ideas/designs
 - Good way to identify issues or areas of conflict
 - Multi-constituent discussion
- Cons
 - Can be taken over by assertive individuals
 - Focus on people's opinions not actual behaviors
 - Limited sample size

When designing a focus group...

- Make sure to invite your target users
- Prepare a list of questions in advance, these questions should be designed to promote discussion
 - Similar to an interview, start with a few easy questions, then get to the harder ones, and finally wrap up with some easy questions
- Remember: You are there to mediate and learn from the participants, your opinions do not matter, listen to theirs



Focus Group uses

- Design requirements
 - Used to understand users current situation and needs
 - Useful to see multiple users discuss a situation
- Product idea testing
 - Test the concept for a product
 - Test reactions to a mock-up physical or digital
- Finished product opinion gathering
 - After a product is already out in the world
 - Determine how people feel about it or how they make use of it

The brief:

3DBI Project - as part of our research we had to design a new app for the iPad to support the development of appropriately-structured Social Stories™, and their effective delivery to the children.

Design requirements:

Main Aim: Get insight into the current practices in social stories and technologies they prefer

Research Question: *How do practitioners develop, present and assess social stories?*

Additional Aims:

- Inform participants about the PD sessions
- Establish relationships with the group members and motivate them to participate to the studies
- Prepare content for a social story based on a given scenario

Our plan

1. Explain what is going to happen to the participants → PowerPoint presentation
2. Ask the attendees to introduce themselves and share their last experience with social stories.
3. Question: “What do you like about Social Stories?”
4. Question: “What are the difficulties associated with Social Stories?”
5.
6. Thank the participants

Then after we have an app prototype we could use a Focus Group to evaluate it.

Evaluation:

Main Aim: to collect users' opinion about the usability of the app

Research Question: *Does the new technology enhance the practitioners' activity of developing, presenting and assessing social stories?*

Our plan

1. Explain what is going to happen to the participants
2. Ask the attendees to introduce themselves and share their last experience with social stories
3. Hand out paper copies of the interface and associated questions, similar to the survey questions
4. Ask participants to try and use the interface to answer the questions silently by themselves
5. Ask participants to discuss the answers one interface at a time
6. Finish with an easy question and thank the participants

Questions

Categories:

- Background
- Technical
- Graphical design
- Structure
- Navigation
- Suitability
- Best/worst characteristics