

NEW COMMUNITIES PROJECT

Preparing for group work

Prepare yourself

- Be prepared. It is important to be clear about the objective of the focus group and what you want from it
- Rehearse your script
- Make a 'pre-flight' checklist and use it!
- Know your questions and what you want to find out
- Calm down!

Prepare your participants

- Ensure your participants know what they're getting into, what their commitment will be and what will happen to the information they provide
- Recap briefly at the start of the focus group

Prepare your questions

- Questions in focus groups should be:
 - Open ended
 - Encourage reflection
 - Conversational
 - Clear
 - Topic relevant

Prepare your script 1

- An introduction to the theme to be discussed.
- Clear statement of aims and objectives, why the focus group is being held and what will happen to the information that is provided.
- Written report of the focus group will be provided to focus group members in case anyone wants to clarify any of the issues raised.

Prepare your script 2

- State clearly that everyone will be given the opportunity to speak and to be listened to.
- State 'ground rules' e.g.
 - Not a test
 - Not a debate
 - Not a grievance procedure

But....

- A focus group should not be too highly structured
- The objective is to promote discussion and feedback and obtain high levels of involvement and contributions from *all* participants