

Conducting a Successful Employee Focus Group

Formula for Success

Tools and supplies: flip chart and stand, markers, stacks of Post-it notes (one stack per participant), sticker sheets (six stickers per participant), and writing utensils for participants

Required time: 90 minutes

Focus Group Plan

1. Thank participants for attending and remind everyone that their participation is completely voluntary.
2. Explain background and reason for your organization's interest in participants' candid feedback (e.g. Improve employee satisfaction for specific groups, ensure employees have the tools needed to provide great patient care, need to better understand employee engagement survey results, etc.)
3. Explain to participants that you are interested in better understanding any issues that may impact their job satisfaction. Remind them that they will have an opportunity later in the session to share solutions to some of their greatest concerns. [Share any additional information necessary to create safety for candid feedback.]
4. Invite participants to share any issues or areas of concerns related to their work experiences and remind them that you are interested in hearing about items of a global nature rather than concerns of a highly individualized nature.
5. Chart responses on flipchart paper until all issues or areas of concern have been identified or one hour has elapsed, whichever comes first. Several flipchart pages should be posted around the room in view of participants when this activity is complete. [Tip: When charting concerns, switching between two colors of markers for each item will help participants distinguish between items.]
6. Review responses with participants to ensure you understand each item. Eliminate or consolidate redundant items where possible.
7. Invite participants to "vote" on their top six issues or areas of concern by placing each sticker of their six stickers next to a *different* concern (as opposed to placing all of their stickers next to their greater concern).
8. Circle the six items with the most votes.
9. Chart each of the top six concerns on separate sheets of blank flipchart paper.
10. Using post-it notes, ask participants to write one solution per post-it note for each of the top six concerns. Remind participants to be creative yet realistic when deriving solutions.
11. Once participants have completed their solution brainstorming, ask them to stick each of their solutions on the flip chart paper with the correlating concern.
12. Thank participants for their time and candor and explain next steps in terms of how the organization will respond to concerns surfaced in the focus group.