

# WEEKS 7 & 8

## Focus Group

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# Definition

1. A **focus group** is a form of qualitative research in which a group of people are asked about their attitude towards a product, service, concept, advertisement, idea, or packaging. Questions are asked in an interactive group setting where participants are free to talk with other group members.
2. Ernest Dichter originated the idea of having a "group therapy" for products and this process is what became known as a focus group.

# Types of Focus Group

1. **Two-way focus group** - one focus group watches another focus group and discusses the observed interactions and conclusions
2. **Dual moderator focus group** - one moderator ensures the session progresses smoothly, while another ensures that all the topics are covered
3. **Duelling moderator focus group** - two moderators deliberately take opposite sides on the issue under discussion
4. **Respondent moderator focus group** - one or more of the respondents are asked to act as the moderator temporarily

1. **Client participant focus groups** - one or more client representatives participate in the discussion, either covertly or overtly
2. **Mini focus groups** - groups are comprised of 4 or 5 members rather than 8 to 12
3. **Teleconference focus groups** - telephone network is used
4. **Online focus groups** - computers connected via the internet are used

# Traditional focus Group

1. In **traditional focus groups**, a screened (qualified) group of respondents gather in the same room. They are screened to ensure that they are part of the relevant target market and that the group is a representative subgroup of this market segment. There are usually 6 to 10 members in the group, and the session usually lasts for 1 to 2 hours.
2. A moderator guides the group through a discussion that probes attitudes about a client's proposed products or services. The discussion is loosely structured, and the moderator encourages the free flow of ideas. The moderator is typically given a list of objectives or an anticipated outline. He/she will generally have only a few specific questions prepared prior to the focus group. These questions will serve to initiate open-ended discussions.

3. Client representatives observe the discussion from behind a one-way mirror. Participants cannot see out, but the researchers and their clients can see in. Usually, a video camera records the meeting so that it can be seen by others who were not able to travel to the site. Transcripts can be created from the video tape. If the participants speak a different language than the clients, a simultaneous interpreter may be used.