

# Evaluation Method: Focus Group

## Overview

Facilitated discussion to investigate people's perceptions, opinions, beliefs, and attitudes.

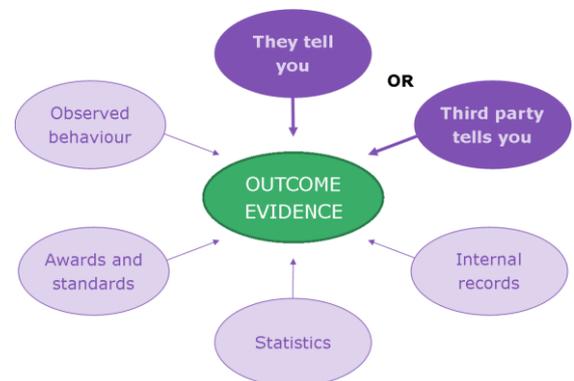
## What's required

Comfortable room with refreshments available. An experienced facilitator who understands the personal/project outcomes being discussed. Can take anything up to 2 hours.



## Process

- Decide the venue, date and time and if you are offering expenses.
- Send out invitations to the cross section you want to interview.
- Have a clear structure and explain the process in the invitation and at the start of the discussion.
- Consider if any activities, games or input may be necessary to facilitate discussion (extra materials needed).



## Capturing evidence

You can record (video or sound) the focus group with members' consent or have someone taking notes throughout the discussion.

## Useful for

- Collecting in-depth qualitative information.
- Linking activity with evaluation if you are doing group work anyway.
- In-depth and interactive discussion with immediate results.
- Fewer resources than 1-2-1 work.
- Allowing everyone to have an input.





## Oban Youth Cafe Focus group Plan – Soup groups 2007-2011

### Example

Preparation: Our Story	What we think happened. Establish our thoughts on their journey (memory and records). Use it to introduce the session and also to construct the time line, you might have a more detailed one and a simpler one to present to the group. Look at own records and use memory to think about the behaviour that was being displayed, attendance, activities learning and observations from archives.
Introduction: 5m	Purpose of the session.
Where were you then: soup group exercise: 15 m	Use soup exercise to help them reflect on what life was like for them at the point they first got involved in the soup group. Two aspects, the ingredients (which can represent protective factors (school, family, friends, OYC, clubs or activities involved in) and the stock/seasoning which represents them, their attitude and aspirations.
Discussion: Their Story: 20m	Feedback on exercise, where were they then, (Reflecting on Mull trip). What they think happened.
Timeline. Charting journey with OYC: 40m	Start, middle and end (what they were thinking at the time) Show them the simple timeline; ask them to put on key events or things that happened for them? Have general discussion about what worked and didn't, ask questions about if age, fact it was compulsory was important. Other queries?
Where are you now? New soup exercise: 15m	Go back to soup exercise: new exercise sheet: Jobs, relationships etc... what's changed?
Where might you have been? Reflect and discuss 15m	Looking back can you speculate what may have been outcome without youth cafe both soup group experience and involvement with oyc on the whole? Thinking of issues such as alcohol, involvement with police, school experience, family life, personal confidence and self-esteem, mental health and attitude to life in general.
Looking forward: 10m	Where next? Aspirations (compare) What now?
Feedback on the process of this exercise: 10m	Has this been useful? Have you learnt anything new? Would you do it again in future? What would you change?

### Scale

Using 1-5 scale for questions before, during and after (rating importance).

### Survey Monkey

We could use this method for individual feedback which would be confidential and anonymous. When collating the findings we should be linking to outcomes and indicators and identify any common themes.