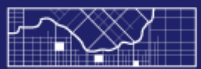


Using Surveys and Focus Groups to Understand Workforce Housing Needs

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Agenda

- Quick question for the group (aka ice breaker)
- Needs Assessment basics
- Survey Questions
- Focus Groups
- Q&A

Training Objectives

- # 1. Share basic concepts about using surveys and focus groups to assess needs



Icebreaker: (2 minutes)

What do you want to know about housing needs that school district employees have?



BASIC CONCEPTS OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT



What is a needs assessment?

A systematic process to determine **needs** and **gaps** between **current** conditions and **desired** conditions. Often part of a planning process, used for **improvement** efforts.



Underlying Values

Research related to needs assessments should be:

- Inclusive
- Accessible
- Action oriented

Developing Assessment Questions

Prioritize what information (answers, insights, perspectives) is most important

1. What are the range of housing needs?
2. What do employees think about particular housing options?
3. What information is reasonable to get within needs assessment timeframe?

How do we decide which methods to use?

- The assessment questions
- Budget
- Timeframe
- Internal capacity and knowledge
- External evaluation support

Typical Needs Assessment Methods

- Mixed methods
- Review secondary data
- Collect primary data
 - Survey
 - Focus groups
 - Key leader interviews
 - Participatory video or PhotoVoice project

Quick Comparison

QUANTITATIVE

- Based on numbers
- Breadth - reaches many people
- Instrument creation is time intensive but analysis takes less time

QUALITATIVE

- Based on words and observations
- Depth - motivations, context, and the “why”
- Time intensive data collection and analysis

Mixed Methods = BOTH

Quantitative

How?

- Closed-ended questions (select one or all that apply)

What can you learn?

- General understanding about what is happening, trends
- Who is interested in the program/initiative
- How many people have the same needs

Qualitative

How?

- Open-ended questions (what, how, why)

What can you learn?

- In-depth responses about people's experiences, perceptions, feelings, and knowledge
- Examples of the responses/needs



SURVEY DESIGN



Types of Data

Quantitative

- Numbers.
- Counts, measures, calculates, estimates.

Qualitative

- Words, images, sensory.
- Describes, imagines, feels.

Types of Questions

- **Closed-ended (check boxes)**

- Check one
- Check all that apply

- **Scales**

- Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Unsatisfied, Very Unsatisfied
- 1 - 5 (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree)

- **Open-ended**

- Written Responses
- Fill in the Blank

Quantitative Data Have Pros + Cons



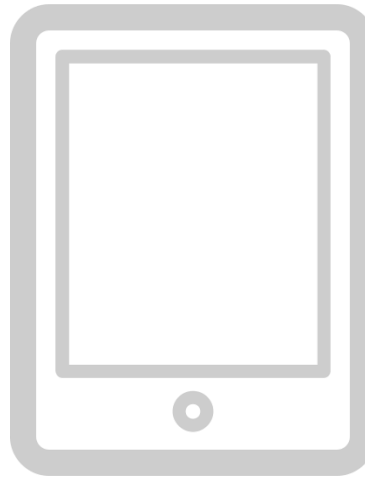
Ways to Conduct Surveys



Paper



Online



Tablet



Phone

Survey Design Considerations

- Survey questions should consider the assessment questions
- Who will participate (sample)
- Double barreled questions
- Length of survey
- Standardized survey questions
- Demographic categories

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QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION: FOCUS GROUPS

Strategies for Conducting Effective Focus Groups

What is a focus group?

- A **guided discussion**
- Usually between **8-12 individuals**
- Participants are considered **experts** because of their training, life experiences, etc.
- Participants are brought together to **tell their story** in their own words
- Facilitated by a **skilled moderator**
- Important to keep **careful and systematic notes**
- Important to **analyze the information in a systematic way** to identify themes about the topic of interest

Why conduct a focus group?

1. To inform survey design

- Identify relevant issues or response categories)

2. To complement quantitative data collection

3. To get feedback about or generate information about:

- Program, strategy, or policy development
- Which strategies work best
- Strengths, challenges, and how to overcome barriers in program, strategy or policy

Pros of Focus Groups

- Group process – **interactive**
- Opportunity to probe and get **in-depth** information unavailable in survey data collection
- Fosters **discussion** which can generate new ideas
- Some people are **more comfortable** in a group setting than 1:1 interview (less pressure)
- Relatively **quick results**

Cons of Focus Groups

- Data **not generalizable** or statistically significant
- **Less control** over discussion than in an individual interview
- Groups can **vary** considerably
- Difficult to control the **number of participants**
- Can be difficult to **convene**
- **Time consuming** to analyze data

What is the ideal focus group?

- Group size **8-12** people
- **Ideally** participants are **selected randomly** from list of program clients (homogeneous group, relatively unfamiliar with one another, “experts” and “talkers”)
- Generally lasts **1 to 1.5 hours**
- Typically **snacks and incentives** are offered



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STAY IN TOUCH!

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