



## GUIDELINES FOR FOCUS GROUP



WP related to the Deliverable:	WP4
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A focus group is a tool used to gather information. Its main characteristic is that it provides data for analysis but data that is gathered in an informal format, therefore a focus group can be like a good conversation. The format of the focus group provides an opportunity for participants and the facilitator to exchange information related to the topic or group of topics for which the data are being collected. A focus group conversation is private and confidential and participants and their ideas are treated with respect and integrity. Focus groups can be powerful tools for planning and decision making. The insights and data produced by the interaction of participants in focus groups can provide feedback to initiate change, confirm satisfaction with services or help generate new hypotheses. Focus groups can be used to assess community needs before planning new offerings, provide inputs on what customers see as 'ideal' or gather feedback on how to improve services. In situations where the questions to be asked are predominantly open-ended, such as 'tell me how this service can be improved' the facilitator of a focus group can elicit a participant's response and encourage other participants to build on them so providing more information from several points of view.

### **Conduct the focus group:**

Attention to the following items will help ensure success:

- i. Set the tone; participants should have fun and feel good about the session
  - ii. Make sure that every participant is heard.
  - iii. Get full answers.
  - iv. Monitor time closely.
  - v. Keep the discussion on track.
  - vi. Head off exchanges of opinion about individual items.
  - vii. Please do a lot of listening - attendees want to give their input.
- It is critical that all members participate as much as possible, yet the session should move along while generating useful information
  - Ensure even participation. If one or two people are dominating the meeting, then call on the others
  - Consider using a round-table approach, including going in one direction around the table, giving each person a minute to answer the question. If the domination persists, note it to the group and ask for ideas about how participation can be increased

### **The session:**

If taping the sessions, attendees must be told ahead of time that the session is being taped. They have the right to object to the session being taped. If it is only for internal use, members most likely will not object.

An ideal size for a focus group is between six and twelve participants. It is important to have a sufficient number of people to generate ideas and create discussions. It is equally important not to have too large a group. This can preclude participants from being involved in discussions and create frustration. It is important to identify a target group that can provide the most useful data (the target of the project)

Each partner should keep photos and participant list from the focus group.

The final task of conducting a focus group is to communicate the findings clearly and accurately so that they can be used for making decisions. The entire discussion will be transcripts used for further analysis. Each partner's country will compile and analyse the comments to determine trends and single comments. Conclusions and recommendations will be based on this analysis. Findings with a summary of the focus group process can be prepared in a report or presentation.

**Time framework:**

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Time</i>
* Presentation of the project	15'
* Turn of presentation of the participants	10'
* Question	35'
* Conclusion	25'
Total	<b>90'</b>

**Proposed questions for focus group**

1. What are the strong points in the electrical engineer's education?
2. What are the weak points in the electrical engineer's education?
3. What kind of Soft skills do you think an electrical engineer needs?
4. What kind of Business skills do you think an electrical engineer needs?
5. Any other skill to consider in the electrical engineer education?
6. Conclusions



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