

Interviews and Focus Groups

“Cheat Sheet”

Take a look at the table below for insight on the differences between interviews and focus groups:

	Interview	Focus Group
Use	Personal experiences Sensitive topics Honest feedback	Group norms Rich thinking
Length	45-60 minutes	45-90 minutes
Mode	In person, telephone, video	In person
Questions	8-12 plus probes	8-10 plus probes
Phrasing	Open-ended (to what extent, please describe, how)	
Sequence	Facts, observations/opinions, reflection, anything else	

Collection Checklist:

- Decide on note-taking expectations
- Review/practice protocol
- Arrive/call on time
- Establish rapport (informal relationship)
- Explain purpose, who you are, confidentiality
- Review ground rules (focus group)
- Take notes or record audio
- Ask questions without leading or responding
- Prompt for clarifications, spelling, etc.
- Thank participants
- Share next steps
- Debrief immediately with key thoughts
- Write up expanded notes within 24 hours (if not recorded)