

Contents

Preface to the First Edition	xi
Preface to the Second Edition	xiii
Preface to the Third Edition	xv
About the Authors	xvii
1. Introduction: Focus Group History, Theory, and Practice	1
Border Crossings: The Behavioral Science Origins of Focus Groups	2
Contributions From Sociology and Social Psychology	5
Contributions From Clinical Psychology	6
Contributions From Marketing Research	7
<i>Separation of Practice From Theory</i>	8
Focus Group Theory	9
<i>Focused Research</i>	9
<i>Group Interactions</i>	10
<i>In-Depth Data</i>	12
<i>Humanistic Interview</i>	13
Purpose of the Book	14
Plan for the Book	14
Conclusion	15
Review Questions	16
2. Group Dynamics and Focus Group Research	17
Influences of Intrapersonal Factors and Individual Differences	18
<i>Demographic Factors</i>	19
<i>Physical Characteristics</i>	21
<i>Personality</i>	21
Interpersonal Influences	23
<i>Group Cohesiveness</i>	24
<i>Group Compatibility, Homogeneity/Heterogeneity</i>	26

<i>Social Power</i>	27
<i>Group Participation and Nonverbal Communication</i>	29
Environmental Influences	30
<i>The Material Environment</i>	30
<i>Territoriality</i>	31
<i>Spatial Arrangements</i>	31
<i>Interpersonal Distance</i>	32
<i>Moderated Groupings of Strangers</i>	32
Group Dynamics in Cross-Cultural Focus Groups	34
<i>Interpersonal Style and Communication Pattern</i>	35
<i>Nonverbal Communication</i>	36
<i>Social Power</i>	36
<i>Group Compatibility, Homogeneity, and Heterogeneity</i>	36
<i>Environmental Influences</i>	37
Conclusion	37
Review Questions	38
3. Focus Groups and the Research Toolbox	39
Focus Group Basics: Structure, Process, and Data	39
<i>Place</i>	40
<i>The Moderator</i>	40
<i>Topics</i>	41
<i>Analysis</i>	42
<i>The Role of Focus Groups Among Research Tools</i>	43
Applications, Advantages, and Limitations	44
<i>Applications of Focus Groups</i>	44
<i>Advantages of Focus Groups</i>	45
<i>Limitations of Focus Groups</i>	47
Steps in the Design and Use of Focus Groups	49
<i>Problem Definition</i>	49
<i>Identifying the Participants</i>	51
<i>The Moderator and Interview Guide</i>	51
<i>The Interview</i>	52
<i>Analysis and Interpretation</i>	52
<i>Some Practical Considerations</i>	52
The Logistics of Focus Groups	52
<i>Institutional Review Boards</i>	53
Conclusion	54
Review Questions	54
4. Recruiting Focus Group Participants and Designing the Interview Guide	57
Establishing the Research Agenda	58
Recruiting Participants	60

<i>Making Contact</i>	61
<i>Incentives</i>	62
<i>Location</i>	63
<i>How Many Participants?</i>	64
<i>Recruiting Hard-to-Reach Individuals</i>	65
<i>The Language of the Group</i>	66
Recruiting Participants Across Cultures	67
Developing the Interview Guide	68
<i>Formulating Questions</i>	69
<i>How Many Questions?</i>	70
<i>How Much Structure?</i>	71
<i>Wording of Questions</i>	73
<i>Pretesting</i>	74
Issues and Trends for the Future	74
Conclusion	75
Review Questions	76
5. The Focus Group Moderator	77
Leadership and Group Dynamics	78
Interviewing Styles and Tactics	81
Moderator Selection	86
Moderator Preparation	88
Cultural Dimensions of Focus Group Moderation	92
<i>Moderator Selection in Cross-Cultural Research</i>	92
<i>Moderator Preparation in Cross-Cultural Research</i>	93
Moderator Bias in Focus Group Interviews	94
Conclusion	95
Review Questions	96
6. Conducting the Focus Group	97
The Physical Arrangement of the Group	98
Interviewing Style	99
Discussion Aids	100
Intimacy	101
Observers and Recordings	101
Beginning the Interview	102
Ensuring Participation	104
Time Management	104
Probing	105
Dealing With Problems	106
<i>Experts</i>	107
<i>Friends</i>	107
<i>Hostile Group Members</i>	108
Special Issues	108

<i>Children as Focus Group Participants</i>	108
<i>Focus Groups With Participants With Special Needs</i>	109
<i>Observational Techniques</i>	110
<i>Dealing With Sensitive and Embarrassing Topics</i>	110
<i>Focus Groups in International Settings</i>	111
Conclusion	112
Review Questions	113
7. Analyzing Focus Group Data	115
How Much Analysis?	116
Transcribing the Interview	117
Qualitative Analytic Approaches	118
<i>Epistemological Orientation</i>	118
<i>Disciplinary Focus</i>	119
<i>Workbench Issues</i>	120
<i>The Order of Topics in a Group Discussion</i>	120
<i>What Is Discussed and What Is Not?</i>	120
<i>Time Spent on an Issue</i>	121
<i>Intensity and Emotional Content of the Discussion Expression</i>	122
<i>Reasons Versus Responses</i>	122
<i>What Is Believable?</i>	122
<i>Individuals Versus the Group</i>	123
Methods of Analysis	123
<i>The Scissor-and-Sort Technique</i>	123
<i>Content Analysis</i>	124
Quantitative Analysis	132
Computer-Assisted Content Analysis	133
Conclusion	139
Review Questions	139
8. Focus Groups in Practice	141
Political Campaigns and Focus Groups	143
Television Ads the Public Will Never See	144
Impulsive Consumers, Shoplifters, and Focus Groups	145
A Representative Focus Group Report: Buying a New Car	146
New Car Purchasing Experiences: A Sample Report	146
<i>Purpose</i>	146
<i>Composition of the Groups</i>	148
<i>Major Factors Influencing Vehicle Purchase</i>	148
<i>Summary</i>	154
Conclusion	155
Review Questions	155
9. Virtual Focus Groups and Other Group Research Methods	157
Virtual Focus Groups	158

<i>Types of Virtual Focus Groups</i>	160
<i>Platforms Available for Conducting Virtual Focus Groups</i>	163
<i>Recruiting for Virtual Focus Groups</i>	165
<i>Benefits of Virtual Focus Group Recruitment</i>	165
<i>Challenges of Virtual Focus Group Recruitment</i>	165
<i>Moderating Virtual Focus Groups</i>	166
<i>The Next Phase of Virtual Focus Groups</i>	168
<i>Other Group Techniques</i>	168
The Nominal Group Technique	168
The Delphi Technique	169
Brainstorming and Synectics	172
Leaderless Discussion Groups	174
Conclusion	175
Review Questions	175
10. Conclusion	177
References	181
Index	193