

Step 5

Focus Group Note Taking Guide

This is a guide a *TfC* team developed for taking notes during a focus group discussion. Once again, your students could use this as a start and discuss, add, revise, and/or subtract as needed.

More on shorthand and abbreviations:

1. Use only a first letter to denote a participant.

Example: Mark Smith is M or MS

2. Eliminate almost all vowels and use the fewest consonants possible to understand a word or phrase.

Example: *I value this opportunity* becomes, I vlu ths oppty.

3. Use a hyphen for “and” and “the” – if “the” is important use “th”
4. Number the questions on the interview prompt sheet and use those numbers to create an interview outline that correlates with the interview prompts.
5. Additional impromptu questions can be added as *a. b. c.* and so on
6. Designate the questioner as “Q”. Example:
 - Q: Hw do yu feel abt ths oppty?
 - M: I vlu ths oppty – dn’t knw hw thnk yu.
 - Q: Wht knds of food do yu srve at thse evnts?
 - M: We dn’t gnrllly fd pple who cme to – wndw. Prefr th door.
 - MS: Bgls – crm chse
 - Q: Tht snds delicus

7. Immediately after the focus group while your memories are fresh – type out the entire transcript in full.
8. It is okay to skip some words to get a phrase down fast.
9. If you need to have participants slow down – simply interrupt and say that you are taking notes and could he/she go slower.