

Group Discussion Frameworks

What A range of frameworks for designing a question plan to support an open discussion around a topic.

When This is a framework for use when a group needs to develop a topic to generate understanding, develop a common knowledge-base, or to prepare a group to make a decision.

How 1. **Invite the right people:** This method assumes that the people that show up are the right people to provide input and make the decision. Therefore people that are invited are very important to the success of the results.

2. **Identify the desired outcomes:** Determine and agree on the purpose for bringing together the group. Explore a subject, solve a problem, or decide on an action or goal. Identify the outcomes are expected by the group. What do you want to see occur as a result of this discussion?

3. **Select the discussion framework:** The discussion framework is the overall method or flow required to achieve the desired outcome. Examples:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Exploratory Framework | ORID - Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, and Decisional |
| Action Oriented Framework | What?, So What?, Now What?" |
| Critical Thinking Framework | What do we know, How do we know that, and What have we learned?" |

4. **Develop 3 to 5 general open-ended questions.** Based on the purpose and outcomes generate a list of 3 to 5 general open-ended questions to cover all the segments of the framework. Some segments may have one to three general questions. In the initial segments add questions that allow the group to generate ideas (divergence). Ensure that there are questions that deal with how participants feel about what they are processing. Then add questions that help narrow (convergence) toward agreement on understanding, a decision, or an action.

5. **Develop amplifying questions for each:** For each question draft one to two additional amplifying questions you might use to delve deeper into the discussion, draws out more information, and or explains a comment. Phrase the questions in different ways like directed, indirect, and stem to offer a variety of stimulating questions.

6. **Identify how the results will be captured:** Determine the method that will be used to capture the results through each phase of the discussion. (ex. Posting on Sticky Wall, Flip charts, computer & projector)

7. **Get agreement on the results:** Identify how the results will be reviewed and agreed to by the group and how the results will be used.