**The Focused Focus Group**

***QUESTION GENERATOR***

***By Melinda Grismer, Purdue Center for Regional Development (mgrismer@purdue.edu)***

***COMMUNITY NEED: To discover which “quality of place” features are most valued by the residents of Dubois County, Ind., for a workforce recruitment campaign***

**OPENING: ROUND ROBIN QUESTIONS**

**DESIGNED TO BE ANSWERED QUICKLY**

**USED TO IDENTIFY CHARACTERISTICS PARTICIPANTS HAVE IN COMMON**

**FACTUAL QUESTIONS (as opposed to attitude or opinion-based questions)**

Example: Each focus group participant has 30 seconds to introduce himself/herself answering these questions:

1. # of years living/working in Dubois County
2. Where in the county he/she lives/works
3. Specific occupation/job title

**INTRODUCTORY: POPCORN QUESTIONS**

**DESIGNED TO INTRODUCE THE GENERAL TOPIC OF DISCUSSION**

**PARTICIPANTS REFLECT ON PAST EXPERIENCES**

**PARTICIPANTS CONNECT WITH THE OVERALL TOPIC**

**QUESTIONS NOT CRITICAL TO ANALYSIS, BUT TO FOSTERING CONVERSATION**

Example:

1. Briefly share your thoughts about your county. First of all, what would you say are the ONE to TWO things you like most about your county?
2. What ONE to TWO things concern you most about your county?

**TRANSITION: RESPONSE-SPURRING QUESTIONS/COULD EMBED SHORT SURVEY HERE**

**DESIGNED MOVE CONVERSATION INTO THE KEY, STUDY-DRIVING QUESTIONS**

**SERVE AS THE LOGICAL LINK BETWEEN INTRODUCTORY & KEY QUESTIONS**

**PARTICIPANTS BECOMING AWARE OF HOW OTHERS VIEW THE TOPIC**

Example:

1. Do residents of your county regularly use its parks, trails, and public spaces?
2. Are your downtown areas thriving?
3. Does your county celebrate and promote its culture and heritage (arts, music, local foods, festivals, etc.)
4. In your county, do residents have access to fresh, locally sourced foods?
5. Are there activities available for children, teens, and families to do?
6. Does your county have places where people can gather to socialize or conduct business (such as coffee shops, parks, public library)?
7. Is it easy to find information about activities and events that are occurring?
8. Is there a variety of local restaurants and dining experiences to enjoy?
9. Do out-of-town visitors enjoy coming to your county?
10. Are people in your community open-minded and welcoming to people o many races, religions, sexual orientations, etc.?
11. Are there a number of activities for young adults (21-35 years of age)?

**KEY: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS**

**DESIGNED TO DRIVE THE STUDY**

**NO MORE THAN 2-6 QUESTIONS IN THIS CATEGORY**

**USUALLY THE FIRST QUESTIONS DEVELOPED (with the end result in mind)**

**QUESTIONS NOT CRITICAL TO ANALYSIS, BUT TO FOSTERING CONVERSATION**

Example: Which of these “quality of place” features do you find the most attractive—and why? *(Have participants brainstorm out loud. Write down answers on flip chart paper and categorize.)*

1. Friendliness of the community, its people, feeling of being “at home”
2. Safety, lack of traffic and congestion
3. Rural surroundings, small town feel
4. Educational opportunities for youth and adults
5. Housing options in the quality and price range desired
6. Digital connectivity via broadband/wireless to your home/office

**ENDING: SUMMARY QUESTIONS**

**DESIGNED TO BRING CLOSURE TO THE DISCUSSION**

**ENABLES PARTICIPANTS TO PRIORITIZE PREVIOUS COMMENTS**

**ENABLES PARTICIPANTS TO REFLECT BACK ON PREVIOUS COMMENTS**

**QUESTIONS CRITICAL TO ANALYSIS, PARTICULARLY IF STRATEGIES WERE SUGGESTED**

Example:Based on your previous comments, what is the MOST IMPORTANT thing that you believe the county should do to provide quality of place to current and future residents of Dubois County?

**CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP COMMENTS**

1. We’ll email synthesized notes to the whole group
2. We’ll let you know the results of the overall campaign (as it rolls out)
3. Thank you for your time and for your thoughtful contributions to this exercise! Your feedback was much appreciated!