Exploratory and Qualitative Research Methods: Part I
Exploratory Research

• Initial research conducted to clarify and define the nature of a problem
• Does not provide conclusive evidence
• Subsequent research expected
Defining Problem Results in Clear Cut Research Objectives

- Symptom Detection
- Analysis of the Situation
- Problem Definition
- Exploratory Research (Optional)
- Statement of Research Objectives
Why Conduct Exploratory Research?

Diagnose a situation
Screening of alternatives
Discover new ideas
Categories of Exploratory Research

- Experience surveys
- Secondary data analysis
- Case studies
- Pilot studies
Experience Surveys

Ask knowledgeable people about a particular research problem
- Most are quite willing to talk
Secondary Data Analysis

• Data collected for purpose other than the project at hand
• Economical
• Quick source for background information
Case Studies

• Intensely investigate one or a few situations similar to the problem
• Careful study
• May require cooperation
Pilot Studies

Any small scale exploratory study that uses sampling but does not apply rigorous standards
Qualitative Methods

• Less structured
• More intensive
• Smaller number of respondents, so non-probability sample
Qualitative versus Quantitative Research

• Purpose
  – Exploratory (initial understanding) vs. descriptive and conclusive (recommend course of action)
• Small (non-representative) versus large (representative) samples
• Broad range of flexible questioning versus structured questions
• Subjective interpretation versus statistical analysis
“The research department says things look bad quantitatively, but qualitatively we’re in good shape.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Measurement</th>
<th>Quantitative Measurement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questions are fast to assemble</td>
<td>Questions are slow to assemble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses are slowly made</td>
<td>Responses are quickly made</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are made in respondents' own words</td>
<td>force respondents to categorize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contain much variety</td>
<td>contain less variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>require more effort to make</td>
<td>require less effort to make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contain less social desirability</td>
<td>contain more social desirability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have more memory problems</td>
<td>have fewer memory problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis is slow</td>
<td>Analysis is fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capable of subjective interpretation</td>
<td>capable of objective interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>largely incapable of statistical analysis</td>
<td>quite capable of statistical analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application is characterized by flexible procedure</td>
<td>Application is characterized by rigid procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>small samples</td>
<td>large samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>usually preceding any quantitative techniques</td>
<td>usually following qualitative techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exploratory research focus</td>
<td>descriptive, causal research focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some Appropriate Uses for Qualitative Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing Arena</th>
<th>Question to be answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market Segmentation</td>
<td>• Why does one demographic or lifestyle group use our product more than another?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who are our customers and how do they use our product to support their lifestyle?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is the influence of culture on product choice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Concept</td>
<td>• What images should we use to connect with our target customer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Product Development</td>
<td>• What would our current market think of a proposed product idea?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• We need new products, but what should they be to take advantage of our existing customer-perceived strengths?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How will consumers embrace a new technology within their home? What are their future intentions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Analysis</td>
<td>• Why have once loyal customers stopped buying?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Development</td>
<td>• What actions could we take to boost industry sales?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package Design</td>
<td>• How do customers use our package? How will considered modifications influence their perception of our product? How will considered modifications influence their use of our product?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Image</td>
<td>• How does our brand image compare to our competitors’ images? What could we do to make our product more distinctive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What adds value to our brand?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positioning</td>
<td>• Should we project our new car as a power symbol or an aid for sexual attraction and social acceptance? How should we talk about our product to distinguish it from competitors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Design</td>
<td>• How do consumers prefer to shop in our store? Do they shop with a defined purpose or are they motivated by other motives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Understanding</td>
<td>• What steps are involved in cleaning a wood floor? How is our product perceived or involved in this process?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Research</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Quantitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding and interpretation</td>
<td>Description and explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher Involvement</td>
<td>High—researcher is participant or catalyst</td>
<td>Limited; controlled to prevent bias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Purpose</td>
<td>In-depth understanding; theory building</td>
<td>Description; theory testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Design</td>
<td>Non-Probability: purposive</td>
<td>Probability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>May evolve or adjust during the course of the project; Often uses multiple methodologies simultaneously or sequentially; Consistency is not expected; Involves longitudinal approach</td>
<td>Determined before commencing the project; Uses single methodology; Consistency is critical; Involves either a cross-sectional or longitudinal approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant Preparation</td>
<td>Pre-tasking is common.</td>
<td>No preparation desired to avoid biasing the participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Type and Preparation</td>
<td>Verbal or pictorial descriptions; Reduced to verbal codes (sometimes with computer assistance)</td>
<td>Verbal descriptions; Reduced to numerical codes for computerized analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>Human analysis following computer or human coding; primarily non-quantitative; Forces researcher to see the contextual framework of the phenomenon being measured—distinction between facts and judgments less clear; Always ongoing during the project</td>
<td>Computerized analysis—statistical and mathematical methods dominate; Analysis may be ongoing during the project; Maintains clear distinction between facts and judgments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insights and Meaning</td>
<td>Deeper level of understanding is the norm; determined by type and quantity of free-response questions. Researcher participation in data collection allows insights to form and be tested during the process</td>
<td>Limited by the opportunity to probe respondents and the quality of the original data collection instrument. Insights follow data collection and data entry, with limited ability to re-interview participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Sponsor Involvement</td>
<td>May participate by observing research in real-time or via taped interviews.</td>
<td>Rarely has either direct or indirect contact with participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback Turnaround</td>
<td>Smaller sample sizes make data collection faster for shorter possible turnaround. Insights are developed as the research progresses, shortening data analysis</td>
<td>Larger sample sizes lengthen data collection; Internet methodologies are shortening turnaround but inappropriate for many studies. Insight development follows data collection and entry, lengthening research process; interviewing software permits some tallying of responses as data collection progresses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Security</td>
<td>More absolute given use of restricted access facilities and smaller sample sizes.</td>
<td>Act of research in progress is often known by competitors; insights may be gleaned by competitors for some visible, field-based studies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Qualitative Studies

- In-Depth Interviews
- Focus Group Interviews
- Projective Techniques
Depth interviews with cigarette smokers include the finding that they tend to use cigarettes as a measure of time and distance, a result that would probably not have been uncovered by conventional survey research techniques:

- **Slicker City**: 13 cigarettes
- **Tractortown**: 1½ cigarettes
- **East Hogville**: 2 cigarettes

---

DANGER – TROLL UNDER BRIDGE
½ cigarette ahead. MAINTAIN NORMAL SPEED!
Types of Depth Interviews

• Non-directive
  – Maximum flexibility/probing
  – Requires excellent interviewer

• Semi-structured
  – General interview schedule
  – Somewhat flexible
  – Excellent for expert interviews
Interviewer Behavior in a Depth Interview

Provides a comfortable environment.
Allows the interview to proceed along respondent’s train of thought in respondent’s own words.
Reflects respondent’s feelings as summary statements.
 Occasionally asks probing questions to investigate new topics or clarify meaning.
May use a topic outline but only to make sure certain topics are covered sometime during the interview.
Avoids evaluative comments or other inhibiting behaviors.
Waits out pauses to allow respondent time to think.
Lets respondent do the talking.
“That’s the worst set of opinions I’ve heard in my entire life.”

“This consumer spending survey requires tact, Figby!
... It sounds just like a husband when you simply ask
a housewife where the money goes!”

Potentially sensitive questions, if absolutely necessary, should be asked as far back as possible in the data collection device. This gives the researcher time to develop rapport and minimizes the loss of other information should the interview be terminated before its conclusion. (GRIN AND BEAR IT by George Lichty, Courtesy of Field Newspaper Syndicate)
INTERVIEWER: What types of beverages are you aware of?

RESPONDENT: Well, there’s Coke, Pepsi, and 7-Up; and then there’s Hi-C, Hawaiian Punch, and Kool-Aid.

INTERVIEWER: What I meant was, what Types—not brands—of beverages are you aware of?

RESPONDENT: Oh, you mean the regular carbonated beverages and that other stuff.

INTERVIEWER: “Other stuff.” What do you mean?

RESPONDENT: You know, there’s the regular kind of beverage: Coke, Diet Coke, Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, 7-Up—they are all carbonated. Then there’s bottled fruit juices, and lemonade powdered drinks. And there’s even powdered soft drink, but these aren’t really the same.

INTERVIEWER: Could you explain?

RESPONDENT: Well, powdered mixes aren’t really soft drinks. They are not carbonated, and have a real unnatural taste. I think they are only sweetened with saccharin. Kids must be the only ones that drink that stuff.
Excerpts from a Depth Interview

An interviewer (I) talks with Marsha (M) about furniture purchases. Marsha indirectly indicates she delegates the buying responsibility to a trusted antique dealer. She has already said that she “and her husband would write the dealer telling him the piece they wanted (e.g., bureau, table). The dealer would then locate a piece which he considered appropriate and would ship it to Marsha from his shop in another state.

M. . . . we never actually shopped for furniture since we state what we want and (the antique dealer) picks it out and sends it to us. So we never have to go looking through stores and shops and things.

I. You depend on his (the antique dealer’s) judgment?
M. Um, hum. And, uh, he happens to have the sort of taste that we like and he knows what our taste is and always finds something that we’re happy with.

I. You’d rather do that than do the shopping?
M. Oh, much rather, because it saves so much time and it would be so confusing for me to go through stores and stores and stores looking for things, looking for furniture. This is so easy that I just am very fortunate.

I. Do you feel that he’s a better judge than . . .
M. Much better.

I. Than you are?
M. Yes, and that way I feel confident that what I have is, is very, very nice because he picked it out and I would be doubtful if I picked it out. I have confidence in him, (the antique dealer) knows everything about antiques, I think. If he tells me something why I know it’s true—no matter what I think. I know he is the one that’s right.

This excerpt is most revealing of the way in which Marsha could increase her feeling of confidence by relying on the judgment of another person, particularly a person she trusted. Marsha tells us quite plainly that she would be doubtful (i.e., uncertain) about her own judgment, but she “knows” (i.e., is certain) that the antique dealer is a good judge, “no matter what I think.” The dealer once sent a chair that, on first inspection, did not appeal to Marsha. She decided, however, that she must be wrong, and the dealer right, and grew to like the chair very much.”
Focus Groups
“Geez, you're the worst focus group I've ever seen.”
Focus Group Interview

- Unstructured
- Free flowing/relaxed
- 1 to 3 hour group interview
- Run by moderator
- Starts with broad topic and focus in on specific issues
- Audio/video recorded and observed live via two-way mirror
Group Composition

- 6 to 10 pre-screened people
- 3 to 4 sessions
- Relatively homogeneous within each session
- Similar lifestyles and experiences
## Sample Costs of a Focus Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing outline and screening participants</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderator’s fee</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility rental, recruiting</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent incentives ($30 x 10 people)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis and report</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,450</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extras:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Videotaping</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel costs for moderator and observers</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## What is Included in a Recruitment Screener?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Information</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heading</strong></td>
<td>Project name, date of interviews, identity of screener.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Screening Requirements</strong></td>
<td>Conditions that must be met to extend a prospect an offer to participate; may include quotas for various demographic, lifestyle, attitudinal or usage questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identity Information</strong></td>
<td>Name of prospect, address, phone, e-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>Describes purpose of study in a motivational way. Completely “blind” studies do not motivate participation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Security Questions</strong></td>
<td>Reveal possible participant over-participation or conflicts of interest; similar information on spouse or immediate family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographic Questions</strong></td>
<td>Determine match for age, gender, ethnicity or race, income, geography, employment status or occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product/Brand Usage/Purchase Questions</strong></td>
<td>Establish frequency of use, purchase, loyalty, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lifestyle Questions</strong></td>
<td>Establish the participant’s daily life experiences, as well as with whom they share their life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudinal and Knowledge Questions</strong></td>
<td>Look for breadth in perceptions, attitudes, opinions, knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation and Creative Questions</strong></td>
<td>Seek evidence that participant could articulate their ideas, form and express opinions; scenarios might include problems/solution questions or ask participant to confront an unusual challenge (What could you do with a brick?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Offer/Termination</strong></td>
<td>Invites participation, discusses compensation and pre-tasking, sets up interview or indicates that person is not right for the current study by may be right for future studies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table was developed from material presented by Hy Mariampolski, in *Qualitative Market Research: A Comprehensive Guide*, pp.134-136.
Seven rules in recruiting focus group participants

1. Specifically define the characteristics of people who will be included in the groups.
2. If you are conducting an industrial focus group, develop screening questions that probe into all aspects of the respondents' job functions. Do not depend on titles or other ambiguous definitions of your responsibilities.
3. If you are conducting an industrial focus group, provide the research company with the names of specific companies and employees, when possible. If specific categories of companies are needed, a list of qualified companies is critical.
4. Ask multiple questions about a single variable to validate the accuracy of answers. Therefore, if you want to recruit personal computer users, do not simply ask for the brand and model of personal computers they use. In addition, ask them to describe the machine and its function; this will ensure that they are referring to the appropriate equipment.
5. Require that recruiters provide completed screener questionnaires at the end of each day. Check them carefully to ensure that appropriate people were recruited from appropriate companies. When in doubt, make a follow-up call to confirm the participant.
6. Do not accept respondents who have participated in a focus group during the previous year.
7. Have each participant arrive 15 minutes early to complete a prediscussion questionnaire. This will provide additional background information on each respondent, will reconfirm their suitability for the discussion, and will help the company collect useful factual information.

### Factors Influencing Participant Contributions in Group Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive/Facilitators</th>
<th>Negative/Inhibitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognition/ Ego Enhancement</strong></td>
<td>Moderator’s expressed appreciation for participant contributions that contribute to issue understanding; participants’ open agreement with other participant comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Contribution</strong></td>
<td>Participants’ desire to be and perception that their contributions are helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Validation</strong></td>
<td>Participant’s need to have their feelings, attitudes, or ideas validated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catharsis/ Load-sharing</strong></td>
<td>Participants’ need to share something negative or bothersome with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Growth</strong></td>
<td>Participants’ desire to increase knowledge or understanding through new perspectives; Participants’ desire for new experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socialization</strong></td>
<td>Participants’ desire to meet new people, make new friends in a ‘safe’ environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectations</strong></td>
<td>Participants’ accurate understanding of the purpose of the group discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extrinsic Rewards</strong></td>
<td>Participants’ fees for participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Use of Abstract Terminology
- Moderator or participant’s use of terminology or jargon unfamiliar to other participants.

### Ego Threats
- Participant challenging another participant’s knowledge of the subject

### Political Correctness
- Participant withholding comments for fear that their contributions might be perceived as disrespectful of another’s knowledge or opinions.

### Ego Defense
- Participant withholding comments for fear that it will make them appear unintelligent, or that opinion will be unpopular with the group.

### Memory Decay
- Participant’s failure to remember incidents or details of incidents

### Embellishment
- Participant’s creative additions to memories of behaviors in order to participate fully or inflate status.

### Inarticulation/Rambling accounts
- Participant’s inability to express their ideas quickly or concisely.

### Confusion
- Participant’s lack of understanding of the issue under discussion.

### Reticence
- Participant’s need to be invited to participate (rather than actively volunteering comments).

### Time
- Participant’s concern about other obligations.

### Dominating/Monopolizing
- One participant attempting to take leadership or spotlight, thus blocking contributions of others.

Focus Group Moderator

• Focuses discussion
• Has loose control
• Develops rapport--helps people relax
• Interacts
• Listens to what people have to say
• Everyone gets a chance to speak
Key Qualifications of Focus Group Moderators

1. Kindness with firmness: the moderator must combine a disciplined detachment with understanding empathy in order to generate the necessary interaction.
2. Permissiveness: the moderator must be permissive yet alert to signs that the group’s cordiality or purpose is disintegrating.
3. Involvement: the moderator must encourage and stimulate intense personal involvement.
4. Incomplete understanding: the moderator must encourage respondents to be more specific about generalized comments by exhibiting incomplete understanding.
5. Encouragement: the moderator must encourage unresponsive members to participate.
6. Flexibility: the moderator must be able to improvise and alter the planned outline amid the distractions of the group process.
7. Sensitivity: the moderator must be sensitive enough to guide the group discussion at an intellectual as well as emotional level.
Procedure for Planning and Conducting Focus Groups

1. Objectives of the Marketing Research Project and Problem Definition
2. Specify the Objectives of Qualitative Research
3. State the Objectives/Questions to be Answered by Focus Groups
4. Write a Screening Questionnaire
5. Develop a Moderator's Outline
6. Conduct the Focus Group Interviews
7. Review Tapes and Analyze the Data
8. Summarize the Findings and Plan Follow-up Research or Action
# Focus Groups: Types and Purposes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Purposes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Problem definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>Hypothesis generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing</td>
<td>Concept testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pilot testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Explore subconscious motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Product/brand usage attitudes and beliefs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Generating New Creative Ideas

Listening to consumers talk about how they use a product or what they like or dislike about a product can provide input for creative teams in developing advertising copy. Advertising agencies often use focus group interviews for this reason.

Establishing Consumer Vocabulary

Understanding the words that consumers use in talking about a product or product category can be extremely useful in structuring questionnaires, particularly in phrasing the question and in determining permissible response categories.

Uncovering Basic Consumer Needs and Attitudes

In talking about a product or product category, consumers often express basic needs and attitudes that can be useful in generating hypotheses about what may or may not be accepted and about the factors responsible for the perceived similarity or dissimilarity among a set of brands.

Establishing New Product Concepts

Focus group interviews are particularly useful in providing information on the major strengths and weaknesses of a new-product idea. In addition, the focus group interview can be effective in judging whether strategy-supporting promises of end-benefits have been communicated clearly.

Generating New Ideas about Established Markets

Listening to consumers talk about how they discovered ways to put a product to alternative use can stimulate marketing executives to recognize new uses for old products.

Interpreting Previously-Obtained Quantitative Data

In some instances focus group interviews are used as the last step in the research process to probe for detailed reasons behind quantitative test results obtained in earlier marketing research studies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes and Levels — Electric Cars*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**A. Shoulder Width**
1. 62 inches
2. 64 inches
3. 66 inches

**B. Seating Capacity/Rear Storage Space**
1. 2/66 cu. ft.
2. 4/30 cu. ft.

**C. Width Between Wheel Houses**
1. 42 inches
2. 44 inches
3. 46 inches

**D. Gear Ratios That Result in Trade-offs**
**Between Speed/Driving Distance Before Recharging**
1. 20 mph/100 miles
2. 30 mph/80 miles
3. 40 mph/50 miles

**E. Rear Storage Space Design/Price**
1. Trunk/Standard
2. Rear deck with upward opening door/ $100 more than standard
3. Rear deck with downward opening door/ $100 more than standard

**F. Type of Radio/Price**
1. AM/Standard
2. AM/FM/$80 more than standard
3. AM/FM/CB/$120 more than standard

**G. Recharger/Price**
1. Built into car/standard
2. Portable/$50 more than standard

**H. Base Price of Standard Car**
1. $6,500
2. $6,800
3. $7,100
Advantages of Focus Groups Over Depth Interviews

Advantages from Respondent Reaction

A Group Environment:
- Produces a wider range of information, insight, and ideas than the total of individual replies. (Synergism)
- Triggers responses from members. One member provides cue or stimulus for another member. (Snowballing)
- Stimulates members to express ideas.
- Provides security because people in group are similar. (Security)
- Allows for spontaneous, less conventional responses. Since each member is not required to respond to every question, the answers received should be more meaningful. (Spontaneity)

Advantages to Sponsor

A Focus Group Interview:
- Offers more opportunity for idea to “drop out of the blue.”
- Allows the efficient use of highly trained personnel.
- Permits closer scrutiny.
- Affords more control over the interviewing process.
- Speeds up the securing of information.
Advantages of Online Focus Groups

- Fast
- Inexpensive
- Bring together many participants from wide-spread geographical areas
- Respondent anonymity
- Transcript automatically recorded
Disadvantages of Online Focus Groups

• Less group interaction
• Absence of tactile stimulation
• Absence of facial expression and body language
• Moderator’s job is different