

## Methods to Collect Information

Method	Overall Purpose	Advantages	Disadvantages
Questionnaires, surveys, checklists	When you need to quickly and/or easily get a lot of information from people in a non-threatening way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-can complete anonymously</li> <li>- inexpensive to administer</li> <li>-easy to compare and analyze</li> <li>-administer to many people</li> <li>-can get lots of data</li> <li>-usually, many sample questionnaires already exist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-might not get careful feedback</li> <li>-wording can bias responses</li> <li>-impersonal</li> <li>-may need sampling expert</li> <li>-doesn't get full story</li> </ul>
Interviews	When want to fully understand someone's impressions or experiences, or learn more about their answers to questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-get full range and depth of information</li> <li>-develops relationships with client</li> <li>-can be flexible with client</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-can take much time</li> <li>-can be hard to analyze and compare</li> <li>-can be costly</li> <li>-interviewer can bias responses</li> </ul>
Observation	To gather accurate information about how a program actually operates, particularly about processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-view operations of a program as they are occurring</li> <li>-can adapt to events as they occur</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-can be difficult to interpret seen behavior</li> <li>-can be complex to categorize observations</li> <li>-can influence behavior of participants</li> <li>-can be expensive</li> </ul>
Focus Groups	Explore a topic in depth through group discussion, e.g., about reactions to an experience or suggestion, understanding common complaints, etc.; useful in evaluation and marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-quickly and reliably get common impressions</li> <li>-can be efficient way to get much range and depth of information in short time</li> <li>-can convey key information about programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-can be hard to analyze responses</li> <li>-need good facilitator for safety and disclosure</li> <li>-difficult to schedule 6-8 people together</li> </ul>