Aachen Summer Simulation Seminar 2014

Group Activity 02
Focus Groups

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Seminar Organisation
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• Day 1: Introduction to Modelling and Simulation
  1. Lec01: Introduction to Modelling and Simulation
  2. Lec02: Foundations of Simulation Modelling
  3. Lec03: Conceptual Modelling
  4. Practice01: AnyLogic Introduction (in pairs)

• Day 2: Application of Modelling and Simulation Methods
  5. Practice02: Java Basics + First Model (in pairs)
  6. Lec04: SDS Modelling
  7. GroupActivity01: Conceptual Modelling (in small groups)
  8. Lec05: DES Modelling
  9. Practice03: SDS or DES Tutorials (in pairs)
Seminar Organisation

• Day 3: Application of Modelling and Simulation Methods
  10. GroupActivity02: Focus Group (in small groups)
  11. Lec06: ABS Modelling + Hybrids
  13. Practice05: Exploring the AnyLogic Model Library (optional)

• Day 4: Knowledge Gathering
  15. Lec07: Input Modelling / Experimentation / Output Analysis
  16. GroupActivity03: Discussion of your own project ideas (whole group)
  17. Lec08: Model Verification and Validation

Feedback
Focus Groups
Motivation

• Enable you to run a focus group
A Focus Group is ...

• What?
  – A carefully planned discussion
  – To obtain perceptions of a defined interest area

• Where?
  – In a permissive, non-threatening environment

• How?
  – Conducted by a trained interviewer (moderator, facilitator)
A Focus Group is NOT ...

• A debate
• Group therapy
• A conflict resolution session
• A problem solving session
• An opportunity to collaborate
• A promotional opportunity
• An educational session
Who?

• Small group (7-10) with common characteristics relating to discussion topic

• Who are the stakeholders?
Why?

• Collect qualitative data
• Determine feelings, perceptions and manner of thinking of participants regarding products, services, opportunities ...
• Attitudes and perceptions are developed in part by interaction with other people
• Promote self-disclosure among participants
• It's dangerous to take "customers" for granted
Limitations?

• Risk of biases introduced by the moderator(s)
• Domineering and/or passive participants
• Usually does not provide depth of information compared to other methods, such as key informant interviews
Moderator's role

- Stays relaxed and sets tone
- Introduces and guides the discussion
- Actively and carefully listens
- Does NOT participate, or share views, or engage in the discussion
- Does NOT editorialise comments
- Promotes everyone's participation
- Is non-judgmental and respectful
Types of Questions

1. Engagement questions: introduce participants to and make them comfortable with the topic of discussion

2. Exploration questions: get to the meat of the discussion

3. Exit question: check to see if anything was missed in the discussion
Example: Dental Flossing Focus Group

• Engagement questions:
  – What is your favourite toothpaste?
  – What do you notice when you look at other people's teeth?

• Exploration questions:
  – Who in particular has influenced your dental habits?
  – What are the pros and cons of flossing your teeth?
  – When you floss, what is your routine?
  – How do you feel when you are told about possible damage caused by not flossing?
  – How do you feel about yourself when you floss regularly or when you don't?
Example: Dental Flossing Focus Group

• Exit question:
  – Is there anything else you would like to say about why you do or do not floss your teeth on a regular basis?

• Remark: You might want to put flossers and non-flossers in separate groups
Getting Started

• Role play
  – A moderator and/or note taker
  – Stakeholders?

• Discussion

• Summarize the session
  – Clear objectives for the study
  – Solutions you are proposing
Questions / Comments