

# Get to know your audience



# FOCUS GROUPS

- In the rapidly changing media environment we discovered that we did not know enough about our audience - their needs and behaviour.
- We needed a more systematic way to analyse and share information about the audience
- Our audience research department was too small to serve all the 28 news rooms.
- We created a simple tool to help the staff to connect better with the audience in order to change the content and improve our services

# Take your time to formulate your research question!

- Why should we engage and have a dialogue with the audience?
- What do we want to know about the audience?
- Do we consider the audience to be one group or many different groups (generation x,y... etc)
- Do we want to focus on one or many aspects of our services?
- Are we trying to understand a certain target group – families, young adults, children?



# Recruitment

- Find 8-10 persons
- The group can be homogenous but the participants should not know each other too well. (it is OK to use the snow ball method – the participants recruit some one they know who in turn recruit some one).
- Consider fall outs – over recruit
- Send invitations, information and reminders
- Be clear and transparent – this is our purpose and we want honest answers.
- Promise anonymity
- Use all possible means – Old school letters, e-mail, telephone.



# The meeting



- Decide if you are going to show a certain story or a whole episode.
- Create a relaxed environment and let all the participants introduce themselves.
- Offer coffee and fruit (very Swedish...).
- Choose between an unstructured or structured interview survey.
- Make an interview guide with a few main questions and many follow up questions.
- In an unstructured interview the participants set the agenda.
- The actual discussion should not be longer than 1,5 hours..

# Questions

- Always start with asking what was good, bad and what the participants remember from the screening.
- Be sure to catch spontaneous comments.
  - common questions
    - If you were talking to a friend – what would you tell him about the program you just watched?
    - What would you like to see more of or less?
    - Is this program aimed at a certain group of people – who would be interested in this?
    - Which is your primary source of news – internet, radio, tv, co-workers, other?
    - How often do you watch regional news?
    - Why and when do you watch our regional output and what makes you watch
    - What do you think about our competitors?
    - Have you used our internet services?

# Documentation

- The discussion should be documented by two persons and recorded (not video)
- Make a transcript and summary and let the whole staff read it.
- Make it a habit for the staff to engage with the audience



# Analysies

- Which are the most important results – positive and negative?
- What was discussed besides our questions?
- Do we trust the answers?
- Do we need to compare with other studies or another focus group?

**Use the result to create understanding and inspiration**

# The moderator

- Try to be neutral – never agree and encourage more developed answers (even the stupid ones).
- Avoid guiding, corrections and fact giving
- If you get a question – turn it back and answer after the meeting
- Be concrete
- Make every one talk
- Be spontaneous
- If some one dominates the discussion invite others with direct questions
- Silence is not bad or threatening
- Do not interpret the answers ask the participants to develop their answers
- Use open questions