

Nominal Group Technique Simplified

Goals of the Nominal Group Technique:

- Provides opportunities for input from all without fear or criticism (brainstorming)
- Allows discussion of ideas for clarity and to remove duplication
- Designed to achieve a set of ranked responses to questions (voting to prioritize)

Basic Steps:

1. Ask group an open-ended question (clarify if necessary).
2. Have each person silently and independently write down as many answers as possible in a given time, usually about five minutes. Stop sooner if everyone finishes.
 - a. Use short phrases or as few of words as possible.
3. Go around to each person and record one answer from each person, using large flipchart paper.
 - a. Write large and leave space for voting.
4. Ask questions at this time only for clarification, not discussion.
5. Repeat process until all answers have been recorded, skipping anyone that's answer has already been recorded or they are out of answers.
6. Reread question and then discuss each answer for information only, not for debate.
7. Group duplicates if possible, if people providing answers agree.
 - a. Be more specific rather than getting broader or more generic.
 - b. After combining, number the answers.
8. Give colored dots to participants based on number of recorded answers.
 - a. Less than 25 answers, each participant gets five dots
 - b. More than 25 answers, each participant gets seven dots
9. Have participants vote using colored dots on the answers they think best answers the question.
 - a. Can only place one dot per answer.
10. Tally dots and circle number of votes received.
11. Review results and note is major breaks in voting.
12. For more than one question, repeat process.