

Nominal Group Technique

A Method for Groups to Decide their Top Priority issues

What	This strategy is a collaborative process for a group to select their most important issues.																																																	
Why	This strategy is used when there is a variety of issues and opinions and a group decision is required. The process does not necessarily result in a consensus decision but is perhaps more likely to be closer to consensus than the Multivoting method.																																																	
Items Needed	Butchers paper, flipchart or whiteboard and marking pens. 2 sheets of blank paper for each group member.																																																	
How	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create two lists of issues – one for issues facing young people, the other for issues facing youth services. You can ask people to nominate issues (no more than 3 for each – you may want to restrict the number to save time): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) before the meeting via e-mail; b) at the meeting – provide butchers paper/whiteboard and pens and either set aside time or use the networking time at the start or during a break for people to jot down their issues. In the latter case it helps if someone is assigned the job of walking around the room encouraging people to put their issues on the butchers paper; c) at the meeting on small slips of paper that are filled out and handed to the facilitator. The facilitator may need several minutes (e.g. during a break) to record the issues (see next step). 2. Record the two lists for everyone to see (eliminate duplicates) eg white board, blackboard, flip chart, and give each issue a letter (a-z). For example: Issues facing young people <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Lack of accommodation b) Transport to work or recreation c) Lack of affordable recreation d) Underage drinking e) Centrelink Breaches f) School expulsions g) Self-harming 3. Spend some time in the group discussing the issues listed. This will give group members a chance to clarify their understanding of the issues listed and also to check if there any duplicates or issues that need to be listed together (e.g. Alcohol and drug use?). 4. Each team member then lists the letters on their own sheets of paper (1 piece for issues facing young people, 1 for issues for services). They then rank the issues according to importance (the higher the number the more important – so in this example above, 7 is most important because there are 7 issues). Each group member then hands their lists to the facilitator. For each list, group members can only use a number once – so for 7 issues they must use all of the numbers 1 to 7. 5. The facilitator then calculates the scores of each issue by adding up the ranks assigned by each group member. For example, the issues above might receive the following scores: <table style="margin-left: 40px; border: none;"> <tr> <td>a)</td> <td>7</td> <td>6</td> <td>7</td> <td>5</td> <td>7</td> <td>= 32 (1st)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b)</td> <td>1</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> <td>1</td> <td>4</td> <td>= 15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c)</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> <td>2</td> <td>= 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>d)</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> <td>7</td> <td>1</td> <td>= 12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>e)</td> <td>3</td> <td>7</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>= 21 (3rd)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>f)</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> <td>6</td> <td>6</td> <td>= 24 (2nd)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>g)</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>= 20</td> </tr> </table> 	a)	7	6	7	5	7	= 32 (1 st)	b)	1	5	4	1	4	= 15	c)	4	2	5	3	2	= 16	d)	2	1	1	7	1	= 12	e)	3	7	6	2	3	= 21 (3 rd)	f)	6	3	3	6	6	= 24 (2 nd)	g)	5	4	2	4	5	= 20
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	<p>6. Tallying up the issues might take a while if you have a large group. You could allow the facilitator to do this during a break and then report back when the group returns.</p> <p>7. From the example above, you can easily rank the issues in order of priority for the group.</p>
Variations & Other Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some groups it may be important that each individuals voting pattern (i.e. their order of priorities) is kept confidential – especially if the issues are controversial or discussion about them has tended to be argumentative. • If there is a tie between two issues, you can split the tie by having a vote only be on the issues that are tied (i.e. the process will get overly complicated if you open it up to all the issues). • Some groups allow the chairperson to cast a deciding vote in situations where you need to break a tie. • This process could be used to determine priorities for your interagency. The next step would be to discuss actions your interagency can take to address those issues. • The process might be useful to run regularly – e.g. as an early warning system to see what low-priority issues are on the horizon now but may develop into higher priorities in the future. • If you have very tight agendas, you could split this process over two meetings. That is, do 'Issues for Young People' at one meeting, and 'Issues for Services' at the next.
Original Source	http://www.cap.nsw.edu.au/QI/TOOLS/mno/ngt.htm .