

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

Research question: \_\_\_\_\_

For each of the questions below, answer “Yes” or “No” given your current knowledge and understanding of the goal and research question above.

**Choosing a method:** *Things to consider*

1. Do you need to establish a demographic baseline of “who” is engaging in an experience or event?
2. Do you have a general idea about the types of responses you might hear from the population or community (for example, you are pretty sure you know many of the barriers this population face when it comes to attending your programs)?
3. Do you want to get feedback or data from a large group of people in a short period of time?
4. Do you want to confirm—with some level of certainty—that an opinion, behavior, attitude, or belief applies to more than a handful of your population? (Confirm a hypothesis?)
5. Do you want to systematically compare opinions, behaviors, attitudes or beliefs of one group to another?
6. Do you have a need to replicate your results?
7. Do you want your final report or results of the study to be numeric (percentages, tallies, graphs or charts)?

**If you answered “yes” to the majority of these, consider a quantitative methodology**

1. Do you need a first-hand account of the “who,” “what,” “where” of a population or event that is new to you?
2. Do you want to explore new elements of a group or space in order to develop a more in-depth understanding?
3. Do you need a method that is flexible and responsive in a more “real-time” way?
4. Do you want to understand “why” or “how” a population behaves, believes, or forms an opinion or attitude in an open-ended way?
5. Do you want to observe behaviors in a way that a person may not be able to articulate or identify?
6. Do you need to understand more about a population in order to potentially develop a hypothesis that you might later test?
7. Do you want a final product or report that provides a rich and thick description of the focus of your research (e.g. community needs)?

**If you answered “yes” to the majority of these, consider a qualitative methodology**

**If you answered “yes” to several questions in both columns above, mixed methods may be the answer for you!**

**Primary quantitative tools:**

1. **Survey:** *a structured, written questionnaire (either online or on paper) that is completed by one individual from the population of study*

Survey question types might include:  
*Likert Scales, multiple choice, ranking, select all that apply, rating, and/or dichotomous questions*

2. **Timing & tracking:** *structured, timed, and rigorously documented counts of specific observed behavior in a predetermined space; data is often capture through and observation protocol*

**Primary qualitative tools:**

1. **In-depth interviews:** *a structured conversation with one individual from the population of study*
2. **Focus groups:** *a structured and facilitated group discussion with people from the population of study*
3. **Observations:** *a structured or open, passive documented observation period of a chosen site connected to the population of study*
4. **Participant-observation:** *a structured or open, active observation period of a chosen site connected to the population of study/community with rigorous documentation*

**Overall Mixed-Methods approach**

1. Survey instruments:
  - Can include quantitative measures using scales, close-coded (select all that apply, multiple-choice) questions and/or qualitative open-ended questions where respondents can openly write their responses
2. Combine methods in the overall research plan, e.g.:
  - Interviews or Focus groups → survey: focus groups can help to understand where to focus a survey and determine response categories
  - Survey → Focus groups or interviews: surveys results might beg the question “why,” which may be answered with qualitative research methods

**Choosing a sampling method:** *Things to consider*

- Who you want to sample/collect data from? (*demographically, geographically, relationship to your institution, etc.*)
- How many you want to sample? (*a representation of the population, an entire population, a specific subset of the population*)
- How you want to recruit that sample in a non-bias way? (*Randomized, intercept, online, etc.*)

**Quantitative sampling methods**

1. Random sampling: *surveying every 3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> person to get a less bias, (potentially representative) sample that is generalizable without speaking with everyone*
2. Convenience sampling: *Survey those who are easiest to reach through passive data collection methods (kiosk, volunteer only)*
3. Census: *Sample everyone that is present under pre-determined conditions (everyone at an event/performance)*

**Qualitative “sampling” methods**

1. Purposive: *based on the researcher’s on-going and growing subjective perspective, determine who in the population might provide an additional and/or varied perspective on the subject matter*
2. Key informant(s) guided: *data collected based on the recommendations and guidance from key members of the population being studied*
3. Census: *data collected from every member of a population*

**Design elements to consider**

- What is the frequency of your sampling approach (3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>)?
- What is the consistent message you want to communicate to potential respondents when recruiting (what’s the script)?
- During any one data collection period, how long will you survey? How frequently? (1 full hour, 2x per week?)
- What, if any, incentive are you offering for participation?