

NOMINAL GROUP TECHNIQUE

HOW-TO

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is a structured method for generating ideas and making decisions as a group. The NGT creates a group discussion environment where every voice is heard, empowering even the quietest participants to share their ideas with confidence.

Preparation

Before beginning, make sure you have the following:

- Ideal group size: 5–10 people.
- Whiteboard or flip chart, sticky notes, pens/pencils.
- A clear and specific NGT question—for example, “How can we increase the average meeting attendance to our Family Engagement Program?”

Four Steps to the NGT



Step 1: Silent Idea Generation

Write the NGT question at the top of the whiteboard or flip chart. Allow 5–15 minutes of silent reflection for participants to write their brief ideas—one per sticky note—in response to the NGT question. No talking during this step. Set a timer.



Step 2: Round-Robin Recording of Ideas

Have participants share one idea at a time aloud. Number and record each on whiteboard or flipchart. No discussion at this stage. Continue until all ideas are shared.



Step 3: Discussion of Ideas

Read each idea out loud and invite questions or comments. The goal is for group members to achieve clarity and understanding of each idea. Avoid judgement (positive or negative). Remove duplicate ideas.



Step 4: Voting

Use multi-voting to prioritize ideas. Give each participant a set number of votes, choose public or anonymous voting, and select top ideas to test. Save others for future consideration. If there is a tie or no clear consensus, hold a second vote.



Debrief and Next Steps

After voting, the facilitator takes a few minutes to reflect on the process with the group and discuss possible next steps. Capture additional thoughts or feedback for future improvements.