Hosting a successful round table discussion

Engaging directly with customers is one of the most effective ways to gather valuable business insights and feedback. A round table discussion offers a unique platform for open dialogue, fostering a deeper understanding of customer needs and preferences. Here are some tips to host your own discussion and enhance your business operations and customer satisfaction.

Planning your round table discussion

1 - Define the objectives
Start by clearly defining what you hope to achieve. Objectives might include understanding customer satisfaction levels, identifying areas for product or service improvement, gathering ideas for new offerings and enhancing customer support and service.

2 - Select participants
Find a diverse group who represent different parts of your customer base. Consider factors like demographics (age, gender, location), usage patterns (frequent or occasional) and how which product or service they use. Aim for a group size of 8-12 participants to ensure a manageable and productive discussion.

3 - Choose a moderator
Select a skilled moderator to facilitate the discussion. The moderator should be neutral, able to manage group dynamics and adept at keeping the conversation focused on the objectives.

4 - Develop an agenda
Prepare an agenda that outlines the topics for discussion. Structure the agenda to cover key areas such as:

- Introduction and objectives
- Customer experiences and satisfaction
- Specific product or service feedback
- Ideas for improvement
- Open forum for additional comments

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Conducting the round table

1 - Set the stage
Begin with a warm welcome and introduction. Explain the purpose of the discussion, the agenda and the ground rules. Emphasize the importance of open and honest feedback.

2 - Facilitate the discussion
The moderator should guide the discussion so all participants can speak. Try asking open-ended questions, encouraging quieter participants to share, managing dominant participants to ensure balance and summarizing key points to maintain focus.

3 - Record the insights
Ensure that all feedback and ideas are accurately recorded. Consider using audio recordings, detailed notetaking or hiring a professional scribe to capture the discussion.

Post-discussion actions

1 - Analyze the feedback
Review the recorded insights to identify common themes, significant issues and actionable ideas. Categorize the feedback into areas such as product improvements, customer service enhancements and new opportunities.

2 - Communicate the outcomes
Share the outcomes of the discussion with the participants. Highlight the key insights and explain how their feedback will be used to improve your business. This transparency fosters trust and shows customers that their input is valued.

3 - Implement changes
Develop a plan to address the identified issues and implement the suggested improvements. Assign responsibilities and set timelines for each action item.

4 - Follow up
Maintain engagement with the participants updating them on the progress of changes. Consider hosting follow-up discussions or surveys to gather more feedback and assess the changes made.

For more information book a free one-hour consultation!