



Primary Research

**Focus Group
Survey**

Focus Group Moderator Guide: QPR Research
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CAP 220

- Determine current levels of awareness and attitudes regarding the Counseling Center.
- Determine current levels of awareness and attitudes regarding the QPR intervention program.

First of all, thank you everybody for taking part in this focus group! I'm Sarah Dudinetz, and I'm conducting this research for one of my Advertising and Public Relations classes, in partnership with the University Counseling Center. Our ultimate goal is to gain an understanding of how we can get the word out to college freshman about the programs available at the counseling center-- Specifically, the QPR Intervention program.

This Focus Group is going to be recorded, for me to refer back to later. There are no wrong answers to any of the questions I'm going to ask-- what I'm looking for is just to get a 'temperature reading' of where you guys are at. Don't feel like you have to answer every question, and try to speak clearly and one at a time. If you're talking and I begin to type, just keep talking. First of all, can we go around so that I can make sure I know everyone's names and majors?

Before we start, I just want to make sure you all know that you have the option to not answer, or to leave, if any of the material discussed makes you uncomfortable in any way.

First, I won't ask for details, but can you raise your hand if you, or somebody that you know, has visited the University Counseling Center?

Is anybody familiar with the Center's QPR program?

Have you taken it/Are you QPR certified?

What were/are your thoughts on the program?

How did you find out about it?

For those of you who are not familiar with QPR, the QPR mission is to reduce suicidal behaviors and save lives by providing innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training. It's a nationwide initiative, and isn't specific to Grand Valley.

If QPR was made available to you, can you think of some examples of things that might entice you to go?

Is there anything that comes to mind as a reason you might not go? (*Remember, there's no wrong answers!*)

**Changing topics a little bit: What Grand Valley-related social media do you follow?
Do you follow the counseling center?**

Summary of Focus Group Results

Introduction

A focus group was conducted in order to gain a better understanding of our target audience, which is freshman girls who live in on-campus housing at Grand Valley. The focus group was conducted by one moderator, who ran the discussion while also taking notes. The group was held off-campus at the moderator's apartment. A moderator guide was used (see appendix) to guide the discussion, covering the following topics: Counseling center awareness/presence, including social media, and awareness/feelings towards the counseling center's QPR intervention program. Our overall goal was to gain a better understanding of the target audience's perceptions and overall awareness of the counseling center, as well as perceptions and overall awareness of the QPR intervention program offered by the counseling center. Due to the results of secondary research, and the sensitive nature of suicide, the moderator chose to refrain from asking questions related to suicide.

There were four participants in the focus group. All were freshman girls who currently live in Holton-Hooker Learning and Living Center. The majors of the focus group members are as follows: Two undecided, one business, and one communications. It should be taken into consideration when looking at the focus group results that the members of the focus group have only lived on Grand Valley's campus for about six months. This gives them a much more limited amount of experience and opportunities for potential exposure than older Grand Valley students.

Counseling Center Awareness

One of the first questions asked in the focus group was whether any members knew anybody who had gone to the Grand Valley counseling center, or if they themselves had gone. When asked this question, two participants raised their hands. While drawing from a very limited body of research, we could assume that this means that around half of freshman girls are somehow exposed to the counseling center within their first six months through word-of-mouth.

The next question related to the counseling center was regarding social media accounts. Participants were first asked if any of them followed Grand Valley's counseling center on social media. No participants raised their hands. As a follow-up question, they were then asked if they were at all aware of the counseling center's social media. All four participants said that they were not aware that the counseling center had their own social media accounts.

QPR Program Awareness

The first question asked to focus group participants regarding QPR training was whether or not they were aware of the program. Not one participant was able to say that they were aware of the program. According to the moderator guide, other questions regarding QPR would have followed, including "Have you taken it/Are you QPR certified, what were/are your thoughts on the program, how did you find out about it". However, these questions were omitted at the time of the focus group, considering the fact that no one would have been able to answer them.

Despite this, after a brief description of what QPR is (see appendix for moderator guide), participants were able to discuss what would entice them to attend. Answers included: Attending with a group that they participated in, attending with friends, extra credit or approval for a class

(example: LIB 100 approval), free food, or time to spend with therapy dogs. Participants heavily discussed the fact that they would not feel comfortable attending a QPR training session alone unless they felt very strongly that one of their friends in particular was in danger. For example, if one of their friends had mentioned that they were suicidal, the group members agreed that they would attend the training without hesitation. However, overall, they would feel more comfortable attending the training with a group of people they were familiar with. This was not specific to QPR training, but just about any event on campus where they knew that they would not know somebody there.

Participants also discussed what would deter them from attending a QPR training session. These answers included that being QPR certified sounded like a large responsibility, the time commitment it would require/too busy of a schedule, and the fact that they don't see the immediate benefits of becoming QPR certified. To elaborate, one participant had stated: "Now if someone says something to you, you have to acknowledge it. You can't just pretend it isn't a big deal. That's a lot of responsibility." This participant felt that, once they became QPR certified, it would weigh heavily on them. Participants seemed to understand, and agree slightly, with this notion through nodding their heads. However, one other participant noted that, after the brief summary of QPR provided, it sounded very simple and that a full training session was not necessary. In the words of this participant: "I'm sure I'd learn a lot, but I already feel like I could 'ask the question' if I felt I needed to".

Survey Guide

1- Are you currently enrolled as a student at Grand Valley State University?

- Yes
- No

2- What is your current class standing?

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Other (please specify)

3- Are you familiar with Grand Valley's counseling center?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

4- Do you follow Grand Valley's counseling center on any social media?

- Yes
- No

5- Are you familiar with QPR training, a suicide prevention initiative offered by the counseling center?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

6- Does mention of suicide and/or mental illness cause you to feel uncomfortable?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

7- If you were made aware of an opportunity to attend a QPR training session, what would entice you to attend?

- Free food
- LIB 100 approval/Extra credit for a class
- Therapy dogs
- Other (please specify)

8- If you were made aware of an opportunity to attend a QPR training session, what would deter you from attending?

- If it costed money
- Having to go alone
- If it was held at an inconvenient time
- Other (please specify)

Introduction

In addition to a focus group, a survey was conducted as a form of primary research. In the survey, we were able to ask more specific questions that were based off our findings in the focus group. This served to solidify our overall findings and to help guide our campaign.

The survey consisted of 8 questions overall. All questions were multiple choice, with three of the questions containing fields that allowed for an open-ended response (See survey guide in appendix). All of our survey participants were freshman girls who currently live in Holton-Hooker Learning and Living center, and were recruited to participate in our survey with the help of our focus group participants, who also reside in Holton-Hooker. The survey was sent out through email.

Our first two questions were asked in order to ensure that our participants fit our target audience. Questions 3 and 4 focused on awareness of the counseling center. Questions 5 and 6 focused on awareness of QPR and feelings towards mention of mental health/suicide. Lastly, questions 7 and 8 focused on what would entice/deter participants to attend a QPR training session.

Awareness/Attitudes

When asked whether or not they were familiar with Grand Valley's counseling center, 46% of respondents felt that they were somewhat familiar, 40% said that they were familiar, and 14% said that they were not aware. While it is promising to hear that 86% of freshman girls have become at least somewhat aware of the counseling center within their first six months of living at

Grand Valley, this still does provide an opportunity for the counseling center to raise awareness--mostly from feeling 'somewhat familiar' to 'familiar'.

When participants were asked whether or not they felt that they were familiar with the QPR suicide intervention program offered by the counseling center, only 8% of respondents said that they were familiar, 31% felt that they were somewhat aware, and 61% of respondents said that they were not at all familiar with QPR. This statistic goes to further support the notion that we are missing an incredibly important opportunity to advertise QPR to freshman who live in on-campus housing, and must do so in our campaign.

In regards of social media awareness, when asked whether or not they follow any of the counseling center's social media, 96% of participants responded saying that they do not follow the counseling center on any platform. Once again, this strengthens the argument that raising social media awareness should be one of the main focuses of our campaign. With a vast majority of college students utilizing social media constantly, using social media presents a chance to create a positive brand image and build familiarity with the counseling center.

Attending QPR

When participants were asked if the mention of suicide and/or mental illness made them uncomfortable, 82% responded with 'yes'. This should be taken into consideration when creating our campaign, knowing that the issues being presented are enough to deter some of our potential audience from attending.

Survey participants were also asked what would entice them to attend a QPR training session if they were given the opportunity. The three most popular responses from our focus

group were given, as well as ‘other’, which allowed for participants to elaborate. Of these, 51% said that free food would entice them to attend, 28% said having the course be LIB 100-approved or count for extra credit for a class, and 21% said having therapy dogs. When participants were asked what would deter them from going, the same format was followed: The three most popular choices from the focus group, as well as the option to give their own answer. The results were that 51% would not go if it was held at an inconvenient time, 31% voted with ‘other’, and 16% would not attend if it costed money. 2% of participants chose not to answer the question. Of those who responded with ‘other’, their responses can be categorized into either ‘I have no reason/motivation to go’, or ‘I am too busy/schedule too full’.

Primary Research Conclusions

After conducting primary research through a focus group and a survey, there are several conclusions that can be used in forming our campaign. First, the topics of suicide and mental illness are sensitive and ‘dark’, and people usually tend to stay away from them if possible. Second, our audience feels somewhat familiar with the counseling center, but much less familiar with the QPR program, which gives us a large opportunity for advertising and helps us know where to put our focus. In addition to this, social media is an area that shows potential for a large amount of growth, and could serve to build familiarity with both the counseling center and the QPR program.