



RESEARCH FINDINGS

Following are key takeaways from the series of eight focus groups conducted in May 2009 for the Puget Sound Starts Here campaign.

PROBLEM FOCUS GROUPS: Four groups, with two sessions of 12 women each and two sessions of 11 men each; age ranges for all groups was 25-70.

Key Takeaways: "Problem" Focus Groups

- Participants believe Puget Sound is in good health, especially compared with other waterways across the country and the world. This belief is largely based on a lack of visible evidence to the contrary (garbage in the water, visible oil slicks or other pollutants, etc.).
- Participants take a lot of pride in the region's strong environmental ethic and in Puget Sound – in its beauty and in what they believe is its current good health.
- There is a perception that the Sound's health is better today than it has been in past due to increased regulation and public scrutiny.
- There is anger that information about the Sound's worsening condition is being kept from public view; government is hiding the facts.
- Participants also expressed surprise, shock and sadness upon learning Puget Sound is in poor health.
- Many of the facts presented to support Puget Sound's deteriorating condition are not considered credible. Participants questioned facts such as the comparison to the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

AD CONCEPT FOCUS GROUPS: Two sessions in Seattle, one each in Puyallup and Bremerton; mix of genders in each group, age range across all groups was 21-63.

Key Takeaways: "Ad Concept" Focus Groups

- Concepts with a problem/solution/hope approach resonate most strongly.
- Using scientific facts from trusted sources adds credibility/believability.
- Humor gives relief to a serious message; however, love (couples holding hands, kissing) seems incongruous.
- Any calls to personal action should focus on things that are simple and easy to perform.
- Participants are willing to accept responsibility for their part in polluting Puget Sound.
- Kids speak to the issue of legacy, which is a powerful motivator.