

Open-Ended Feedback Forms

Open-ended feedback forms create space for participants to share **unstructured input** that might not be anticipated in structured questions. They are simple but powerful tools for capturing **unexpected insights**.

Purpose

- Gather spontaneous participant reflections.
- Capture suggestions, frustrations, or ideas that structured tools miss.
- Provide a “catch-all” for thoughts not covered elsewhere.

When to Use — Options

- At the end of surveys → “Any additional feedback?”
- After workshops/sessions → Quick open reflection on value and improvements.
- Close-Out Feedback → Space for big-picture reflections at program end.

What to Capture in Feedback Forms

Category	Examples
Session Takeaways	“What did you find most useful today?”
Suggestions	“What could be improved in the future?”
Unanticipated Input	“Anything else you’d like us to know?”
Reflections	Quotes or stories that highlight program value.

Recommended Tools

Tool	What to Know
Google Forms / MS Forms	Simple, free, and widely accessible. Easy to distribute via email or links. Responses export directly into spreadsheets for quick analysis. Best for pulse-check style questions like “ <i>What did you find most useful today?</i> ”
Typeform	Offers a more engaging, conversational experience that feels less like a survey and more like a dialogue. Good for capturing thoughtful, narrative responses to prompts like “ <i>What could be improved in the future?</i> ”
Airtable / Trello	Useful for ongoing, program-wide tracking. Airtable lets you tag, categorize, and visualize responses over time. Trello works

	well for feedback that ties to specific tasks or milestones. Great for recurring prompts like <i>“Anything else you’d like us to know?”</i>
Paper Forms	Low-tech, but powerful in the right setting—especially in circles, retreats, or in-person gatherings where reflection is part of the ritual. They capture stories, quotes, or handwritten notes that highlight program value and can later be digitized for record-keeping.

Best Practices for Feedback Forms

- **Keep prompts simple.** Open-ended, one-liner questions work best.
- **Combine with structured items.** Use alongside rating scales for context.
- **Review frequently.** Don’t let free-text responses pile up without analysis.
- **Code responses.** Group into themes to see patterns.
- **Close the loop.** Share back highlights so participants know their feedback was heard.

Design and Accessibility Considerations

Even the best feedback forms can fall flat if participants feel uncomfortable or excluded in how they’re asked to respond. Adding a short section here would show intentionality. For example:

- **Multiple formats:** Offer digital and paper options so tech access doesn’t become a barrier.
- **Anonymous vs. identified:** Let participants choose anonymity to encourage candor, but explain when/why named feedback is helpful.
- **Language accessibility:** Provide forms in multiple languages or plain-language versions to support different literacy levels.
- **Time to respond:** Build in moments during sessions for participants to fill them out instead of relying on “after the fact” completion.

Using Feedback Strategically

You have “close the loop” in best practices, which is great. You could expand by showing how feedback connects to program improvement:

- **Spot trends early:** Use forms as an “early warning system” for disengagement or role imbalance.
- **Pair with mentorship logs:** Compare spontaneous reflections with activity logs to see if certain themes recur.
- **Highlight success stories:** Turn quotes into program narratives or anonymized case studies to reinforce program value with stakeholders.
- **Feed into future cohorts:** Document insights systematically so adjustments can be baked into onboarding or facilitator prep.

Sample Question Library for Open-Ended Feedback Forms

Session Takeaways & Value

- What did you find most useful today?
- What's one idea or insight you're taking away from this session?
- How do you see yourself applying what you learned in your mentorship partnership?
- What's something you learned that surprised you?
- What's one thing you'll do differently as a result of today's discussion?

Suggestions for Improvement

- What could be improved in the future?
- If you could change one thing about today's session, what would it be?
- What resources or support would have helped you more?
- Were there moments that felt less valuable to you? How could we improve them?
- Is there a topic you wish we had covered more deeply?

Reflections on the Mentorship Experience

- How is your mentorship partnership going so far?
- What has been your biggest learning or growth moment in the program?
- What challenges are you experiencing in your partnership right now?
- What has surprised you about your partner or the process?
- In what ways has this mentorship influenced how you think about your work or role?

Community & Belonging

- Do you feel a sense of belonging in this program? Why or why not?
- What's one moment when you felt especially supported or connected?
- How has this program shaped your view of the broader organization/community?
- What would make you feel even more included or valued in this space?

Program Impact & Big-Picture Reflections

- Looking back, what has been the most valuable part of the program for you?
- What outcomes (personal or professional) are you noticing from your participation?
- If you were recommending this program to a colleague, what would you say about it?
- What's one story or moment that captures the impact of this program for you?
- Anything else you'd like us to know?