

Attachment A: Screener's Guide

**Correspondex Letter 4310-C,
Wage and Investment Notice Improvement Office
Screener's Guide**

Recruit participants for Correspondex Letter 4310-C testing using the following quotas:

- 1. All must have been possible victims of identity theft or had to dispute a charge on their credit or debit card.*

For both groups, would like a mix of:

Gender

Race/Ethnicity

Filing Status (single, married/jointly, married/separate, head of household, widow, widower)

Education

Please note: *Participants will have to read forms and publications during the interview. We want to only recruit individuals who fluently speak and read English.*

Hello, my name is _____ and I work for _____. We are a marketing research company that is working with the IRS to improve **written** IRS communications. We would like your help to better understand the communication needs of taxpayers.

Do you have a few minutes to answer a couple of questions? Your participation is voluntary, but your help on this project would be very much appreciated. This process is not associated with your IRS tax account and will not affect your tax information in any way. *[If respondent says yes, proceed with interview].*

1. Do you, or any member of your immediate family currently or ever worked in any of the following fields? **TERMINATE IF YES TO ANY**

____ Marketing or Market Research

____ Advertising or Website Design

____ The Internal Revenue Service

____ Tax Preparer or Accountant

2. Do you consider yourself to be fluent in English?

____ Yes (Probe if necessary, Do you read and write in English?)

____ No **Terminate**

3. Have you, in any of the past five years, filed a federal tax return?

Yes
 No **Terminate**

4. What was your filing status on your most recent tax return? [Read responses and check one] **Recruit a mix**

Single
 Married/ jointly
 Married/ separately
 Head of household
 Widow/widower

5. Have you ever been a possible victim of identity theft or had to dispute a charge on your credit or debit card?

Yes
 No **Terminate**

6. Into which of the following categories does your age fall?

24 or under
 25 - 34
 35 - 44
 45 - 54
 55 - 59
 60 and over

7. Which of these categories does your total annual household income fall into?

Less than \$34,999
 \$35 - \$49,999
 \$50 - \$75,000
 Over \$75,000

8. Please identify your highest completed level of education. **Recruit a mix**

Some High School
 High School Diploma/GED
 Some College or Associate's Degree
 Bachelor's Degree
 Graduate or Professional Degree (M.D., J.P.)

9. What is your employment status?

Full time student
 Student, working full time
 Student, working part time

- Employed full time
- Employed part time
- Not employed, but looking for employment
- Not employed and not looking for employment
- Retired

10. Are you of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

- YES
- NO

11. What is your race? Are you: [MARK ALL THAT APPLY]

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- REFUSED

INVITATION

Thank you for answering our questions. Based on your responses, we would like to invite you to participate in an interview regarding written IRS communications. This interview will be held in Chamblee, GA on *[insert date]* or *[insert date]* at *[insert time]*. The total time will be no more than 2 hours. We will provide everything that you need to participate in the interview. Your participation is completely voluntary. We will provide you with a \$75 stipend for participating in the interview, as well as light refreshments.

Are you willing to participate?

- YES
- NO **Terminate**

I'm glad that you will be able to join us! At this point I need to collect some contact information from you. Then we will send you a confirmation letter and directions to the office via e-mail or by mail if you do not have an e-mail address.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone # (Day): _____ (Evening) _____
E-mail Address: _____

Because these are all one-on-one interviews, it is very important that you notify us as soon as possible if you are unable to participate. Please call *[insert recruiter contact and phone]* if this should happen. We look forward to having you participate on *[insert date]* at *[insert time]*.

Do you have any questions?

Great! Thank you for your time and we will be in touch again the day of the interview. Please remember to bring reading glasses if you use them.

TERMINATE TEXT

Thank you very much for your time, and thank you for answering our questions. Unfortunately, based on the interview requirements, we cannot extend you an invitation. Perhaps at a later time we can include you in a future interview. Have a good *[day/evening]*.

Note to screener: Do not read this information. Provide if someone asks for it.

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB control number on all public information requests. The OMB Approval Number for this study is 1545-1349. Also, if you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making this process simpler, please write to the:

Internal Revenue Service
Tax Products Coordinating Committee
SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP
1111 Constitution Ave. NW, IR-6406
Washington, DC 20224

Attachment B: Reminder Call Script

Hello, my name is _____ with _____. May I speak with
_____ {Participant name}.

{Once you have participant on the phone}

We just wanted to remind you that we are looking forward to seeing you tomorrow at (time) at (location) to talk about IRS communications.

Attachment C: Testing Protocol

Comprehension Testing Protocol

Correspondex Letter 4310-C

Greet participant and thank him or her for coming.

Introduction of Moderator

Welcome, and thank you for coming in today. My name is _____, and I am a researcher from the Internal Revenue Service and I will be leading today's session. Before we get started, I want to let you know that I will be reading from a script. We are talking with a number of people this week, and we want to be sure we say the same things in the same way to each person.

Today's session will be videotaped to ensure that we collect all pertinent information. In addition, there are representatives from the IRS observing our session from the room next door. It is very common when we conduct tests to have interested parties observe, and that is the case today.

The entire session will take no more than 45 minutes.

Confidentiality

I want to assure you that all of the information we collect today is private, and we will not identify you by name when we compile our results. In addition, we will not use your name, address, or any other identifying information in reports, papers, or videos based on this research.

Do you have any questions?

Note to Moderator: If "no":

Step 1: Reading the Notice / Reviewing Notice Packet

First, I am going to provide you with a scenario and background information regarding a fictitious taxpayer, and ask you to review a notice received by this same fictitious taxpayer.

Then, I'm going to ask you some specific questions about the information contained within the notice.

And finally, after I've completed the information questions, I'm going to ask you some more general questions about the notice.

It is important that you understand our purpose today is not to test your ability but to evaluate the notice itself. In other words, we are not grading your performance.

Please take as much time as you need to review the notice, and you may review it as many times as you like.

When you are finished, let me know, and we'll start the questions.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Note to Moderator: If "yes" answer questions.

Note to Moderator: If "no":

Let's begin.

Note to Moderator: Provide participant with a copy of the scenario.

I would like you to follow along while I review the information in the scenario.

Note to Moderator: Read scenario to participant.

Testing Scenario

Jean Harding electronically filed her tax return on March 24, 2008. On March 25, 2008 Jean received notification that the IRS did not accept her electronic return. This notification instructed Jean to call the IRS. Jean called the IRS and was told another return with her Social Security number had already been filed and that she should mail in her paper return and that the IRS would research the situation. Jean mailed in her paper return on March 27, 2008 and was notified that her refund would be held until the IRS could verify her identity and asked her send in documents to verify her identity. Jean sent in the documents and received her refund on May 5, 2008. On May 25, 2008 Jean received the following letter.

Note to Moderator: Provide participant with a copy of the notice package.

This is the notice that the fictitious taxpayer, Jean, received. Please begin reading the notice and let me know when you are finished.

Note to Moderator: Begin comprehension questions once participant has finished reviewing the package.

Step 1: Comprehension Questions

I'm now going to ask you a series of specific questions about the notice you just reviewed.

Please remember that you may refer to the information contained in the notice as much as you'd like to answer the questions.

1. What is your initial impression of the information Jean received in this notice?
2. Why did the IRS send Jean the notice? (Communication goal: 1)
3. What, if anything, should Jean do upon receiving this information? (Communication goal: 2)
4. If Jean notices suspicious or unusual activity in her financial accounts, what should Jean do? (Communication goal : 2)

NOTE: There are 4 actions listed in the letter-

Contact your financial institution

Contact the fraud department of one of the three major credit bureaus

Report any fraudulent activity to your local police or sheriff's department.

File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission

If does not mention all 4 actions:

5. What other actions, if any should Jean take if she notices unusual or suspicious activity in her financial accounts? (Communication goal 2)

If mentioned another action to Q5 but still does not mention all 4 actions

6. Are there any other actions Jean should take if she notices and suspicious or unusual activity in her accounts? (Communication goal 2)

If mentioned file a complaint with FTC

7. You mentioned that Jean should file a complaint with the FTC, how should she file a complaint with the FTC?

Note there are 3 ways to file a complaint:

- **By telephone**
- **On line**
- **By mail**

If only mentions one way to file a complaint with the FTC

8. Are there other ways Jean can file a complaint with the FTC?
9. Should Jean contact the IRS upon receiving this letter? If yes, why? If no, why not?
10. If Jean decides to contact the IRS, how should Jean contact the IRS? (Communication goal: 3)

NOTE: If participant mentions contacting the TAS

11. How can Jean contact the TAS? (Communication goal: 3)

That concludes the specific questions I have regarding this notice.

Step 2: Debrief Questions

I'm now going to ask you a series of more general questions about the letter.

Re-Read

Were there any sections of the notice that you had to re-read or go over more than once?

PROBE: What was your primary reason for doing this?

Skipped

Where there any sections of the notice that you either scanned or skipped over completely?

PROBE: What was your primary reason for doing this?

Now I am going to ask you to rate some aspects of the letter.

Note to Moderator: Provide participant with a copy of the element scale.

Please rate the notice on the following items. Circle the dot that represents how you would rate each item. For example if the question is asking you to rate the temperature of this room and you felt this room was a little too cold, you would circle a dot closer to too cold as seen below. Please circle the dots, not the words.

Room Temperature

Too warm • • • • • • • • • • Too cold

1. Now I would like you to think about the Language of the notice

Very friendly • • • • • • • • • • Very unfriendly

Appropriate • • • • • • • • • • Not appropriate

Too technical • • • • • • • • • • Not technical enough

2. Thinking about the Layout of the Notice

Too long • • • • • • • • • • Too short

Easy to follow • • • • • • • • • • Difficult to follow

