Focus Group Discussion Guide

Note to moderator: GROUP MAY NOT EXCEED 2 HOURS IN LENGTH. PLEASE MANAGE TIME ACCORDINGLY.

Introduction (10 minutes)

Hello my name is ____. I want to start off by letting you know that I am an independent moderator. What that means is that I do not work for [insert name of focus group facility]. I am not looking for you to say one thing or feel another. In fact, I am just here to guide the conversation along. There are no right or wrong answers.

I would also like to point out a few things before we get started. I am video taping this group so I could focus on our conversation and I do have some of my colleagues behind the glass taking notes for me. So please feel free to be candid as your individual information will be kept confidential as it relates to this project.

With regard to cell phones - If you have a cell phone with you tonight, please turn it to vibrate so it does not disrupt the flow of our conversation today.
Let's start off by going around the room. Please introduce yourself, where you are originally from and how long you have lived in [insert city].

Section I: Awareness/Opinions of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

Later this evening, I am going to show you a couple of ideas of a current and proposed website.

But before we get to that point I would like to learn more about your thoughts on the current state of the economy.

Discuss what they know about the economy stimulus and road to recovery.

What do you know about the $787 billion stimulus package? What types of programs or projects is it funding?

What resources do you currently use/or would you use to learn more about the recovery process and allocation of the $787 billion stimulus package? (Create list on flip chart. See if Recovery.gov is mentioned on an unaided basis.)

If not mentioned, how many of you are aware of a website called Recovery.gov? What kinds of information/content might be included on a website called Recovery.gov?

Section II. Design the Recovery.gov website

Transition: We are conducting this research to better assess what folks just like yourself might like to find on a website called Recovery.gov.

Read description about Recovery.gov: Recovery.gov is the U.S. government's official Web site providing easy access to data related to Recovery Act spending and is a forum for reporting fraud, waste, and abuse.

With the pieces of paper in front of you, I would like for you to create your own Recovery.gov website. That is, what types of information would you want to see? How would you organize it?

Please draw it out on an individual basis and then we will discuss as a group.

Discuss as a group.

Section III: Reveal New Website

Bring up Recovery.gov/ on a large television monitor.

Conduct an ad-hoc usability study critique of the existing site Note: conventional usability testing will later be conducted in a one-on-one or dyad format. Group discussion might generate Group Think on a premature basis. Moderator will ask respondents to critique on an individual basis before discussing as a group.

Ask respondents to write down their initial response to the homepage. Where would they click first? Probe all elements of a traditional usability test including homepage, content, navigation, nomenclature.
- Basic user information location and retrieving
- Ask respondents to look at each content category/label and supporting topics
- Discuss if headers/labels and supporting content is clear/intuitive
- Top-line navigation
- Aesthetics
- Economy, i.e. activity was worth the effort for reward achieved
- Total site architecture
- Data visualization components

Assess ways to improve the site.

Section V. Conclusion
In closing, please offer one piece of advice to improve Recovery.gov.

Thank respondents again for their time and participation. Please ask them to leave their paperwork behind.