

## 2012 Survey of Business Owners – Cognitive Interview Protocol

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### Before the Questionnaire:

- What kind of business do you have? What types of products or services do you provide to your customers or clients?
- Do you recall receiving this form in 2007? If so, what do you remember about it? Do you recall whether you completed it and returned it to the Census Bureau?

Now let's take a look at the form.

- *(If R received and completed the form in advance)* I'd like to go through and ask you about your answers.
- *(If R is seeing it for the first time)* I'd like you to approach the form as if you had received it in the mail, and go ahead and fill it out. I'll ask you questions as you go through the form.

## Long Form SBO-1

### Generic probes – For every item

- What is this item asking for, in your opinion?
- How did you go about completing this item?
- How did you decide which answer to choose?
- Did/would you have access to all the information you needed, or did you have to get help from others?
  - *(If needed help)* Whom did/would you contact? What is that person's [role in the company/relationship to you]?
- What records did/would you use to answer this question, if any?

### Specific probes for items of interest

#### Front page

- What did you notice about the front page when you first set eyes upon it?
- Was any information on the front page relevant to you? If so, what?
- Do you recall seeing any instructions for returning the survey or how to get help?
- Do you recall seeing the text under "Start Here"? What does this text mean to you? What does the [first/second] bullet mean to you?

### Page 2, Ownership questions

*Instructions at top of page*

- Do you recall seeing the text at the top of the page, above question 1? What does that mean to you?
  - What do you think about this message?
- What does the sentence starting with “NOTE” mean to you? Does that apply to you?

*Item 1*

- How did you decide whether anyone owns 10% or more of this business?
- *(Note whether R correctly followed skip instruction, if appropriate)*
- What does the text next to the “yes” answer mean to you?
- Do you recall seeing the arrow in this item? What does that mean to you?

*Item 2*

- What does each answer option mean to you?
- Do you recall seeing the text to the right of the answers? What does that mean to you?

*Item 3*

- How many owners does this business have?
- Who is included in the answer you selected?
- How do you define the owners of this business?
- *(Note whether R included her/himself as owner, if appropriate)*

*Item 4*

- *(Note whether R correctly followed skip instruction, if appropriate)*
- What does line [A, B, C] mean to you?
- In line A, what does “the majority of this business” mean to you?
- Do you recall reading the text in parentheses? How well does this match the way you think about family?
- In line C, what does “primarily operated by” mean to you?

*Item 5*

- How did you know the amount owned each owner?
- What does the [first, second, third] bullet mean to you?

## **Page 3, Owner 1**

*Instruction at top of page*

- Do you recall seeing the instruction at the top of the page? What does it mean to you?

*Item 18*

- *(Note whether R correctly followed skip instructions, if appropriate)*
- In line A, what does “active duty” mean to you?
  - Do you recall seeing the text in parentheses? What does it mean to you?

- In line B, do you recall seeing the instruction to select all that apply?
  - What does [each answer] mean to you?

Item 19

- (Note whether R correctly followed skip instruction, if appropriate)

## Page 4, Owner 2

*If seeing form for first time, have R complete this page for one other owner.*

- Whom did you answer these questions for?
- (For each question) How did you know how to answer this question?

## Pages 5-6, Owners 3 and 4

*If seeing the form for the first time:*

- Would you complete pages 3 and 4 for anyone? Who are they?
- How would you know how to answer these questions for them?

*If R completed the form in advance and completed pages 5-6:*

- Whom did you answer these questions for?
- How would you know how to answer these questions for them?

*If R completed the form in advance >2 owners listed in item 5 but left pages 5-6 blank:*

- Do you recall seeing pages 5 and 6 before?
- (If yes) How did you decide not to complete these pages?

## Page 7, Business

Item 67

- What does “franchise” mean to you?

Item 68

- What does “franchiser” mean to you?

Item 69A

- What does “capital” mean to you?
- What does [each] answer option mean to you?

Item 70

- What does “expansion” mean to you?
- What does “capital improvements” mean to you?

## Page 8, Business (continued)

### Item 81

- What does “intellectual properties” mean to you?
- Are there any other types of intellectual property you think should be included on this list?

### Wrap-up

- How likely are you to respond to this request?
- How would you most likely return the survey – by mail, by the website?
- Considering the kinds of questions on the form, do you have any concerns about providing this information to the Census Bureau? If so, which questions do you consider sensitive?
- Do you have any other thoughts about the form that we haven’t discussed?

### Overall impression of the form

- What is your impression of the form?
- What do/did you like about it, if anything?
- What do/did you not like, if anything?

Thanks very much for your time.

## Short Form SBO-2

### Generic probes – For every item

- What is this item asking for, in your opinion?
- How did you go about completing this item?
- How did you decide which answer to choose?
- Did/would you have access to all the information you needed, or did you have to get help from others?
  - *(If needed help)* Whom did/would you contact? What is that person’s [role in the company/relationship to you]?
- What records did/would you use to answer this question, if any?

### Specific probes – For items of interest

#### Front page

- What did you notice about the front page when you first looked at it?
- Was any information on the front page relevant to you? If so, what?
- Do you recall seeing any instructions for returning the survey or how to get help?
- Do you recall seeing the text under “Start Here”? What does this text mean to you? What does the [first/second] bullet mean to you?

## Page 2, Ownership questions

### *Instructions at top of page*

- Do you recall seeing the text at the top of the page, above question 1? What does that mean to you?
  - What do you think about this message?
- What does the sentence starting with “NOTE” mean to you? Does that apply to you?

### *Item 1*

- How did you decide whether anyone owns 10% or more of this business?
- *(Note whether R correctly followed skip instruction, if appropriate)*
- What does the text next to the “yes” answer mean to you?
- Do you recall seeing the arrow in this item? What does that mean to you?

### *Item 2*

- What does each answer option mean to you?
- Do you recall seeing the text to the right of the answers? What does that mean to you?

### *Item 3*

- How many owners does this business have?
- Who is included in the answer you selected?
- How do you define the owners of this business?
- *(Note whether R included her/himself as owner, if appropriate)*

### *Item 4*

- *(Note whether R correctly followed skip instruction, if appropriate)*
- What does line [A, B, C] mean to you?
- In line A, what does “the majority of this business” mean to you?
- Do you recall reading the text in parentheses? How well does this match the way you think about family?
- In line C, what does “primarily operated by” mean to you?

### *Item 5*

- How did you know the amount owned each owner?
- What does the [first, second, third] bullet mean to you?

## Page 3, Owners 1-2

### *Instruction at top of page*

- Do you recall seeing the instruction at the top of the page? What does it mean to you?

### *Item 13*

- (Note whether R correctly followed the skip instruction, if appropriate)
- In line A, what does “during active military service” mean to you?

*If seeing form for first time, have R complete the second section for one other owner*

- Whom did you answer these questions for?
- (For each question) How did you know how to answer this question?

## Page 5, Business

*No specific probes.*

## Wrap-up

- How likely are you to respond to this request?
- How would you most likely return the survey – by mail, by the website?
- Considering the kinds of questions on the form, do you have any concerns about providing this information to the Census Bureau? If so, which questions do you consider sensitive?
- Do you have any other thoughts about the form that we haven't discussed?

*Overall impression of the form*

- What is your impression of the form?
- What do/did you like about it, if anything?
- What do/did you not like, if anything?

Thanks very much for your time.

## Spanish-Language Long and Short Forms

**NOTE: Questions will be translated from the protocols for the English-version long and short forms.**