

November 6, 2012

NOTE TO THE REVIEWER OF: OMB CLEARANCE 1220-0141
“Cognitive and Psychological Research”

FROM: William Mockovak
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Office of Survey Methods Research

SUBJECT: Submission of materials for focus groups and
individual interviews with potential users of the
Occupational Outlook Quarterly (OOQ)

Please accept the enclosed materials for approval under the OMB clearance package 1220-0141
“Cognitive and Psychological Research.”

In accordance with our agreement with OMB, I am submitting a brief description of a series of
proposed focus groups and individual interviews with potential users of the Occupational
Outlook Quarterly. We estimate 50 burden hours will be required for this initial study.

We are attaching the protocol and related forms for this study. If there are any questions
regarding this project, please contact Bill Mockovak at (202) 691-7414 or
Mockovak_W@bls.gov.

1. Introduction and Purpose

The Occupational Outlook Quarterly (OOQ), Career Guide to Industries (CGI), and a series of articles on Green Jobs are publications of the Division of Occupational Employment Projections (DOEP), Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections (OOSEP), Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The OOQ is published quarterly and provides practical information about jobs and careers. The CGI was published biennially as a companion to the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH) to provide career information from an industry perspective, but a redesign is underway to better integrate the CGI with the Occupational Outlook Handbook. The Green Jobs articles are published periodically and provide career information on green jobs.

Current content of the OOQ includes:

- Feature articles
- You're a *what*?
- My career
- Grab bag
- OOChart
- Charting the projections (special biennial issue)

BLS recently formed an internal team to transition the Occupational Outlook Quarterly (OOQ) to an online-only publication; to assess the effectiveness of the OOQ content; to determine if and how the OOQ should be consolidated with other career information, such as the Career Guide to Industries (CGI) and Green Jobs articles; and to recommend improvements to the design and content of this information online.

This initial research will obtain and analyze customer feedback to determine if OOQ content is meeting the needs of its audience, and to generate recommendations to better meet those needs.

In previous research, a brief, online customer satisfaction questionnaire was voluntarily completed by visitors to the OOQ website. Results from this survey identified issues that will be pursued more thoroughly in focus groups, discussion groups, and individual interviews (when group discussions cannot be organized).

2. Participants

Our current plans are to include high school, college, and community college career counselors; reference librarians; Career OneStop counselors; and possibly teachers of a middle school career exploration class. We do not know the exact distribution of volunteers from each of these groups, but the total number of participants will not exceed 50. We are not planning to provide participants an incentive.

3. Research Design

Focus groups (or structured group discussions) and individual interviews will be used to obtain feedback about issues of interest. The focus group protocol is shown in Attachment A, the individual interview script is shown in Attachment B.

4. Burden Hours

Each focus group or individual interview will last a maximum of one hour. The total burden hours will be 50.

5. Data Confidentiality

Participants will be informed as to the voluntary nature of the study. Participants will also be informed that the study will be used to help the Division of Occupational Employment Projections (DOEP) redesign the Occupational Outlook Quarterly. Information related to this study will not be released to the public in any way that would allow identification of individuals except as prescribed under the conditions of the Privacy Act Notice (Attachment C).

6. Attachments

- A. Focus group protocol
- B. Script for individual interview
- C. Participant consent form

Attachment A: Protocol for Focus Group

Introduction

As some context for the questions we are going to be discussing, in the summer of 2012 BLS put an invitation on the Occupational Outlook Quarterly, or OOO, website that asked visitors to respond to a brief online survey.

The purpose of this survey was to answer questions such as who visited the online OOO, how often did they visit the site, how useful did they find the information to be, which type of information did they find most useful, were visitors aware of different OOO features, and what topics would they like to see covered?

The purpose of our discussion group today is to go into more detail about these and similar topics.

When we have a discussion such as this, we each have different roles to play.

- MY TASK will be to keep track of the time and to keep us focused on our specific topics. If we stray too far off course, I will re-focus us and keep us working towards our goal.
- YOUR TASK is the important one. It is to discuss the issues that will be raised today. It's important that you all participate freely, speak up when you have a comment or question, and share any ideas you may have with the group.

Before we go on, let me tell you how a discussion group like this typically works.

- First of all, let me emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers to the questions that I'll be asking of you. We are not here to evaluate you, rather we are just trying to learn what you think about different questions. Please feel free to disagree with others in the group. Also, even if someone has already said what you think, it is okay to tell us that you agree with what has just been said. It helps us to know if more than one person in the group has the same opinion.
- Next, I want to assure you that everything we discuss today will remain confidential. Any information we obtain from you will not be shared with anyone in any way that links you with what you said, and your names will not appear in any report of the findings.
- With your permission, we will be taping this conversation. This allows us to ensure the accuracy of your statements, and will supplement our notes. The tapes will be used for research purposes only, to make sure that we have an accurate account of what was said. Again, we are only interested in what was said and not who said it. I would like to emphasize again that the tapes will remain confidential and your privacy will be protected.
- Also, please wait until another person is finished speaking before speaking up yourself. Please speak loudly, clearly, and one at a time or else it will be difficult for us to decipher the

audiotape when we listen to it later. And please, no side conversations -- we don't want to miss anything that you say!

- Remember that this is an open discussion. Please talk to each other and speak whenever you have something to say. However, I ask that you all be courteous conversationalists. Please don't interrupt one another and try to monitor yourselves. If you find you've been talking a lot, allow others to join in the conversation, and if you haven't said much, please let us hear from you. I encourage every one of you here today to contribute to the discussion, because everyone's opinion is important to us.
- Since we have a set number of questions to cover, please understand in advance that I may have to interrupt the discussion and redirect if we get too far off the topic.

Are there any questions about what I have just covered? If there are no other questions, then let's begin.

1. What do you see as the key purpose or objective of the OOO? How does this differ from the purpose or objective of the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)?
2. Which audience(s) do you think the OOO is geared towards (college students, counselors, young adults, unemployed, etc.)? Which audience do you think the OOO should be geared toward? (Why?) Is the style of writing and depth of analysis appropriate for this audience?
3. Are the topics usually covered in the OOO of interest/value to this audience? If there are multiple audiences, do you have any suggestions for meeting the differing needs of these audiences?
4. Relatively large numbers of people appear to be unfamiliar with the OOO features: Grab Bag, You're a What?, OOChart, and My Career. Do you think this is an example of people not recognizing our names for things, or do readers skip these sections? If readers tend not to recognize BLS names, what should we call these sections?
5. How do people find out about the OOO?
6. What steps could be taken to make more people aware of the OOO and its special features? How do we improve marketing?
7. If you use the print version, do you use it differently from the online version? Should we continue producing a print version, or would providing an online PDF that could be printed be an adequate alternative for those who prefer print?
8. Why are researchers interested in the OOO? Which topical articles are of most interest to them?
9. A list of topics for future articles has been proposed. The most commonly mentioned topics are the following:
 - Sustainability/Green Jobs
 - Career outlook/growth

- STEM careers
- Occupations in most demand
- Workers just entering the work force/entry level
- Social media careers
- Resources/occupations for entrepreneurs

10. Would you like to see articles on the topic of Sustainability or Green Jobs? Even though I can't promise they will be covered, are there any specific issues that you think should be covered?
11. Would you like to see articles on the topic of career outlook or growth? Again, even though I can't promise they will be covered, are there any specific issues or topics that you think should be covered?
12. Would you like to see articles on the topic of STEM careers? Again, are there any specific topics you would like to see covered?
13. Would you like to see articles for workers just entering the work force or in entry level jobs? Again, are there any specific topics you would like to see covered?
14. Before we wrap this session up, are there any other issues or questions that you have about the Occupational Outlook Quarterly?

Attachment B – Script for OOH Individual Interview Questions

As some context for the questions I am going to be asking, in the summer of 2012, BLS put an invitation on the Occupational Outlook Quarterly, or OOH website, that asked visitors to respond to a brief online survey.

We were trying to answer questions such as who visited the online OOH, how often did people visit the site, how useful did they find the information to be, which type of information did they find most useful, were they aware of different OOH features, and what topics would they like to see covered?

Since you are familiar with the Occupational Outlook Quarterly, the purpose of my call today is to ask you a few questions about these and similar topics. This call is completely voluntary, and depending on your answers should take between 15 and 30 minutes. This survey has been approved by OMB under control number 1220-0141, with an expiration date of February 28, 2015.

Before we begin, I want to assure you that your responses will be kept confidential, and you can skip any of my questions if you prefer not to answer one.

Also, with your permission, I would like to tape our conversation because that will help me capture exactly what you say. The tape will be used for research purposes only, and I'll destroy it once my report is written.

Are there any questions before we begin?

1. What do you see as the key purpose or objective of the OOH? How does this differ from the purpose or objective of the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)?
2. Which audience(s) is the OOH geared towards (college students, counselors, young adults, unemployed, etc.)? Which audience do you think the OOH should be geared toward? (Why?) Is the style of writing and depth of analysis appropriate for this audience?
3. Are the topics usually covered in the OOH of interest/value to this audience? If there are multiple audiences, do you have any suggestions for meeting the differing needs of these audiences?
4. Relatively large numbers of people appear to be unfamiliar with the OOH features: Grab Bag, You're a What?, OOChart, and My Career. Do you think this is an example of people not recognizing our names for things, or do readers skip these sections? If readers tend not to recognize BLS names, what should we call these sections?
5. How do people find out about the OOH?
6. What steps could be taken to make more people aware of the OOH and its special features? What steps could we take to improve marketing?

7. If you use the print version, do you use it differently from the online version? Should we continue producing a print version, or would providing an online PDF that could be printed serve as an adequate alternative for those who prefer print?
8. **(Optional)** Why are researchers interested in the OOO? Which topical articles are of most interest to them?
9. A list of topics for future articles have been proposed. The most commonly mentioned topics are the following:
 - Sustainability/Green Jobs
 - Career outlook/growth
 - STEM careers
 - Occupations in most demand
 - Workers just entering the work force/entry level
 - Social media careers
 - Resources/occupations for entrepreneurs
10. Would you like to see articles on the topic of Sustainability or Green Jobs? Even though I can't promise they will be covered, are there any specific issues that you think should be covered?
11. Would you like to see articles on the topic of career outlook or growth? Again, even though I can't promise they will be covered, are there any specific issues or topics that you think should be covered?
12. Would you like to see articles on the topic of STEM careers? Are there any specific topics you would like to see covered?
13. Would you like to see articles for workers just entering the work force or in entry level jobs? Are there any specific topics you would like to see covered?
14. Those are all my questions. Before I say good bye, do you have any comments or questions about the Occupational Outlook Quarterly?

Attachment C – Consent Form

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is conducting research to improve the quality of materials presented on one of its websites: the Occupational Outlook Quarterly.

The Privacy Act notice on the back of this form describes the conditions under which information related to this study will be used by BLS employees and agents.

During this research you may be audio taped, and you will be observed by researchers from BLS.

We estimate this discussion group will last about an hour. Your participation in this research project is voluntary, and you have the right to stop at any time. If you agree to participate, please sign below.

Persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number is 1220-0141 and expires February 28, 2015.

I have read and understand the statements above. I consent to participate in this study.

Participant's signature

Date

Participant's printed name

Researcher's signature

OMB Control Number: 1220-0141
Expiration Date: February 28, 2015

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (5 U.S.C. 552a), you are hereby notified that this study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), under authority of 29 U.S.C. 2. Your voluntary participation is important to the success of this study and will enable the BLS to better understand the behavioral and psychological processes of individuals, as they reflect on the accuracy of BLS information collections. The BLS, its employees, agents, and partner statistical agencies, will use the information you provide for statistical purposes only and will hold the information in confidence to the full extent permitted by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (Title 5 of Public Law 107-347) and other applicable Federal laws, your responses will not be disclosed in identifiable form without your informed consent.