

Attachment 12

Focus Group Protocol

NCVS Focus Group Discussion Guide

Thank you for joining us today.

Westat is a research company that conducts studies on many different topics, for many different clients. This particular project is for the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Today, we are asking for feedback from you all on some of the materials being developed for a pilot study being done to improve the information we get from crime victimization surveys.

1. The whole point of this discussion is to obtain your reactions to the materials I'll be showing you and get your ideas for possibly improving them. There are no right or wrong answers – and we are interested in both positive and negative reactions.
2. Everything covered today will be treated as confidential: we will not share any information we obtain from you with anyone in a way that identifies who you are (for example, we won't use your names in the report of the findings that we'll be writing). We ask that you also not discuss our conversation outside of this group in order to respect the confidentiality of everyone in the group.
3. Behind me is a one way mirror. Behind it are some people I am working with on this project, from Westat as well as the agency we are working for. They came here today as well so that they can see and hear for themselves what you have to say.
4. Also, this discussion is being audio-taped – this is so that others who are interested in the results but could not be here today will be able to hear what you have to say. No one who is not directly involved in this research will listen to the recording.
5. Finally, I want everyone to get a chance to speak when they have something to say. So I ask that you try to keep your comments brief and related to the issue at hand. And I'd appreciate it if you wait until another person is finished speaking before speaking up yourself.

6.

A. Three Versions of the Survey Invitation Letter

6. We're going to be looking at and discussing some materials being developed for a crime victimization survey we are doing next year.
7. This survey will be done by mail. Sampled individuals will get a letter in the mail asking them to participate.
8. Let's look at three different versions of a letter that might be sent out. Please take a look at each and then we'll talk about them.

LETTER VERSION 1 (Fact-filled)

9. What is the message in this letter?
10. What do you think the survey is about, based on the letter?
11. If a letter like this came to your home, what do you think you would do?

LETTER VERSION 2 (Short)

12. What is the message in this letter?
13. What do you think the survey is about, based on the letter?
14. If a letter like this came to your home, what do you think you would do?

LETTER VERSION 3 (Long)

15. What is the message in this letter?
16. What do you think the survey is about, based on the letter?
17. If a letter like this came to your home, what do you think you would do?

COMPARE THE THREE LETTERS

18. Is one letter better in getting you interested in participating in the survey?
 - a. What is it about the letters that get you interested?
 - b. Would you actually give it to the person described?
 - c. How would you identify that person?
 - d. What is the problem with the letter that doesn't get you interested?
19. Do you have any other comments about how these letters compare to one another?

B. Q&A Materials

Finally, we'd like your input into how we might handle commonly asked questions. We usually include material like this to answer questions people might have.

People sometimes ask a question like “*Why is this study important?*” or “*What are the results going to be used for?*”

Take a look at this material we might include with the letter [HANDOUT].

- What would you think of these answers?
- Which one answers the question best?
- Does it help to have the explanations of how previous findings have been used, or is that not necessary?
- Do you have any question about the survey that is not answered here?

C. Additional Information about Crime Victimization

HAND OUT SHEET OF “PREVIOUS FINDINGS”

The “Fact-filled” version of the letter showed a few findings taken from this survey. Take a look at these additional findings....

1. Considering the three letters and the information in them, are there any facts on this page that would be the best to include in these letters? (Why? Would these increase your interest in participating in the survey, or no?)

2. Which ones do you think should not be included?

D. Final comments on Letter

Do you have any other thoughts on what we should say in our letter? (Especially for getting people’s interest in taking part in the survey)

E. Inserts: 2 Versions

HAND OUT “INSERTS”

Now we are going to look at something that will be included with the letter.

What do you think the purpose of these is?

What is the main message [of each one]?

If you got this in the mail, how would you use it?

Which one do you prefer?

Which one would get the person to make the phone call?

F. Refusal Conversion Letter

PASS OUT REFUSAL CONVERSION LETTERS 1 AND 2

1. Who do think we send these letters to?
2. Which letter do you think might be best, for increasing the chances you would participate in the survey?
3. What else do you think we could say in a letter like this that might increase the likelihood people will take part in our survey?

G. Wrap-up

Before I let you go, I want to check with my friends behind the mirror to see if there is anything more they'd like me to ask you about.

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