

2015 National Survey of E-Verify Employers

Moderator Guide for Focus Groups

All Items

Hello, everyone! My name is _____, the facilitator for today's focus group. I am part of a research team at Westat, a social science research firm in Rockville, Maryland. First of all, I would like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this discussion.

As stated in the USCIS letter we sent you, the purpose of this focus group is to obtain feedback from companies on a draft survey of E-Verify users before it is finalized for the full study later this year.

I would like to quickly review some guidelines for today's meeting.

First, please make sure you have your completed copy of the survey available to look at during the discussion.

- There is no right or wrong answer to any of the questions and issues we will discuss today. We encourage your candid opinions and suggestions.
- We want to hear what each person has to say, so we ask that only one person speak at a time.
- All information from discussions will be kept private. We will **not use your name or the name of your company** in any reports or notes. I encourage you to speak honestly and candidly so we can hear as many perspectives as possible. Therefore, can we all agree NOT to share information from the focus group with anyone outside of the group? *[Wait for everyone to say "yes."]*
- With me are a few observers who are part of the Westat research team who are very interested in hearing your opinions and one of them is taking notes as a backup to the

audiorecording. We are audiorecording the discussion so I can focus on listening to your comments.

- Because we are audiotaping the discussion, I need you to speak in a voice as loud as mine. If your voice gets too low, I'll ask you to speak up.
- When you begin to respond to a question or make a comment, please start by stating your first name only, so that I can identify the speaker while also protecting privacy.
- Please use your phone handset rather than the speaker phone, if possible, when you are speaking. The speaker phone is more likely to distort the sound or pick up background noise.
- We have many questions to cover in a short period of time; therefore, I apologize up front if I must interrupt you so we can move on to the next topic. If time permits, I will return to any unfinished discussions.

Does everyone have their completed copy of the survey available to look at during our discussion? We will ask you questions about each of the highlighted survey questions you were asked to review and comment on. We will post these "questions about the questions" on your computer screen.

Are there any questions before we begin? *[Wait for them to ask questions.]*

Let's begin by introducing ourselves. Please tell us your first name, the type of work your company does, and the number of employees working for your company. For example, I am _____ and I work for a social science research company with about 2,000 employees.

First, I have a few general questions for you.

- How difficult was it to follow the instructions throughout the survey?

- If you completed the entire survey, how much time did it take?
- Were you able to answer all the questions by yourself or did you need to get any answers from co-workers? If you needed help, for what types of questions?

Now let's talk about specific survey items. As we go through the questionnaire, we may reach a question where you had difficulty providing the answer—for example, you may not have understood the question, you may not have had any good way to find the answer, or it may have been very time-consuming to try to find an answer. I will try to ask about the areas where we think you were most likely to have problems, but please let me know about any problems whether I ask or not, or even if I skip past a question.

As you know, our focus is on the highlighted questions, so let's begin with Question _____

SECTION A: Contact and Company Background Information

A6. Which description below best fits your company?

- What do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer the question? If difficult, what made it difficult?
- If your company has multiple buildings on a campus, would you consider this to be one location or multiple locations?

A14. Before we continue with the survey, we would like your comments or suggestions for improving E-Verify. [NOTE: NEED TWO VERSIONS OF QUESTION]

- How did you feel about answering this open-ended question at this point in the survey?
- How did you respond to this question?
[IF COMMENT INDICATES A PREFERENCE FOR A DIFFERENT PLACEMENT ASK:] What would be a better place to ask this question and why?

SECTION B: Implementing the E-Verify System

B4. For each of the statements below, select the answer that best represents your company's experience with the E-Verify enrollment and start-up process.

- a. **The online enrollment process was easy to complete**
- b. **The online enrollment process was too time-consuming**

- What things came to mind when you read the term “enrollment process”? What activities did you think about when answering this question?
- [IF NO ONE REFERS TO THE TERM REGISTRATION, ASK:] Do you consider enrolling in E-Verify the same thing as registering in it? [IF NEEDED, PROBE ANSWER]
- Did anyone answer “don’t know” for Question 4a or 4b? If yes, what led you to make this selection? What would you have to do to get the needed information and how difficult would that be?
- Is the person who enrolled your company in E-Verify still employed by your company? Did that person remember his/her experience with the enrollment process?
- If you are not the person who enrolled your company in E-Verify, how did you answer these questions?
- What amount of time would you consider too time-consuming?

B5. For your company, how helpful are each of the following resources and features that are provided as part of the E-Verify system?

(d) E-Verify Quick Reference Guide

- Did you know what the E-Verify Quick Reference Guide was when you first read the question? [IF NOT, ASK:]
 - o Were you able to find out what it is?
 - o [IF THEY WERE ABLE TO FIND OUT, ASK] How did you get this information?
 - o [IF NO ONE IN THE GROUP WAS ABLE TO FIND OUT, ASK] What might you have to do to get the needed information and how difficult would that be?

B6. Thinking about system navigation and data entry issues, how user-friendly is the E-Verify system?

- Did anyone answer “moderately user-friendly” or “slightly user-friendly”? [IF YES, ASK:]
 - o Do you think “moderately user-friendly” is different from “slightly user-friendly”?
 - If yes, describe how it’s different to you.

- If no, what other terms could we use to distinguish between the two terms?

B7. Have you personally ever tried calling the E-Verify Technical Help Desk (800-741-5023) or the E-Verify Customer Service number (888-464-4218)?

- Did anyone choose answer #3: “No, we had problems but chose not to call”?
 - o [IF YES, ASK:] If we did not provide this answer to the question, which other answer would you have picked and why?
 - o [IF NO, ASK:] If we did not provide this response option to the question, would you have answered this question differently? [AS NEEDED, PROBE WHAT ANSWER WOULD HAVE BEEN]

SECTION C: Experiences with E-Verify

C2. Which of the following was the main reason your company agreed to participate in E-Verify?

- How easy or difficult was it to report a **primary** reason for using E-Verify? [IF DIFFICULT, ASK:]
 - o Why was it difficult? What would you have to do to get this information?
- Did anyone answer “Don’t know”? What would you have to do to get the needed information and how difficult would that be? How time-consuming would it be?

C3. Please answer the following questions about your company’s use of E-Verify.

- Did you have to read either of the statements (i.e., items a and b) more than once before you clearly understood what was being asked? [IF YES, ASK:]
 - o What things about the question were not immediately clear to you? What would make the question clearer to you?
- Did anyone answer “don’t know” for either of the items in this question? If yes, what led you to make this selection? What would you have to do to get the needed information and how difficult would that be? How time-consuming would it be?

[FOR EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES OR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT ORGANIZATIONS, ASK:]

- How did you answer this question---for your own company or for your clients?
- Was it clear that you needed to answer the question for your **own** company and not your clients?
- How easy or difficult was it to provide this information? How time-consuming was it to get this information? [IF DIFFICULT OR TIME-CONSUMING, ASK:]
 - What did you have to do to obtain the information?

C5. Why would you be likely to continue using E-Verify? [NOTE: THIS QUESTION IS ASKED ONLY OF MANDATED USERS THAT WOULD USE E-VERIFY IF NO LONGER REQUIRED TO DO SO]

(c) To remain more competitive with other companies in our industry

- Did anyone respond to this question?
- What did this statement mean to you?

C6. Why would you be unlikely to continue using E-Verify? [NOTE: THIS QUESTION IS ASKED ONLY OF MANDATED USERS THAT WOULD NOT USE E-VERIFY IF NO LONGER REQUIRED TO DO SO]

(d) The financial costs of using E-Verify outweigh the benefits of using it

- Did anyone respond to this question?
- What did this statement mean to you? What kinds of costs did you think about when answering this question?
- How did you answer this question? Could you say more about why you answered this way? [IF THE ANSWER IS DON'T KNOW, ASK:]
 - What would you have to do to get the needed information and how difficult would that be? How time-consuming would it be?

(c) Using E-Verify makes us less competitive with other companies in our industry

- Did anyone respond to this question?
- What did this statement mean to you?

C9. How has using E-Verify made it harder for your company to recruit qualified workers?

- Did anyone respond to this question?
- What do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what made it difficult for you?
- How did you answer the question? [PROBE ANSWERS AS NEEDED]

C10. How has using E-Verify created a competitive advantage for your company?

- Did anyone respond to this question?
- What do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what made it difficult for you?
- How did you answer the question? [PROBE ANSWERS AS NEEDED]

C11. How has using E-Verify caused your company to be less competitive?

- Did anyone respond to this question?
- What do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what made it difficult for you?
- How did you answer the question? [PROBE ANSWERS AS NEEDED]

C12. Please consider each of the following statements related to E-Verify and select the response that best represents the experiences at your company.

(g) At times it is impossible to submit the information required by the deadline

- What do you think this question is asking about?
- Was this question clear to you?
- What deadline(s) did you think about when reading this question?
- How did you answer this question?

C13. Which of these situations make it difficult for your company to meet the E-Verify deadline for submitting cases within 3 days of hire?

- Did anyone respond to this question? [IF NO ONE RESPONDED TO THIS QUESTION, CONFIRM THAT THEY SKIPPED C14 AND C15.]
- Did you have to read any part of this question more than once before you clearly understood what was being asked? [IF YES, ASK:]
 - What things about the question were not immediately clear to you? What can we do to make the question clearer?
- Was it immediately clear that you could provide more than one answer to this question? If not, how could we change the question to make it clearer?
- Did you have easy access to the information needed to answer this question? If not, what did you have to do to get the information?
- How did you answer the question? Do you think others in your company might have answered this differently? If so, how do you think they may have answered and why would the answers be different??
- Did anyone answer "Other" for the question? If yes, what did you specify?

C14. Which ONE of these situations presents the most difficulty for your company to submit cases within 3 days of hire?

- Did you have easy access to the information needed to answer this question? If not, what did you need to do to get the information?
- Was it immediately clear that you should choose only **one** answer to this question? If not, how could we change the question to make it clearer?
- Did you have trouble picking just one of the situations listed? If so, why was it difficult to choose only one?
- Did anyone answer “Other” for the question? If yes, what did you specify?

C15. How many days would you like to have to submit this information?

- What did you think “this information” meant?
- How did you answer this question?
- Why does your company need the time specified to submit cases to E-Verify?
- Did anyone answer “More than a week” to this question? If yes, what did you specify and what led you to this answer?
- Did you need to consult with anyone else at your company to answer this question? If yes, how many persons did you consult and what are their job titles? How time-consuming was this process?

C16. Which of the following best describes your company’s hiring pattern?

- Did anyone answer this question?
- What do you think this question is asking?
- What does the term “year-round” mean to you? How are these workers different from “seasonal workers?”
- Did you need to consult with anyone else at your company to answer this question? If yes, how many persons did you consult and what are their job titles? How time-consuming was this process?

C18. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the overall costs of E-Verify to your company?

- Did you need to read any parts of these questions (items a and b) more than once before you clearly understood what was being asked? ? [IF YES, ASK:]
 - o What things about the question were not immediately clear to you? What can we do to make the question clearer?
- Did you need to consult with anyone else at your company to answer this question? If yes, how many persons did you consult and what are their job titles? How time-consuming was this process?
- Did anyone answer “don’t know” for either of the items in this question? If yes, what led you to make this selection? What would you have to do to obtain the needed information and how difficult would that be? How time-consuming would that be?

C21. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the use of Photo Matching reduced your responsibility to be certain that the person presenting the document is the right person?

- What did you think this question was asking?
- How did you respond to this question?

C24. Why is your company more willing to hire job applicants that appear to be foreign born?

- Did anyone answer this question?
- What do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, how so?
- How did you answer the question? [PROBE ANSWERS AS NEEDED]

C25. Why is your company less willing to hire job applicants that appear to be foreign born?

- Did anyone answer this question?
- What do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what made it difficult?
- How did you answer the question? [PROBE ANSWERS AS NEEDED]

SECTION D: Experiences with E-Verify

D3. How often would you say workers provide email addresses on their Form I-9?

- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- Did you need to consult with anyone else in your company to answer this question? If yes, how many persons did you consult and what are their job titles? How time-consuming was this process?
- How did you answer this question?

D4. If workers provide their email addresses on the Form I-9, how often do you submit that information to the E-Verify system when creating a case for the worker?

- What do you think this question is asking?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- Did you need to consult with anyone else in your company to answer this question? If yes, how many persons did you consult and what are their job titles? How time-consuming was this process?
- How did you answer this question?

D5. Why don't you always submit the workers' email addresses to the E-Verify system?

- Did anyone answer this question?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- How did you answer this question? [PROBE ANSWERS AS NEEDED]]
- Would you have been inclined to skip or respond to this question if it applied to your company? Why?

D6. E-Verify has implemented a new feature to alert employers when they are creating a duplicate case (i.e., when the social security number of the current case matches another recently-submitted case.)

How often have you had a duplicate case alert when creating a case in E-Verify?

- Was it immediately clear to you what a duplicate case alert was? If not, what would make it clearer?
- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- Did you need to consult with anyone else in your company to answer this question? If yes, how many persons did you consult and what are their job titles? How time-consuming was this process?
- How did you answer this question?
[NOTE: IF ALL PARTICIPANTS RESPONDED "NEVER", SKIP TO QD12]

D7. Generally, how useful was the duplicate case alert?

- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- How did you answer this question?

D8. When you received a duplicate case alert, how did you respond to it?

- Were all of the response categories clear to you, or did you have difficulty understanding any of them? If so, which one(s)? What made them difficult?
- Was it immediately clear to you that you were to choose a "yes" or "no" answer for *each* of the four statements?
- How did you answer this question? [PROBE ANSWERS AS NEEDED]
- Did anyone answer "Other" for the question? If yes, what did you specify?

D12. USCIS recently implemented the Further Action Notice to replace the Tentative Nonconfirmation notice.

Has your company used the Further Action Notice to process Tentative Nonconfirmations?

- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- Is the term "Further Action Notice" or FAN a term you are familiar with? How do you refer to it, if at all?
- How did you answer this question?

D13. Generally, how satisfied were you with your experience in using the Further Action Notice?

- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- Has anyone used the old TNC Notice? If yes, are you aware of the similarities and differences between the two notices?
- How did you answer this question?

D14. How often does your company do the following when using the Further Action Notice and Referral Date Confirmation?

- How easy or difficult was it to answer this question? If difficult, what about the question made it difficult to answer?
- Were all the response statements clear? Did any the statements seem too similar in content?
- Was it immediately clear to you that you were to choose a response for each of the eight statements?
- Did you need to consult with anyone else in your company to answer this question? If yes, how many persons did you consult and what are their job titles? How time-consuming was this process?
- If your company did not follow the procedures, would you feel comfortable answering “never” or “sometimes” to these questions?

D21. The following statements describe possible changes that could be made to E-Verify procedures. Please select the answer that best describes your views for each of these possible changes.

f. Allowing employers that are not Federal contractors to verify existing employees

- What do you think this statement is saying?
- How did you answer this question and why did you respond this way?
- Did anyone include a similar suggestion (i.e., to allow employers to verify existing employees?) in your response to the open-ended question A14?
 - If not, would you have added it to an open-ended question if the open-ended question had appeared at the end of the questionnaire?
- Did you know that Federal contracts that contain a specific FAR rule allow Federal contractors to verify existing employees?
 - Does this knowledge change your initial response to this statement? If so, how and why?

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