

Attachment A: HITRC Training Focus Group Protocol

Step 1: Invite HITRC Training participants to attend the focus group

The moderator of the focus group should send the invitation below to registered training participants three months after their participation in a given training event.

What	When to Send
Email Invitation to Attend Focus Group	Three Months Following Course Participation
<p>Email Text:</p> <p>Dear [NAME],</p> <p>Three months ago, you completed the HITRC training, [insert course name here]. The HITRC Training Team would like to assess how much the training has helped you on the job in the last three months, as well as what kind of specific impacts you may have noticed.</p> <p>To this end, the HITRC Training Team would like to invite you to attend a brief, 45 minute focus group to share your ideas and stories around how the training has helped you. Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you would like to participate, please reply to this email message with your availability to attend a focus group in the next two weeks.</p> <p>If you have any questions about the focus group or HITRC Training, please reply to this email or contact us at HITRCTraining.os@hhs.gov.</p> <p>Thanks, HITRC Training Team</p> <p>NOTE ON PUBLIC REPORTING BURDEN Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 45 minutes per person, the estimated time required to participate. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control number for this information collection is xxxx-xxxx. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave. S.W., Attn: OS Reports Clearance Officer, Washington, D.C. 20201.</p>	

Step 2: Schedule the focus group

Once the date is decided, send an email confirmation to all participants.

What	When to Send
Email Confirmation of Focus Group Schedule	After date and time are confirmed with participants

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Email Text:

Dear [NAME],

Thank you in advance for volunteering your time to participate in the HITRC Training Team's focus group regarding the course you attended, [insert course name here]. The HITRC Training Team is grateful for your feedback.

This email confirms your attendance at the focus group on DATE at TIME. The focus group will be held virtually through the following conference line:

INSERT DIAL-IN INFORMATION

As a reminder, your participation is entirely voluntary. If you have any questions about the focus group or HITRC Training, please reply to this email or contact us at HITRCTraining.os@hhs.gov.

Thanks,
HITRC Training Team

NOTE ON PUBLIC REPORTING BURDEN

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Step 3: Use the focus group script to conduct the discussion

The script below should serve as a guide for conducting the focus group. The moderator should read the introduction and ask focus group participants the questions provided prior to closing.

Introduction (3 min)

Good morning/ good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for taking the time today to participate in this focus group. My name is [NAME] and I am a member of the HITRC Training Team.

My goal today is to understand how [TRAINING PROGRAM NAME] has impacted your day-to-day job. I understand that you took part in this training in the past few months, and I am trying to assess the value this training brings to REC staff like you.

During the discussion today, I will capture your responses on my laptop. The information you share with me will only be used by the HITRC Training Team to evaluate the effectiveness of this training, and we will not share this information with your supervisors. I take notes only so I can compile the data from all the focus groups. The data we gather from the focus groups will be used to improve our training events.

We have 45 minutes scheduled for this focus group.

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Are there any questions?

Before we proceed, allow me to go over a few ground rules with you. I know that you have busy schedules so in order for me to capture your responses and end on time, I request that you:

1. Listen carefully and allow time for each participant to talk
2. Work to create an open and frank dialogue that allows for a full and respectful discussion around the topics at hand
3. Respect and maintain the confidentiality of the group; what is said in the focus group is not to be repeated or discussed at any other time or place

Questions (40 min)

1. Tell us your name and share your Regional Extension Center (REC) affiliation.

I hope the training has been helpful to you. As a quick refresher, the learning objectives of the course were: **[INSERT LEARNING OBJECTIVES]**

Using these learning objectives as a guide, we can continue the discussion by talking through any benefits you have seen to date as a result of the training.

2. How has this particular training event impacted your ability to perform in your day-to-day job?
 - a. Are there any specific anecdotes you can share where the training has helped you, or how you have applied the concepts you learned to solve a specific problem?
 - b. If you could estimate a percent improvement in performance from 0 to 100 percent, what would it be?
 - c. How much of that improvement is related to the training and how much do you think is related to on-the-job reinforcement?
3. After you attended the training, what kind of on-the-job support did you seek to help you implement what you learned?

[Moderator Note: If needed, give examples such as job aids, mentoring, or one-on-one meetings with supervisor]

4. What other training needs to you or your co-workers have?
5. Is there any additional information that we have not captured today?

Closing (2 min)

Thank you, again, for your time. Your input has a significant impact on our course offerings and the actual content of courses. Would you mind if I follow up with you in the next couple of weeks in case we need to clarify the data I gathered today? If I do need to contact you, it will not take more than a few minutes. Also, should you have additional feedback, feel free to contact me. I appreciate your assistance.

Step 4: Thank participants for providing their input

The focus group moderator should send the following email to each participant within 24 hours after the focus group occurrence.

What	When to Send
Thank You Email	After focus group
<p>Email Text:</p> <p>Dear [NAME],</p> <p>I am writing to thank you for your recent participation in a focus group to discuss how the course, [INSERT TRAINING PROGRAM], has had an impact on you and your day-to-day job. I appreciate the time you invested in sharing your feedback with me, and I assure you this information will be used to help ensure the HITRC Training Team delivers high impact training to REC staff like you.</p> <p>If you have any additional feedback you would like to share, please do not hesitate to contact me.</p> <p>Thanks, [NAME] on behalf of the HITRC Training Team</p>	