

PATH Focus Group Moderator Guide

Social Media

Overview

Thank you for agreeing to participate this evening in a discussion about tobacco-related content on social media sites. My name is _____ and I will be leading the session tonight. With me is _____, who will be taking notes and helping me with the discussion.

_____ and I both work for Westat, a company based in Rockville, MD that conducts research on many different topics for a variety of government agencies. Westat has been contracted by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to develop materials and questions for a study known as the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health, or “PATH”. PATH is a national study that will look at how people use tobacco (or don’t) over a period of many years. Data collected during the study will help provide the scientific background for the development of product regulations to reduce tobacco-related illnesses and deaths in the United States.

Today, we’ll be asking you questions about your experiences with seeing tobacco-related content on social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and others. Our discussions today will help us develop questions to include in the PATH Study

Before we get started there are a few things I should mention. This is a research project, and your participation is voluntary. You may leave at any time during the session. You will receive [\$50 (*for young adults*) / \$30 (*for youth*)] as a thank you for participating in tonight’s discussion.

Your participation is also anonymous. Our report to NIH and the FDA will include the ideas that you all share with me today, but not your names. They are interested in *what* gets said, not *who* said what. Sometimes we do include quotes from groups like this, but we never use participants’ names in any reports. We also won’t share your names with NIH or the FDA, except as required by law.

Behind me is an observation room. Sitting in there tonight are [Westat staff and NIH or FDA staff]. They are also here to learn from you. Towards the end of the group, I’ll go back and see if our discussion raised any questions that they would like me to ask you. Because they are part of the research team, they also cannot attribute what they hear tonight to any one of you in particular. In fact, they only know your first name as it’s written on your name card.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 86 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. 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. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: NIH, Project Clearance Branch, 6705 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7974, Bethesda, MD 20892-7974, ATTN: PRA (0925-0675). Do not return the completed form to this address.

In addition, we need to audio record this focus group session. This helps _____ and I; I can listen better to what you are saying, and the recording will help _____ be sure that her notes are complete. We will destroy the file and any identifying information when the project ends.

I will look at your name tags and call on you by your first name. However, when studying the transcripts from today's session, it is helpful for me to know when we change speakers. So, please identify yourself when you speak so that we have that on tape. Also, please try to speak one at a time.

If you need a restroom, they are located _____. Please feel free to step out if you need to, but don't all leave at once!

Does anyone have any questions? [ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS]

In front of you is a form that says I've fully explained what we're doing today, and what your rights are as participants in this discussion. Please take a moment to read it and let me know if there is anything on the form that you do not understand. If you understand and are ok with what we're doing this evening, please sign and date one copy of the form and give that to _____. The other copy is for you to keep. It has contact information for the study director at Westat, in case you should have any questions later on. [COLLECT ALL FORMS]

If everyone's ready, we're going to start recording the session now.

Introductions

Let's start off by going around the room: state just your first name and tell us something interesting about who you are - a hobby you may have, a unique experience, something like that.

Social Media Content

Tobacco/ENDs related Content Seen:

OK, so you've all told us that you use social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and so on. Let's go around the room and I'd like each of you to tell us which social media sites you have visited in the past three months, including sites where you don't have an account.

When you visit these social media sites, do you use a computer, tablet, or smart phone? Or something else?

Which of these sites do you use/visit the most?

On any of these sites, have you seen anything related to tobacco products or electronic nicotine products like e-cigarettes? What kinds of things have you seen? WRITE ON WHITE BOARD.

IF NOT MENTIONED, What about pictures or videos posted by friends? What about ads for products? What about articles about these products?

Characterization of Content

Now let's look through this list of things you have mentioned.

GO THROUGH LIST ONE BY ONE:

- Do you think this encourages, discourages, or is neutral the use of tobacco or electronic nicotine products?
- Why do you think it encourages/discourages/is neutral?
- Does anyone have a different opinion? EXPLORE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION IN ROOM

Overall, what do you see more of—stuff that encourages tobacco use, stuff that discourages it, or stuff that is neutral?

Apps

Tobacco/ENDs Related Content Seen:

Now let's talk about apps related to tobacco or electronic nicotine products such as e-cigarettes. There are apps that are games, that give information about a product and where to buy it, that track use or help people quit. What kinds of apps have you heard of or used? WRITE ON WHITE BOARD

FOR EACH APP, What does the app do? What do you use it for? Do you know who made the app? How did you hear about the app?

Characterization of Content

Now let's look through this list of apps you have mentioned. GO THROUGH LIST ONE BY ONE: Do you think this encourages, discourages, or is neutral about the use of tobacco or electronic nicotine products?

Why do you think it encourages/discourages/is neutral?

Does anyone have a different opinion? EXPLORE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION IN ROOM

Overall, which do you think there are more of—apps that encourages tobacco use, apps that discourage it, or apps that are neutral?

Card Sort

I have a set of cards here, with posts and pictures from social media sites. I'd like everyone to take a few minutes to sort these pictures into three piles: posts and pictures that encourage tobacco use, those that discourage tobacco use, and those that are neutral. [WRITE THREE CATEGORIES ON BOARD.]

AFTER SEVERAL MINUTES, Now let's talk about how you sorted these posts and pictures.

FOR EACH CARD: HOLD UP CARD. Which pile did you put this card in? Why? Did anyone put it in a different pile? Tell me why.

PROBE AS NEEDED

- How did you decide if this post/picture encouraged or discouraged tobacco use?
- Was it difficult to choose a pile for this card? Why?

Now let's look at every card that was in your encourage pile. Are there things that are similar about those cards? Things that the cards have in common?

REPEAT FOR EACH PILE

What would you call each of these piles? NOTE ANY LANGUAGE RESPONDENT USES TO DESCRIBE EACH CATEGORY.

PASS OUT RUBBER BANDS AND NOTECARDS. We'd like you to label each pile [encourage, discourage, or neutral] and put a rubber band around each pile. COLLECT PILES.

Close

Those are all the questions I have for you, but let me check with my colleagues behind the glass to see if there are issues you all raised about which they have additional questions. [CHECK WITH OBSERVERS, RETURN AND ASK ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS, AS APPROPRIATE]

Thank you for your thoughts and your time today.
DISTRIBUTE INCENTIVE OR DIRECT RESPONDENTS TO FRONT DESK.