

Request for Approval under the Persona Creation Interviews for Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Taxpayer Segmentation & Persona Creation Study - Attachment
(OMB Control Number: 1545-1432)

**Forrester / IRS Persona Creation Research
Screener
5-10-12
W&I Taxpayers**

Audience	Total Sample Size
W&I Taxpayers - IN PERSON	N=21 (6 back up participants will be recruited)
W&I Taxpayers - PHONE	N=21 (2 back up participants will be recruited)
W&I Taxpayers - TOTAL	N=42 (50 total will be recruited including back-up participants)

Persona Research Recruiting Screener

Overview

This document contains a screener to be used to recruit respondents for participant interviews.

Thank you for volunteering to participate in our survey. The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB control number on all public information requests. The OMB Control Number for this study is 1545-1432. The time estimated for participation is 75 minutes for phone interviews and 90 minutes for in-person interviews. If you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making this process simpler, please write to the, Internal Revenue Service, Tax Products Coordinating Committee, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20224.

Screener Questions

1. Record gender (no need to ask, collect and record).
 - a. Male (Recruit 21)
 - b. Female (Recruit 21)

2. Are you currently employed (preference for yes)?
 - a. Yes (Go to Q 5)
 - b. No (Go to Q.3)

3. Are you retired?
 - a. Yes (Recruit 1-2)
 - b. No (Recruit 1-2)

4. Are you currently unemployed?

- a. Yes (Recruit 1-2)
5. What is your job title? _____
6. Please tell me your age: _____
- a. 18-25 (Recruit 3)
 - b. 26-35 (Recruit 8)
 - c. 36-45 (Recruit 10)
 - d. 46-55 (Recruit 10)
 - e. 56-65 (Recruit 8)
 - f. 66-75 (Recruit 2)
 - g. 76-80 (Recruit 1)
7. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin (ethnicity)?
- a. Yes (Recruit 7, Go to Q. 8 to collect and record race as well)
 - b. No (Go to Q. 9)

Note: Below are two questions related to race. Based upon responses to Q7 above, we will move to *either* Q8 or Q9. This will allow us to ensure that we are recruiting an appropriate mix of individuals that are (and are not) of Hispanic or Latino origin *and then* the appropriate mix of races.

8. What is your race? Please select one or more.
Are you... [ACCEPT ALL MULTIPLE ANSWERS.]:
- a. White
 - b. Black or African American
 - c. Asian
 - d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - e. American Indian or Alaskan Native

(Record and Go to Q.10)

9. What is your race? Please select one or more.
Are you... [ACCEPT ALL MULTIPLE ANSWERS.]:
- a. White (Recruit 30)
 - b. Black or African American (Recruit 5)
 - c. Asian (Recruit 2)
 - d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Recruit 2-3)
 - e. American Indian or Alaskan Native (Recruit 2-3)

10. Have you or any family members participated in any market research studies (such as a focus group or interview) on the following topics in the past year?
- a. Financial studies, like banking (CONTINUE)
 - b. Marketing studies, such as about retail stores (CONTINUE)

- c. IRS/tax studies, such as about tax preparation (TERMINATE)
 - d. Media studies, like television viewing (CONTINUE)
11. Are you or any family members employed in any of the following government organizations?
- a. County or State Health Department (CONTINUE)
 - b. City Police or Firefighters (CONTINUE)
 - c. Internal Revenue Service (TERMINATE)
 - d. Census Bureau (CONTINUE)
 - e. Department of Public Works (CONTINUE)
12. Are you or any family members employed in any of the following business types?
- a. Banking (CONTINUE)
 - b. Tax Preparation (TERMINATE)
 - c. Hotel Management (CONTINUE)
 - d. Manufacturing (CONTINUE)
 - e. Construction (CONTINUE)
13. How often do you use a computer or access the Internet¹?
- a. Daily
 - b. Weekly
 - c. Monthly
 - d. Less Often
 - e. Never
- (Recruit 8 who report either “Less Often” or “Never”)¹
14. Did you file your 2011 federal tax return this year?
- a. Yes (CONTINUE)
 - b. No (TERMINATE)
15. Have you personally contacted the IRS at any time in the last 3 years?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
16. When filing your taxes, which of the following tax forms did you use (see footnote)²?
- a. 1040
 - b. 1040A
 - c. 1040EZ
17. When changes are proposed or made to US tax laws, how much attention do you pay to whether they may or may not impact your personal tax situation?
- a. A lot of attention
 - b. A fair amount

¹ <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2012/Digital-differences/Overview.aspx>; reports that 1 in 5 American adults do not use the Internet.
² If the respondent needs help determining which form they used, please use the information in Appendix A or Appendix B to assist them.

- c. ___ Some
- d. ___ A little bit
- e. ___ No attention at all

18. How were your 2011 federal taxes filed?

- a. ___ Your return was filed using paper forms (Recruit 8, go to Q 20)
- b. ___ Your return was filed electronically (Go to Q. 19)

19. Which of the following methods did you use to electronically file?

- a. ___ You filed your return yourself (Recruit 12)
- b. ___ A professional tax preparer filed your return (Recruit 22)

20. Thinking about your 2011 federal tax return, how simple or complex would you say it was to prepare and file on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being really simple and 10 being very complex?

- a. ___ 1 really simple
- b. ___ 2
- c. ___ 3
- d. ___ 4
- e. ___ 5
- f. ___ 6
- g. ___ 7
- h. ___ 8
- i. ___ 9
- j. ___ 10 very complex

21. How much of your time and effort goes into the preparation of your taxes (saving and organizing receipts, etc.—the tasks you do before you sit down to file taxes)?

- a. ___ Quite a lot of time and effort
- b. ___ A fair amount
- c. ___ Some
- d. ___ A little
- e. ___ None at all

22. How much of your time and effort goes into actually filing your taxes, after the preparation step we talked about in the last question?

- a. ___ Quite a lot of time and effort
- b. ___ A fair amount
- c. ___ Some
- d. ___ A little
- e. ___ None at all

23. In general, how easy or difficult do you consider activities involved with preparing and filing federal tax returns to be?
- a. ___ Very easy
 - b. ___ Easy
 - c. ___ Somewhat easy
 - d. ___ Neither easy nor hard
 - e. ___ Somewhat hard
 - f. ___ Hard
 - g. ___ Very hard
24. As a general rule, what is your approach to withholding and tax payments?
- a. ___ I'd rather withhold more and ensure I get the most possible.
 - b. ___ I understand the IRS requires tax payments but I would like to withhold some of them.
 - c. ___ I don't care to withhold any tax payments.
25. How challenging is it to understand the language and instructions on tax forms?
- a. ___ Very easy
 - b. ___ Easy
 - c. ___ Somewhat easy
 - d. ___ Neither easy nor challenging
 - e. ___ Somewhat challenging
 - f. ___ Challenging
 - g. ___ Very challenging
26. What is the highest level of education you have completed (recruit mix)?
- a. Less than high school
 - b. High school or GED
 - c. Some college or a 2-year college program
 - d. Vocational or technical school
 - e. 4-year college graduate
 - f. Some graduate school
 - g. Graduate degree
27. How would you rate your satisfaction with the services provided by the IRS (preference for satisfied)?
- a. ___ Very Dissatisfied
 - b. ___ Dissatisfied
 - c. ___ Somewhat Dissatisfied
 - d. ___ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - e. ___ Somewhat Satisfied
 - f. ___ Satisfied
 - g. ___ Very Satisfied

Invitation

As part of our research study, we are inviting people who fit the criteria to join us for in-person interviews (90 min.)/ phone interviews (75 min.).

Let me tell you a little about it before you decide. The session will last for (x min.), and we will be asking about your daily life activities, how you interact with technology and information sources, and about your thoughts and perceptions around taxes. We will ask you about getting the information you need to prepare your federal taxes, IRS-related information you’ve used, and about the organization and how it serves taxpayers. You will not be asked any particular or personal information about your taxes (for example, how much your return was or specific deductions information). Two professional interviewers will conduct the session.

For privacy purposes we will not associate any of your personally identifiable information (name, address etc.) with the session materials, instead, we will use a code number to identify you.

You will be compensated \$100 for your time.

The session will be video and audio taped (audio only for telephone interviews) for use by our client for their internal research purposes. Your name and contact information will be kept private to the extent allowed by law. Before the interview, you will be asked to sign a ‘Consent to Participate’ and ‘Non-Disclosure’ Agreement (if phone interview, they will be asked to sign and return these documents by mail pre-interview).

The phone/in-person interview will be on (time/date TBD)/ held at our facility on (time/date TBD).

Are you interested in participating?

- YES (CONTINUE)
- NO (TERMINATE)

May I get your contact information?

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (Preferred) _____ (2nd) _____

Email (Preferred) _____ (2nd) _____

My supervisor will call you back to verify the information you’ve provided to me and to answer any questions you may have. We will send driving and parking directions to you (for in-person interviews), and will give you a reminder call a day or two before the interview.

Thank you—we’ll be in touch.

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Reminder phone call/confirmation

Reminder phone call for **phone interviews**:

"Hello, this is (name) calling from (research firm) to remind you that your phone interview will take place on (date) at (time). Two professional interviewers will call you to conduct the interview. Do you have any questions? Thank you."

Reminder phone call for the **in-person interviews**:

"Hello, this is (name) calling from (research firm) to remind you that your in-person interview will take place on (date) at (time) at our research firm. The address is (address). Our contact phone number is (phone number). Two professional interviewers will meet with you. Do you have any questions? Thank you."

Interview Questions

Interview

Introduction to the research

Hello, I am _____ from MAYA Design. Thank you for agreeing to spend this time with us today. We'd like to start by getting to know you a little better, we'll talk about how you use technology, and finally get into detailed questions about taxes.

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB control number on all public information requests. The OMB Control Number for this study is 1545-1349. The time estimated for your participation is 75 minutes for phone interviews and 90 minutes for in-person interviews. If you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making this process simpler, please write to the, Internal Revenue Service, Tax Products Coordinating Committee, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP, 1111 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20224.

Getting to Know You

Objective: To obtain a picture of the participant's "day in the life" and help them relax as we begin the interview process.

1. Tell me a bit about your day-to-day life during the week. Does it differ on weekends?
2. Who is in your immediate family?

3. Are you employed?
How long have you been doing that?
What is your schedule like?
What's a typical day like for you?
Do you have to bring work home?
4. How long have you been in this home?
In this city?
Do you have family nearby?
5. Do you belong to any organizations?
What are they?
What prompted you to join?
6. What kinds of things do you do for fun? What do you do when you're not at work?
Family Entertainment
Personal Entertainment

Use of Information Devices, Content Needs

Objective: To understand how participants use personal information devices in their lives, the kinds of transactions they perform on them, the information channels they choose, and the kinds of content they expect, need, and seek from them.

1. Do you use a computer at work?

What are the main tasks you use it for?

2. Do you use a computer(s) at home? If not, where do you access a computer (local library, community center, friend or family)?

- What kind is it/kinds are they (desktop, laptop, tablet)?
- How much time do you spend on the computer?
- When you start up the computer, where do you go first?
- What other kinds of things do you do (play games, search for needed info, read blogs, read news, watch movies, use social web sites (Facebook/Twitter), store & share photos, manage a calendar, store and download files, publish your own blog, research and purchase and rate items like clothing, electronics, flights, vacations, etc.)? How often? Why?
- Do you have any concerns about security when you use it? When and why, or why not?
- What do you do to safeguard your information when you use a computer?

3. Do you use a mobile or smart phone?

- What kind?
- How often throughout the day do you use it?
- What's your favorite thing about it?
- Besides making and receiving phone calls, how do you use it (texting, email, information searches, apps, get directions/use maps, productivity tools, etc.)?
- Do you have any concerns about security when you use your phone (or any apps)?
- Do you use your phone for online banking applications (checking your account, etc.)?

4. How many televisions do you have?

- Where are they in the house?
- When is the television on in your house?
- How much television do you watch?
- What do you watch on TV?
- Do you skip through commercials? How and why?
- Do you use a DVR? Why?

5. Does anyone in the household use a video gaming system?

- What type of console?
- Why did you choose the one you have?
- What type of games?
- Is the video game console used for accessing information on the Internet?

6. So far, I've been asking you about particular devices. Now, I'm going to turn things around and ask how you get the following information. (Use the following sentence to prompt for each:

If you want to _____, where do you get that info? Which device, if any do you use most often?)

- Check weather
- Get news
- Find information such as address, telephone #, zip codes
- Find government information (census, taxes, CDC)
- Get directions or look at maps
- Learn about upcoming events
- Get information about places to eat
- Find out about jobs or industry information
- Check financial information (stocks, bank accounts)
- Get language translations
- Watch movies
- Watch television shows
- Listen to music
- Keeping up with friends, family, and business acquaintances
- Play video games with multiple players online
- Community events

Favorite Products & Brands

Objective: To learn what drives participant's product purchases.

1. What are the three things that you own that you treasure most?
2. Describe an experience with a product or service that was the best you ever had, and the worst you ever had.
3. What are some of your favorite brands (cars, clothing, shoes, accessories, perfume, etc)? What do those products say about a person?
4. What products do you own by those brands?
5. Have you ever recommended a product, a brand, or service? To whom?
 - a. Can you tell me about a product or service that you would recommend or not recommend? Why?
6. Have you ever contacted customer service for any product or service?
 - a. Can you tell me about the last time you contacted customer service? How did you do this? (via mail, email, chat, chat room, blog, phone, face-to-face)

Self-Perception/Identification

Objective: To learn how participants think about themselves—their characteristics and qualities.

1. Now that we've learned a bit more about you, we want to do a quick activity. I'd like you to write 5 words that other people who know you would use to describe **you** on these sticky notes, one word to a sticky. Then we'll talk about why you wrote them.
2. Is there a character from film, TV, sports, history, or books that you relate to; that you'd say is a lot like you? What do you admire about them?

Financial Activities

Now I have a few questions for you about managing your finances.

1. Do you participate in any of the following activities (note all that apply)?
 - Investing
 - Financial planning, retirement planning
 - Accounting
 - Budgeting
 - Paying bills
2. Do you pay a professional to manage any of the following activities for you?
 - Investing
 - Financial planning, retirement planning
 - Accounting
 - Budgeting
 - Paying bills
3. Have you always done so?
4. What are the benefits of doing so?
5. How do you pay your bills? Do you prefer to pay your bills electronically? Online banking? Write checks?

Taxes

Objective: To understand the different facets of participant's experience with their taxes.

1. Did you file your federal income tax return for 2011?
 - a. If yes, did you file by the April deadline?
 - b. Do you always file on time?
 - c. If not, did you file an extension?
 - d. If you did not file by the deadline and did not get an extension, why not?
2. How did you file them? I'm going to read the following answers, and you can tell me which one applies to you.
 - a. I used a tax preparation service, such as H&R Block.
 - b. I went to a tax professional (accountant).
 - c. I did them myself using IRS forms and mailed them in.

- d. I did them myself using IRS forms, and filed them electronically.
 - e. I used a computer program such as TurboTax or other similar software.
 - i. Did you pay for the software?
 - ii. Did you use it at home? If not, where?
3. If you use a tax professional: when you go to the preparer, do you ask what steps he or she will take to file your taxes? Why or why not?
 4. Did you get a refund?
 - a. If yes, how did that make you feel?
 - b. Did you receive it quickly, or not?
 - c. Did you get a check in the mail, or did you use direct deposit? Why do you choose that method of getting your refund?
 - d. Do you usually get a refund, or not? Why?
 5. How would you describe the complexity of your taxes?
 - a. Are they pretty complex, fairly simple, or somewhere in between? Talk to me about that—what are the reasons for your answer?
 6. Did you need any help/have questions when you filed your 2011 taxes? If not, what about past years? What questions did you have? Who did you go to, or what resources did you use, to get answers?
 - a. Did you get some advice or assistance from a professional tax preparer, whether paid or unpaid?
 - b. Did you get help from family member, friend, or acquaintance? Why them?
 - c. Did you go online? Did you do a search, or go directly to a site? Which site? Tell me about that process. When you got to the site, what was your experience like? Had you used that site before? What made it helpful to you, or not?
 - d. Did you contact the IRS? If so, how (IRS Customer Service 1-800 #, the IRS web site, a call to an IRS department or office, a fax or letter, a visit to one of their Taxpayer Assistance Centers, other?)
 - e. Did you use any IRS-related materials or services? If so, why?
 - f. Any other sources that I haven't mentioned?
 - g. Were any of these people and sources better than others to get the answers you needed? Which ones? Why?
 7. Have you always filed taxes the same way? Why?
 - a. If not, what are the other ways you have filed, and why did things change?
 - b. What was the tipping point, for example, that made you go from preparing them yourself to using a tax professional?
 8. Some people describe the entire activity of “doing their taxes” as two tasks. One is “preparation,” which is gathering receipts, W-2’s, and any other applicable paperwork. Two is actually sitting down to file them—to fill out the forms. In your opinion, what’s the easiest part of the preparation process for you?
 9. What is the most difficult part of preparation?

10. Now, onto the second part. What's the easiest part of filing your taxes for you?
11. What's the most difficult part of filing of your taxes?
 - a. Determine whether certain sources of revenue are relevant to the IRS?
 - b. Making estimates for deductions/expenses?
 - c. Itemizing deductions/expenses?
 - d. Knowing whether or not you qualify for a credit?
 - e. Other? Tell me about that.
12. Is there anything tax-related that you think about after you've finished those tasks, after filing is done and it's "in the mail," so to speak?
13. Similarly, after you're done with those steps, have you ever had questions about your tax return? Where did you go to get answers?
14. When do you tend to file your taxes?
 - a. More than a month in advance of the deadline
 - b. One-two weeks in advance
 - c. The day before/day of the deadline
 - d. Other
 - e. Why is that?
15. What do you think of the language (words) and instructions the IRS uses on its tax forms? What about the language (words) IRS uses on its website or other communications you've seen?
 - a. Has the language (words) been designed in a way that's accessible and understandable to taxpayers? Why or why not?
16. What do you think of the language (words) used in non-IRS provided websites, programs like TurboTax, notices, YouTube, emails, and/or other communication methods related to taxes? How would you compare how understandable they are with IRS-related items? Why?
17. Have you ever used any of the following IRS-provided information sources? Are you familiar with them? If you have used them, why did you do so? Tell me about the experience.
 - a) [www.IRS.gov](http://www.irs.gov) (IRS website)
 - b) IRS2Go smart phone application
 - c) The IRS's 1-800 Customer Phone Service
 - d) IRS Taxpayer Assistance Center
18. Have you ever used any of the following 3rd party information sources to get help with your tax-related questions? Why or why not?
 - a) "Ask A CPA" app (for iPhone and iPad)
 - b) Internet browser searches
 - c) Ask.com

- d) About.com
 - e) Specific tax related websites
 - f) Volunteer Tax Centers in your community
 - g) A tax preparation office (like H&R Block, etc.)
19. How confident are you that the method you use to prepare your taxes resulted in everything being correct?
- a. How would you rate it on a scale of 1-10, with one being not confident at all and 10 being completely confident?
20. What “keeps you up at night” about your taxes? Why?
21. Have you ever made an unintentional mistake on a tax return?
- a. (Prompt if needed: like forgetting to sign it online or on paper, or making simple math error?)
 - b. What happened and how did you find out (did you get a notice)?
 - c. Was the IRS communication about the error in clear language (notice or letter)?
 - d. How did you handle it?
 - e. How was it resolved?
 - f. How would you describe the experience—for example, was it nerve-racking, or was it fine? Why?
22. How proactive do you tend to be in planning for and minimizing your tax burden throughout the year?
- a. (Prompt if needed: For example, do you keep receipts and track expenses, or make charitable contributions?)
23. When I say the words “Tax Code” or “Tax Laws”, what do you think about? How do you feel?
- a) (Prompt if needed: exciting, scary, boring?)
 - b) Are you interested in Tax Laws and how the laws changes can affect your situation? Or are you not interested at all? Why?
 - c) Do you think that changes in tax laws have a significant effect on your situation/life?
24. When your tax documents (W-2s, e.g.) start to come in (via mail or email) do you put them somewhere special to keep track of them until it’s time to file? Where do you keep them?
25. Do you keep copies of your returns from year to year? Are they paper or electronic copies? Where do you keep them (in-home office, drawer in den, etc.)?
26. Once your taxes are done and you know that you’re getting a refund, what kind of planning do you do, knowing you’ll be getting money back?

27. Was your tax refund amount ever different from what the IRS said it was supposed to be? What did you do? What do you think caused the problem, the IRS, you, or a tax preparer?
28. Have you ever paid too much or too little to the IRS? What happened as a result? What did you do to resolve that situation?
29. Have you ever received a notice from the IRS? How about multiple notices on one topic?
- What was the notice about?
 - Were you prompted to take action?
 - What did you do after you read it?
 - Were you able to resolve the problem by yourself or did you need to contact the IRS or another source to resolve? If yes, how did you do this?
 - Did the issue ever get resolved? How?
30. Have you ever been audited? If yes, tell me about that process and the outcome.
31. Have you ever sought help in paying taxes (sought an installment agreement, extension to file, filed for bankruptcy, have a lien on your assets)?
- Who did you go to discuss this matter with first? Did you go directly to the IRS or to an outside lawyer, tax advisor, etc.?
32. Have you ever had a tax issue you couldn't get resolved? What was the problem? Where did you go for help?
33. On a scale of 1- 10 (where 1 is terrible and 10 is the best imaginable, how well is the IRS doing to provide American taxpayers with:
- Getting the help they need
 - Getting information they need
 - Help filing their taxes
 - Helping them file on time

Why?

34. Have you ever helped someone else prepare and/or file his or her taxes? Why did they need your help? How did you help them?
35. How would you describe yourself as a taxpayer (provide respondent with paper list and ask them to circle those that they believe apply to them)? What are the reasons why that word or those words describe you as a taxpayer?
- Analytical
 - Conscientious
 - Detail-Oriented
 - Decisive
 - Dedicated
 - Efficient
 - Empowered

- Communicative
- Conservative
- Compliant
- Comfortable
- Curious
- Annoyed
- Uninterested
- Confident
- Anxious
- Unsure
- Frustrated
- Puzzled
- Uncooperative
- Ethical
- Methodical
- Organized
- Practical
- Punctual
- Resigned
- Powerless
- Helpless
- Frustrated
- Angry
- Scared
- Intimidated
- Other words that aren't listed?