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ATTACHMENT D

Moderator's Guide for Consumer Focus Group Session

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Moderator's Guide for Consumer Focus Group Session – General Adult Consumers
Testing Visuals and Names for EPA Design for the Environment Program
DRAFT – June 11, 2013

Need in the room: Pencils and highlighters for all participants; an easel for the moderator.

Introduction [15 minutes]

Welcome and thank you for joining us. My name is _____ and I will be your moderator for this focus group session, which is about providing information to help consumers select products that are safer and better for people, families, and the environment. I'd like to hear how you feel about this topic, and I'm also interested in your perceptions about some visual materials, which I will show you a bit later. I want to let you know that I am not an expert in this topic; rather, I am an independent moderator trained to facilitate our discussion.

Our client for this research is the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), located in Washington, D.C. The EPA's mission is to protect human health and the environment.

Our discussion should take about two hours.

Disclosure

- Observation: There is a one-way mirror with observers in the next room who are interested in hearing your views, but don't want to interrupt the conversation.
- Audio taping: This session will be recorded by audio to enable us to capture everything that is being said today. We will use the tape to write our report to our client.
- Confidentiality assured: All of your answers will be confidential, so feel free to say exactly what is on your mind. Nothing will be attributed to any particular person in our report.

Ground rules

- Need to hear from everyone, one at a time please
- No right or wrong answers, want personal opinions
- Moderator is impartial, please be candid
- It's okay to be critical. If you dislike something you hear, it's fine to disagree but please be willing to offer your own views and opinions.
- If anyone needs to use the rest room, they are located [specify]. There is no need to stop the discussion.

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Participant introductions

- Brief introductions around the table – name, occupation, family

Awareness and Use of Certification Seals [10 minutes]

Let's start our session by taking a look at some products you may have seen in a local supermarket or retail store.

[Show several products in a category, perhaps cleaning products – include at least one with a green certification and at least one without]

- Which one of these products would you choose to purchase in the supermarket?
 - o Why?
- Let's look more closely at this product [pick up a product that has a green certification mark on it]
 - o Have you seen this mark before?
 - o What does it mean?

The mark on this product indicates a green certification program, which is a program intended to help consumers purchase safer and/or more environmentally sustainable products. These programs are also known as "eco-label" programs.

Are you familiar with green certification programs?

- Which ones are you familiar with? [Prompt if necessary: Green Seal, Good Housekeeping Green Ratings, EcoLogo, Home Depot's Eco Options, USDA Organic, Energy Star]
- Have you ever used any of these programs to help you decide which products to buy?

Perceptions of Design for the Environment Program [15 minutes]

Different certification programs have different purposes – for example, EnergyStar specifically helps consumer purchase products that are more energy efficient, whereas the USDA Organic program lets consumers know which products are certified organic. I want to talk about an EPA program intended to help consumers select products that can help protect the environment and are safer for people, families, and pets. I'll distribute a description of this program, and you can read along with me.

The U.S. EPA's Design for the Environment (DfE) is a voluntary program that works in partnership with industry, environmental groups, and academia to help protect people and the planet by identifying safer chemicals and allowing safer chemical-based products to carry the DfE label. For more than 15 years, DfE has been evaluating the human health and environmental concerns associated with traditional and alternative chemicals and empowering businesses to make safer chemical-based products. When you see the DfE label on a product it means the DfE scientific review team has screened each ingredient for potential human health and environmental effects and that the product contains only the safest chemical ingredients available.

- Has anyone ever heard of the DfE program?
 - o Have you used it to help you decide which products to buy?
- What's your overall impression of this program?
 - o Does it sound useful to you?
- As you shop in your local supermarket or retail outlet, would it be helpful to you to have some easy way of knowing if a product has been determined to be safer for people or if it can help protect the environment?
 - o If you could get that information at a glance just by looking at the product, do you think it might influence your purchase decision?
 - Why or why not?
 - o If the products in a particular category all cost about the same, do you think you'd choose the product that has been certified by the EPA to be safer for people and the environment?
 - Which of those two claims would motivate you more to purchase a certified product – safer for people or protects the environment?

Testing DfE Logo Redesigns and Names (45 minutes)

The EPA is in the process of renaming the DfE program to make it easier for consumers to understand the program's benefits. The EPA is also developing designs for a visual mark that will appear on product packages to let consumers know which products have been certified under this program to be safer for people and the environment. I'd like to show you some combinations of names and visual marks to get your impressions of them and determine which is the most effective for the program. We'll go through three of them, and discuss each separately. [Show one graphic at a time, each on a separate board]

Design Comp #1:



- How would you sum up your first impression of this mark?
 - o Would you notice it if you saw it on a product?
 - o Is it attractive?
 - Why or why not?
- What does this mark mean to you, the consumer?
 - o How well do you think the message comes across in this mark?
 - o Is it easy to understand at a glance?
- Is this mark credible? Do you believe it will deliver on what the mark conveys?
 - o Why or why not?
- Does this mark give you any information about the safety of the product?
 - o If so, what does it tell you?
- Does this mark give you any information about the product's impact on the environment?
 - o If so, what does it tell you?
- Does this mark provide enough information to help you choose between various products in a category?
 - o Why or why not?
- How well do you think the name "Name #1" conveys what the program is trying to do?
- How well do you think the visual label conveys what the program is trying to do?
- Is there anything you would change about this label to make it more effective?
 - o What would you change?
- How likely would you be to use this mark to help you decide on a product to purchase?
 - o Why or why not?

Design Comp #2:



- How would you sum up your first impression of this mark?
 - o Would you notice it if you saw it on a product?
 - o Is it attractive?

- Why or why not?
- What does this mark mean to you, the consumer?
 - o How well do you think the message comes across in this mark?
 - o Is it easy to understand at a glance?
- Is this mark credible? Do you believe it will deliver on what the mark conveys?
 - o Why or why not?
- Does this mark give you any information about the safety of the product?
 - o If so, what does it tell you?
- Does this mark give you any information about the product's impact on the environment?
 - o If so, what does it tell you?
- Does this mark provide enough information to help you choose between various products in a category?
 - o Why or why not?
- How well do you think the name "Name #2" conveys what the program is trying to do?
- How well do you think the visual label conveys what the program is trying to do?
- Is there anything you would change about this label to make it more effective?
 - o What would you change?
- How likely would you be to use this mark to help you decide on a product to purchase?
 - o Why or why not?

Design Comp #3:



- How would you sum up your first impression of this mark?
 - o Would you notice it if you saw it on a product?
 - o Is it attractive?
 - Why or why not?
- What does this mark mean to you, the consumer?
 - o How well do you think the message comes across in this mark?
 - o Is it easy to understand at a glance?
- Is this mark credible? Do you believe it will deliver on what the mark conveys?
 - o Why or why not?
- Does this mark give you any information about the safety of the product?
 - o If so, what does it tell you?
- Does this mark give you any information about the product's impact on the environment?
 - o If so, what does it tell you?
- Does this mark provide enough information to help you choose between various products in a category?
 - o Why or why not?
- How well do you think the name "Name #3" conveys what the program is trying to do?
- How well do you think the visual label conveys what the program is trying to do?
- Is there anything you would change about this label to make it more effective?
 - o What would you change?

- How likely would you be to use this mark to help you decide on a product to purchase?
 - o Why or why not?

In any of these combinations, is there any where you liked the name but didn't like the visual? Or vice versa - where you liked the visual but didn't like the name?

- o Which?
- o What would you change?

Let's see a show of hands to determine which of these three you think is most effective [Show each in turn - #1, #2 or #3 - to have them vote].

Communication Preferences and Wrap Up (5 minutes)

As a result of our discussion tonight, are you interested in learning more about the EPA program we have discussed this evening?

What would be the best way to provide additional information for you? Where would you be most likely to pay attention to it? [E.g., web site, product packaging, point of purchase information or display, magazines or newspapers]

On behalf of the U.S. EPA, I want to thank all of you for your input today. Please stop by the reception desk to receive a token of our gratitude. [Collect all materials]