

ATTACHMENTS
Follow up Focus Groups for W&I Taxpayer Experience Survey (TES) 2015

Recruit 4 Groups

1. Phone Group 1: Offline taxpayers (no Internet access at home) (Offline priority, supplement with Group 2 or Group 3, if needed)
2. Phone Group 2: Taxpayers who used TAC or Toll-Free line (include all TAC/TF users, prioritize non-Web)
3. Phone Group 3: Rural taxpayers
4. Phone Group 4: Taxpayers unwilling to set up IRS online account

*Include some file by mail and self-filers.

Hello, This is _____ and I'm calling from Pacific Market Research regarding a research project. May I please speak to _____?

R1. [All] Based on a survey you took last June for the IRS, you qualify to participate in a phone-based focus group to discuss taxes. The phone-based focus group will last up to one hour and you will receive an honoraria payment of \$45 for participation from the study sponsor. Are you interested in participating in one of these groups?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No (TERMINATE)

If yes, continue:

R2. Did you or your spouse file a Federal Income Tax Return in 2016 for income earned in 2015?

- 1 Yes, I or my spouse filed federal tax return
- 2 No federal income tax return filed for 2014 taxes [TERMINATE]
- 3 Not sure/Refused [TERMINATE]

R3. Which of the following was the **filing status** you used on your 2015 tax return?

- 1 Single
- 2 Married, filing jointly
- 3 Married, filing separately
- 4 Head of Household (single with dependent parent or child)
- 5 Qualifying widow(er) with dependent child
- 6 Don't know [TERMINATE]

R4. In the *past 12 months*, did you contact the IRS for any reason, using any of the following methods?

Select one answer from each row in the grid

[NOTE: Phone version is in present tense to read more smoothly]

1—Yes 2—No

- a. 2a Called an IRS Toll-Free line
- b. 2h Called an IRS Toll-Free line to make an appointment to visit a local IRS office
- c. 2b Visited a local IRS office (Taxpayer Assistance Center, walk-in center)
- d. 2c Visited the IRS website to obtain specific information. Please do not count casual browsing.
- e. 2d Contacted the IRS through regular mail
- f. 2e Email the IRS
- g. 2f Got help from a volunteer tax preparer from a community organization
- h. 2g Used the IRS2Go App (for smartphone or tablet mobile device)

R5. Do you live in...

- 1 An urban area
- 2 A suburban area
- 3 A rural area

R6. Do you have Internet access at home?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

R7. Do you regularly use a mobile phone?

- 1 Yes, regular mobile phone
- 2 Yes, Smartphone (mobile phone with applications and Internet access)
- 3 No

R8. The IRS is considering creating individual online accounts for taxpayers to receive communications and other information. (ONLINE only: How likely are you to do the following where 1 is "Very Unlikely" and 5 is "Very Likely"?) (PHONE only: For each of the following please respond with 1-Very unlikely...2-Somewhat unlikely...3-Neither unlikely nor likely...4-Somewhat likely... or 5-Very likely.)

- 1 Very unlikely
- 2 Somewhat unlikely
- 3 Neither unlikely nor likely
- 4 Somewhat Likely
- 5 Very likely

- 1. Create an online account on IRS.gov.
- 2. Receive IRS notices through an online account rather than in the mail.
- 3. Receive information on tax law changes through an online account.
- 4. View your current balance due through an online account
- 5. View your payment history through an online account
- 6. Confirm IRS received a document you sent through an online account

R9. Based on your responses, you qualify to participate in a phone-based focus group to discuss taxes. You will be given a toll-free number to call in and the group will last up to one hour. You will receive an honoraria payment of \$45 for participation from the study sponsor. Are you interested in participating in one of these groups?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

R9. [Online screening only] In order to schedule you for one of our focus groups with \$45 honoraria, we need your name, telephone number, and best time to reach you, and we will follow up with you by phone.

Name: _____
Phone: _____
Time to call: _____

R9. [Online screening only] In which time zone are you located:

- 1 Eastern
- 2 Central
- 3 Mountain
- 4 West
- 5 Alaska
- 6 Hawaii

[please provide respondent time zone in data file]

[End of online screening: "Thank you for your time."]

[For phone screening, skip to Q1 below]

Scheduling Script

Recruit 4 Groups

- 5. Phone Group 1: Offline taxpayers (no Internet access at home) (Offline priority, supplement with Group 2 or Group 3, if needed)
- 6. Phone Group 2: Taxpayers who used TAC or Toll-Free line
- 7. Phone Group 3: Rural taxpayers
- 8. Phone Group 4: Taxpayers unwilling to set up IRS online account

Intro Scheduling Recruiting:

Hello, This is _____ and I'm calling from Pacific Market Research regarding a Research Now eRewards survey. May I please speak to _____?

A few days ago you completed a Research Now e-rewards survey in which you agreed to participate in a phone based focus group to discuss taxes. These groups are being conducted as part of a research project with the IRS, and I'm calling to schedule the groups. Your participation is voluntary, but your help would be very much appreciated. As a token of our appreciation for your time, you will receive \$45.

- 1. For the phone group, I will give you a toll-free call in number and you will be joined by 6-8 others on the call. Are you available at the following time?
 - Phone Group 1: DATE, TIME [IF Quota 1, Fill FIRST]

- Phone Group 2: DATE, TIME [IF Quota 2, Fill SECOND]
 - Phone Group 3: DATE, TIME [If Quota 3, Fill THIRD]
 - Phone Group 4: DATE, TIME [If Quota 3, Fill LAST]
2. If not available at first offered time and qualify for another group:
- Are you available at [OTHER GROUP DATE, TIME]?
3. If not available at any times or not interested anymore:
- [IF NOT AVAILABLE TERMINATE] and say: “Unfortunately we can’t schedule you in a group, but thank you for your willingness to participate”
 - [IF NOT INTERESTED TERMINATE] and say: “I’m sorry it does not work out. Thank you for your time.”
4. If yes available:
Thank you for participating in our group.
I will give you the call in number and meeting code. Do you have a pen and paper available?
- Phone Group 1: Call 1-877-668-4493; Code TBD
 - Phone Group 2: Call 1-877-668-4493; Code TBD
 - Phone Group 3: Call 1-877-668-4493; Code TBD
 - Phone Group 4: Call 1-877-668-4493; Code TBD
5. We would also like to give you a reminder call on the day of the focus group call. Would we reach you at this number or another? [record number _____]

I am required by law to give you the OMB control # for this public information request. That number is OMB 1545-1349. The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that the IRS display an OMB control number on all public information requests. Also, If you have any comments regarding the time estimates associated with this study or suggestions on making the process simpler, please write to the: IRS Tax Products Coordinating Committee, SE:W:CAR:MP:T:T:SP, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20224.

Thank you and have a nice day. We look forward to speaking with you on [DAY DATE TIME.]

-----end conversation-----

REMINDER CALL for FOCUS GROUP

Hello, I’m _____ and I’m calling from _____. This is a call to remind you of your participation in the telephone focus group scheduled for (REFER TO DATE, TIME ABOVE). Should I give you the call in number again? (INSERT CALL IN INFORMATION). Thank you in advance for your participation.

Thank you and have a nice day. We look forward to speaking with you then.

-----end conversation-----

**IRS Wage and Investment
Taxpayer Experience Survey
Phone Focus Group
Moderator's Discussion Guide**

4 Phone Focus Groups:

- Group 1: Rural taxpayers
- Group 2: Offline taxpayers (no Internet access at home)
- Group 3: Taxpayers who used TAC or Toll-Free line (include all TAC/TF users, prioritize non-Web)
- Group 4: Taxpayers unwilling to set up IRS online account

Overview (5 mins)

Hello, I'm (MODERATOR) from Pacific Consulting Group (PCG) and I'm moderating our discussion today. The goal of this research is to provide information that will help the IRS understand access and use of IRS online resources and provide better service to people like you. This is your opportunity to provide important input and to make recommendations for change.

First, I would like to thank all of you for calling in today. Our discussion will take about one hour. I would like to know your real attitudes and feelings, so please be as open and frank with me as you can. I am recording this session, and have some IRS personnel listening in, but please keep in mind that our focus here is on your experiences and opinions, not on your individual identities. In fact, none of us know more than your first name and results will be presented in summary form and not include any individual's information.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with focus group discussions, a focus group is simply a group discussion with the purpose of obtaining a diversity of views, ideas and opinions on a particular topic. IRS management uses information from focus groups to improve its services. I also want to point out that I am not an IRS employee, so please be open and honest with your feedback. There are no right or wrong answers so please don't hold back any of your perceptions, opinions and suggestions.

My job as moderator is to:

- Help guide the flow of the discussion
- Make sure everyone's comments are heard
- Ensure that questions about various aspects of the topic are covered

In order for things to move along smoothly I have a few ground rules and general information that we need to follow:

- I'd like everyone to participate, so please speak loudly and one at a time.
- Please state your first name as you begin to speak so that everyone can more easily follow the conversation.
- You do not need to address all of your comments to me to get them on the table. You can respond directly to what someone else says.
- And remember, there are no right or wrong answers, I only ask that you are respectful to other viewpoints.

A. Introductions (5 min)

Let's introduce ourselves. As I call each person's first name, please tell us what city and state you are located in. Remember to use your first name only.

Please also let me know how were your taxes prepared this year?

- Self-Prepared
- Paid Preparer
- Unpaid Preparer

B. Access to IRS Resources/Service Channels (15 min)

1. Did you contact the IRS for any reason in the past year? If yes, why?
2. If yes, how did you contact the IRS?
 - IRS.gov
 - TAC
 - Toll-Free
 - Email
 - Mail
 - VITA
 - IRS2Go App
3. How did you decide to contact IRS that way (probe decision making process)? What other channels did you consider?
 - a. Was your issue resolved?
 - b. Would you use that IRS channel again?
 - c. Did you need to use another channel?
4. (all) Which methods of contacting IRS (IRS channels) are you willing to use in the future and for which service needs? (Probe about website, Toll-Free, and TAC)
5. How can IRS service to taxpayers be improved? Are service channels easy to access? Are there any barriers to access (Probe about website, Toll-Free and TAC)?

C. IRS Online Account (15 min)

6. The IRS is considering creating individual online accounts for taxpayers to receive communications and other information. How likely would you be to create an online account on IRS.gov? Why or why not?

[Online account may include the following:

- Receive IRS notices through an online account rather than in the mail.
- Receive information on tax law changes through an online account.
- View your current balance due through an online account
- View your payment history through an online account
- Confirm IRS received a document you sent through an online account]

- a. What features would be attractive to you for an online account that would encourage you to use it?
 - b. What benefits do you see to an IRS online account?
 - c. What would convince you to create an online account?
 - d. For those of you who never needed to contact IRS, would you create an online account if you needed to contact IRS about your account, for example for a notice?
7. Do you have any concerns about IRS online accounts? How can those concerns be addressed?
8. How comfortable are you sharing information like your name, address, Social Security Number, bank or loan number, or personal cell phone number with the IRS?
9. [If time] If you use a tax preparer, what type do you use (CPA, H&R Block, etc.) and would you want your tax preparer to have access to your IRS online account? What concerns do you have about that?

D. Confidence in Taxes (10 min)

10. How well do you understand what you need to do to fulfill your tax obligations?
- a. What helps you understand?
 - b. What would help increase your understanding?
11. How confident are you that the information you provide to the IRS is accurate and correct?
- a. What makes you confident?
 - b. What would help increase your confidence?
12. How confident are you that you receive all tax credits and benefits you are entitled to?
- a. What makes you confident?
 - b. What would help increase your confidence?

E. Rural [Rural Group Only]

13. You indicated you live in a rural area. Do you feel there are any challenges to paying federal taxes or contacting IRS that are specific to your location (probe: IRS offices, internet connection, etc.)

F. Recommendations (5 min)

14. Does anyone have anything else they'd like to share about their experience with the IRS or additional suggestions for improvement?

Wrap Up

Those are all the questions that I have for this session. On behalf of the IRS, I would like to thank you for participation in today's discussions. I want to thank you and the IRS wants to thank you, for participating in this discussion. PCG will be sending a \$45 token of our appreciation in the mail within two weeks.

I am required by law to give you the OMB control # for this public information request. That number is OMB 1545-1349.

Thank you for participating and enjoy the rest of your day. Good bye.