

**ECONOMIC CENSUS
ROUND 3 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTLINE
SMALL, MEDIUM AND LARGE COMPANIES**

I. Introduction (10 minutes)

A. Purpose of meeting: We are going to talk about some of the information requests from the Federal, State and Local governments that businesses must deal with today. We are going to talk about your experiences and get your opinions about these different requests. Let me assure you once again that this is not a sales meeting of any kind. I don't have anything to sell you. This is a form of research conducted with members of the local business community and all I'm interested in are your opinions.

B. About this focus group session

1. Form of market research, not selling anything
2. Discussion will last about 2 hours
3. Audio/Video Recording
4. One-way mirror; associates viewing, notes may come in
5. All comments will be kept anonymous and confidential
6. Have courage of convictions; don't let group sway you
7. No right or wrong answers, only your opinion
8. Don't have to raise hands; but speak one at a time
9. Work for independent market research company
10. Turn off cell phones

C. Respondent introduction

1. First name
2. Type of business (**but do not reveal company name**)
3. Years in business
4. Number of employees
5. Ice breaker

II. Government Reporting Requirements (15 minutes)

- A. Now I would like to turn to the topic of tonight's discussion: the requests for business information you receive from the government.
1. What requests for information about your business do you receive from the government?
 - a. Federal, State, Local government. Other organizations?
 - b. Approximately how many of these requests/forms do you typically have to complete each year? (How many are in your inbox right now?)
 2. How easy or difficult is it for you or your organization to respond to these information requests/requirements?
 - a. What is your biggest obstacle in complying with the requests/requirements?
 - b. What could be done to make the task easier?
 3. How do you typically submit your information – online on computer, paper forms or other ways such as mobile devices or tablets?
 - a. How do you feel about completing these requests online?
 - i. Is online submission easier or more difficult than paper submission?
 - ii. Do you have any concerns about submitting your data online? (If not, mentioned, probe: security/confidentiality)
 - iii. Do you face any technical issues when completing the forms online?
 - b. Do you prefer to do these things online (mobile/desktop/etc.) or would you rather use paper forms? Why?
 4. Can someone tell me about the process they go through in completing a typical government request for information?
 - a. Is it something you attend to as soon as it arrives or do you wait and complete it at a later date and time? How do you determine its priority?
 - b. Does it require more than one of your employees/co-workers to complete the request?
 - i. When more than one person is involved, how do you go about coordinating your response to the request?
 - ii. Is the process different if you are completing the request online vs. a paper form? Explain the process
 - c. Where do you turn to for help or answers to any questions you have regarding the request?
 - d. Do you or your employees answer the requests or do you have an external source such as an accountant or bookkeeper handle them?
 - i. If you use a third-party, how do they submit the forms (paper or online)?
 5. Are you ever unclear about the legitimacy of these types of requests (is this a real form)?

- a. What is it that makes you skeptical about the legitimacy?
 - b. What gives you reassurance that request is something legitimate and important?
6. Besides the requests for business information you receive from the government, do you also receive non-government surveys as well?
- a. Who are these non-government survey from? (Industry/trade groups, associations, private firms, etc.)
 - b. Can they tell the difference between a private survey and a government survey? If so, how?

III. Awareness and Perceptions of the Census Bureau's Surveys (15 minutes)

- A. Are you currently receiving surveys from the U.S. Census Bureau?
1. How many do you complete?
 2. How similar or different are they?
 3. Which ones do you receive? (Unaided)
 4. Are you completing any of these Census surveys? (Pass out list of surveys and have each respondent check which ones they are receiving. List will include "unsure" options.)
- B. Are you selected for multiple years of response?
1. If yes, what type of preparation should be provided?
 2. Do you/should you have a contact at Census?
- C. What is your preferred method for response (mail, online, phone, etc.)?
1. How long does it take you to complete all of your Census surveys?
 2. How do you prioritize which ones to focus on?
 - i. State, Federal or Local
 - ii. Mandatory vs. voluntary
 - iii. Complexity/length
- D. What is the most difficult thing about completion?
1. Why don't you complete a survey?
 2. Are there any internal impediments or specific policies within your company that barriers to you completing Census surveys?
 - i. Probe: Mandatory vs. voluntary

- E. What is the purpose of these Census surveys?
 - 1. What is the data used for?
 - 2. Why should businesses participate?
 - a. Is it important to complete these surveys? Why/why not?
 - 3. How can/do businesses benefit from data?
 - 4. Are you aware that the data/results are available to your business?
- F. What can Census do to motivate you to respond? Faster? More thoroughly?
- G. How should they inform you re: other Census Economic surveys (“cross promotion”)?

IV. Response Motivators - Messaging Approaches (45 minutes)

- A. Reaction to “Economy Measurement System” messaging/visuals
 - 1. Message communication/main point
 - a. What is the main point of this message/visual?
 - b. How do you feel about the message? How important is this message to you?
 - 2. Other points communicated
 - a. What other points are being communicated?
 - b. Are these important or meaningful to you?
 - 3. Initial reactions to the theme
 - a. Likes/dislikes
 - 4. Is this a believable message for the Census Bureau to make?
 - a. Why/why not?
 - 5. Is there anything confusing or difficult to understand about the message/visuals? If so, what?
 - 6. Would this message this message/visual help motivate you to complete Census surveys?
 - a. Why/why not?
- B. Reaction to “Where your data goes” messaging/visuals
 - 1. Message communication/main point
 - a. What is the main point of this message/visual?
 - b. How do you feel about the message? How important is this message to you?
 - 2. Other points communicated
 - a. What other points are being communicated?
 - b. Are these important or meaningful to you?
 - 3. Initial reactions to the theme
 - a. Likes/dislikes

4. Is this a believable message for the Census Bureau to make?
 - a. Why/why not?
 5. Is there anything confusing or difficult to understand about the message/visuals? If so, what?
 6. Would this message this message/visual help motivate you to complete Census surveys?
 - a. Why/why not?
- C. Reaction to creative campaign messaging/visuals
1. Message communication/main point
 - a. What is the main point of this message/visual?
 - b. How do you feel about the message? How important is this message to you?
 2. Other points communicated
 - a. What other points are being communicated?
 - b. Are these important or meaningful to you?
 3. Initial reactions to the theme
 - a. Likes/dislikes
 4. Is this a believable message for the Census Bureau to make?
 - a. Why/why not?
 5. Is there anything confusing or difficult to understand about the message/visuals? If so, what?
 6. Would this message this message/visual help motivate you to complete Census surveys?
 - a. Why/why not?

V. Economic Census Program Overview (30 minutes)

- A. Walk through Economic Census Overview presentation, including samples of:
 1. Intro/summary videos
 2. Survey dashboard
 3. Reporting tool
- B. What is your initial reaction?
 1. What do you like about it? What do you dislike about it?
 - a. Where would you expect to see this?
 - b. Is this something you would expect to see from the Census Bureau?
 2. How do you feel about setting up an account with your email?
 3. What would you do if the option of a paper form is not offered?
 4. What information do you find most interesting?
 5. What key points are being communicated? Which will you remember most?
 6. Is this something you might share or pass on to others?

VI. Follow-up Letters (10 minutes)

- A. Does anyone know what happens if you aren't able to submit your Census survey on-time?
1. A series of reminder letters are sent from the Census Bureau to let companies know that their survey is over-due and needs to be completed and submitted.
 2. I want show you an example of the letters that a company would receive over time as the survey continues to be past due.
 3. What is your reaction to the letters?
 - a. To the content, to the tone of the letters?
 - b. Should the tone of the letters change the longer the survey is overdue?
 4. Would they get you attention?
 - a. Would they motivate you to complete the survey?
 - b. Why or why not?
 - c. What could they say that would better motivate you?

VII. Closing – Group Assignment