

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE
Screen for Life: National Colorectal Cancer Action Campaign
2015 Focus Group Testing with the General Public**

I. BACKGROUND (5 minutes)

Moderator will:

Introduce self and thank participants for agreeing to come.
Identify topic in broad terms and explain the purpose of the discussion.
Explain the presence and purpose of audio recording and observers.
Encourage participants to speak candidly.
Note that participants' names will not be used in any report.
Facilitate participants' self-introductions with first names only.

Example:

Greetings:

Good evening everyone. My name is _____. Thank you for participating in the discussion tonight. [Moderator mentions brief background about herself/himself]

Purpose/sponsor:

We're going to talk about a particular type of cancer. Specifically, we'll be looking at some ideas for television ads and other materials to help people learn about this type of cancer.

Our discussion is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – or CDC. Has anyone heard of CDC? It is part of the U.S. public health service. The main reason I am telling you this is to emphasize that the materials we'll look at are not being developed by a company that wants you to buy anything. This is strictly a health awareness program.

No right or wrong answers:

Please bear in mind that I am interested in *your ideas and opinions* – there are no right or wrong answers. I encourage you to be candid about your personal view on anything that comes up. I will not use your names in my report - and I hope that will help you feel comfortable telling me your honest opinions. I did not work on this personally, so it will not hurt my feelings if there are things you do not like about what we look at.

Recording/Observers:

We are being video and audio-taped, so that I can concentrate on talking with you and, just in case there is a problem with the recording, I've asked someone I work with to take notes in the room behind this mirror. Because of the recording, it will be very important for everyone to speak at least as loudly as I do. If you see me do this [*gestures with hands to raise voices*], it will be a reminder to speak up. At the same time, please do not be offended if I must interrupt you to move on to another topic. I'd like to get at least a little bit on many different topics and that may make us feel a bit rushed. If I must cut you off, I will try to come back to you later on.

II. INTRODUCTIONS (10 minutes)

I think everyone would like to hear something about each other now. You already know that my name is _____. My home is in _____ and I am delighted to have this chance to see your area and talk with people who live here.

Please take a moment now before you introduce yourself to think about this...

One of the things we will be talking about is your reaction to some preliminary ideas for television and print ads for a health awareness campaign. As you introduce yourself – first name only - please tell us briefly about an ad that has been especially memorable for you – it can be an ad about any product, anywhere. TV, radio, magazine, billboard... anything. I am interested in what makes people remember ads.

[Calls on first person.] _____, will you begin?

III. DISCUSSION TOPICS

A. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING @10 Minutes

Objective: Assess participant knowledge about the benefits of screening.

Moderator will ask:

1. **Has anyone heard of colorectal cancer? What have you heard?** (*Listening for...who gets it, screening tests available, age to screen*)
2. **Who gets it?** (*Listening for... Men? Women? Races? Ethnicities? Ages?*)
3. **Where did you learn what you know about colorectal cancer?**

B. TV CONCEPT TESTING (@50 minutes)

Objective: Obtain reactions to television PSA concepts.

Moderator will:

Explain that air time for these ads will be donated, so these may not be shown many times...not like a regular ad campaign selling something where companies buy ad time.

Explain what concepts are/are not to convey understanding of how participants should organize their reactions and comments...e.g., these are not finished ads.

Introduce concepts in different order in each group, playing a DVD/VHS that shows visuals along with a recorded narration that explains what concept is about – to assure that all participants hear the same explanation for each concept.

Will tell group that voices they will hear are not professional actors...so shouldn't judge by that.

Have participants write reactions on separate “grading” sheet after each spot, but not discuss until after the concepts have been displayed and explained.

Emphasize as needed throughout discussion that people should focus on the *creative approach* in each ad variation.

Note that the information or facts may be different in different creative approaches, but don't grade on that basis. Any information you see in any ad can be used in the final one that gets produced.

Remind people to focus on what approaches work best for them personally – not how they think others would feel about the approach. We're interested only in *your* reaction.

Explain that while we are seeing individual frames of a TV ad, when it is produced for TV, it will have real people/not the people shown here (not still photos), who will actually be talking and moving. So the ad will flow seamlessly, just like other ads they see on TV. This video is just a tool to give them an idea of the kinds of scenes that will be included in the final ad.

Explain that the title for each concept is only used so we can identify one from another as we show them and discuss them. Titles will never be a part of the actual ad, so don't worry if you don't like a particular title.

After the presentation of several concepts, discuss the first few then repeat the process for another group of concepts.

Then, the moderator will facilitate discussion of each ad concept, with focus on grades people assigned and reasons for the grade; e.g., likes/dislikes, etc. The discussion will help to reveal attitudes and perceptions about CRC screening in addition to reactions to concept specifics.

I am going to start by having each of you call out the grade you gave this ad...just the grade, without any comments just yet. *[Moderator will have each participant call out grades so notetakers/tape can record everyone's grades. (Will get an accurate count of the grades.)*

Now I'd like to hear about the reasons you assigned the grade you did to this approach.

Moderator then will have several people explain why they assigned the grade that they did.

Possible probes, as appropriate for grades that people call out:

**What was the take-away message?
What appealed to you about this approach?
What did not appeal to you?**

Did you learn anything new in this ad?
Did this ad 'speak' to you personally? Is it believable?
Does it convince you to do anything (get screened, talk to your doctor)?
Do you have any suggestions to make this ad more appealing?
Is this an ad that you'd stop and watch or flip right by? _

At some point during discussion of first spot or the second, moderator will ask:
Now that we've seen an ad about this...

Has anyone here been screened for colorectal cancer? What test? When (age)? Why?
Did your doctor recommend that you get screened? (If yes, will get a count on this.)
Did your doctor recommend a particular test?
For everyone who hasn't been tested, why haven't you?

Did this approach have any information or words that surprised you – that you did not know? [May not be needed for every concept.]

As needed to stimulate discussion, moderator will remind people of some of the facts they heard in the approach (depending on what's accurate for approach viewed):

- Colorectal cancer is the 2nd leading cancer killer of men and women
- Colorectal cancer can be prevented.
- Screening can find polyps, which can be removed before they turn into cancer.
- Screening can also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment is most effective
- Colorectal cancer may not cause symptoms, especially early on.

[Moderator will repeat process with each concept. We can talk about specific probes that may be needed for individual concepts as they evolve.]

C. COMPARISON OF THE CONCEPTS (@10 minutes)

Objective: Determine which concept(s) resonate the most with participants and why.

Moderator will:

Ask everyone to review the approaches again, now that all have been discussed.

Have participants complete a "ranking" sheet.

Facilitate reporting of first, second, and *last* place rankings, using an easel chart so everyone can see the rankings for each concept (by title).

I'm going to read each ad title now and see how you ranked it.

For the ad we are calling, "____" did anyone put it in first place?
If yes, please raise your hand and keep it up while I count.

Did anyone put "____" in second place? *[Record votes on easel.]*

Last place...that's 6th. *[Record votes]*

Moderator will repeat this process for the other titles.

Then will ask for some very brief discussion about overall results of ranking.

D. PRINT CONCEPT TESTING (@ 10 MINUTES)

Objective: Obtain reactions to print PSA concepts.

Moderator will:

Explain that space for these ads will be donated, and they may appear in newspapers, magazines, billboards, malls and transit stations, or on the internet.

Explain what concepts are/are not to convey understanding of how participants should organize their reactions and comments...e.g., these are not finished ads.

Introduce concepts in different order in each group, showing a printed copy of each concept.

Will tell group that the people in the ads are not the people who will eventually be pictured, but are similar in appearance to what the final ad will look like.

Have participants write reactions on separate “grading” sheet after each spot, but not discuss until after the concepts have been displayed and explained.

Emphasize as needed throughout discussion that people should focus on the *creative approach* in each ad variation

Note that the information or facts may be different in different creative approaches, but don't grade on that basis. Any information you see in any ad can be used in the final one that gets produced.

Remind people to focus on what approaches work best for them personally – not how they think others would feel about the approach. We're interested only in *your* reaction.

After the presentation of several concepts, discuss the first few then repeat the process for another group of concepts.

Then, the moderator will facilitate discussion of each ad concept, with focus on grades people assigned and reasons for the grade; e.g., likes/dislikes, etc. The discussion will help to reveal attitudes and perceptions about CRC screening in addition to reactions to concept specifics.

I am going to start by having each of you call out the grade you gave this ad...just the grade, without any comments just yet. *[Moderator will have each participant call out grades so notetakers/tape can record everyone's grades. (Will get an accurate count of the grades.)*

Now I'd like to hear about the reasons you assigned the grade you did to this approach.

Moderator then will have several people explain why they assigned the grade that they did.

Possible probes, as appropriate for grades that people call out:

What was the take-away message?

What appealed to you about this approach?

What did not appeal to you?
Did you learn anything new in this ad?
Did this ad 'speak' to you personally? Is it believable?
Does it convince you to do anything (get screened, talk to your doctor)?
Do you have any suggestions to make this ad more appealing?
Is this an ad that would catch your attention? _

Did this approach have any information or words that surprised you – that you did not know? [May not be needed for every concept.]

[Moderator will repeat process with each concept. We can talk about specific probes that may be needed for individual concepts as they evolve.]

D. COMPARISON OF THE CONCEPTS (@ 10 minutes)

Objective: Determine which concept(s) resonate the most with participants and why.

Moderator will:

Ask everyone to review the approaches again, now that all have been discussed.
Have participants complete a "ranking" sheet.
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I'm going to read each ad title now and see how you ranked it.

**For the ad we are calling, "____" did anyone put it in first place?
If yes, please raise your hand and keep it up while I count.**

Did anyone put "____" in second place? *[Record votes on easel.]*

Last place...that's 6th. *[Record votes]*

Moderator will repeat this process for the other titles.
Then will ask for some very brief discussion about overall results of ranking.

E. RECALL OF SFL PSAs IN CIRCULATION (@10 minutes)

Objective: Show participants finished SFL PSAs to see if they recall viewing any, and ask for reactions to them.

- 1. Do you recall seeing or hearing an ad about colorectal cancer screening on television, on the radio, in magazines, on busses, in malls, or anywhere else?**
- 2. Can you describe it?**
- 3. Where did you see it? What do you remember about it?**
- 4. Did you do anything differently after seeing it?**

Listening for: talk to the doctor; do an Internet search; tell a friend or family member to get screened; thought more about getting screened myself

Moderator will then show a few SFL ads and ask for reactions:

—Here are some finished TV public service announcements that have aired already - so you may have seen them.

5. Do you remember seeing any of these? (get a show of hands) What's your reaction to it?

Did it make you want to do anything? (Listening for: talk to your doctor about screening; do an Internet search; tell a friend or family member to get screened; get screened yourself)

6. For those of you who have not seen these...

What do you think?

Which did you like the best? Why?

Which did you like the least? Why?

V. CONCLUSION (@05 minutes)

Objective: Obtain participants' closing advice, thank them, provide departure information.

We're almost out of time now.

I am going to step out and check with my helpers about any last minute questions they may have. While I do that, if you would please write on the bottom of your ranking sheet any advice you have for the people working on this campaign to encourage screening for colorectal cancer. You may have something you want them to think about that you did not have a chance to say here, or something that we talked about that you want to emphasize. Any advice or comment you have would be great. I'll be right back, and will let you go just a minute after I return.

The moderator then will:

--Step out to check with observer(s) about any final questions to pose if time permits.

--Return to focus group room; poses questions as time allows, including possibly:
where do you get information about health?

--Have people put all of the ad concepts plus their ranking sheet together with a paperclip to collect after they leave.

--Thank everyone for participating and provide any needed departure instructions. (Will mention that they will get a fact sheet on colorectal cancer screening to take home with them..)

TOTAL TIME: @120 minutes