

Supporting Statement B
Army Marketing and Research Group- “DA Civilian Employment and Marketing Feedback”

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Description of the Activity

The main purpose of the study is to gather insights on non-federal employees’ awareness of and attitudes toward career opportunities within government services. Some of the information gathered from focus group discussions will be analyzed using summary statistics, e.g., number of times a certain comment was made. These focus groups will be conducted to inform the study’s Phase II quantitative survey and therefore reduce the survey respondent burden and improve the survey collection instrument utility. The ultimate goal of the study is to inform how the Army can more effectively market to ultimately recruit for and fill DA Civilian critical occupations, and not to publish information for statistical use.

Focus group participants will be prospective candidates for Army civilian employment who are either:

- College juniors, seniors or graduate students currently pursuing a major that aligns with one of the following careers, or:
- Professionals currently employed at different career stages (junior and mid-level) in one of the mission-critical careers below:
 - Civil Engineering
 - Electronics Engineering
 - Contracting
 - Information Technology Management

The number of respondents in the respondent universe is not known. Participants will be recruited for focus groups comprised of specific careers and career stages. Response rates are anticipated to be high as participants are personally contacted and incentivized (and therefore much different than survey response rates).

The project will use data collected from 16 focus groups (lasting about 1.5 hours each). Each group will include 8 participants for a total of 128. To achieve this, a total of 160 qualified people will be recruited, 10 people per group in order to seat 8 participants. It is typical for one or two focus group recruits to not show up for a focus group. If more than 8 potential participants show up for a session the extras will be randomly selected, thanked, compensated, and excused. The total number who will participate in the focus groups will be 128.

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

This information collection does not use rigorous sampling or weighting procedures as these focus groups will be conducted to inform the study’s Phase II quantitative survey and therefore reduce the survey respondent burden and improve the survey collection instrument utility. Groups will be assigned by participant type (student, junior professional, mid-level professional) and by specific career. Additionally, in each group, respondents will be recruited in rough

proportion to their representation in the particular occupation, ensuring that minorities and veterans (if possible) are represented. The focus groups will be conducted in three cities (TBD). Research sites will cover cities as well as a less urban location.

In each city, potential participants will be identified from the focus group facility database and then screened for qualification. (See attachment B_2A for the screener document.) Those participants who fully qualify will be scheduled and scheduled to go to a focus group facility. Once the participant arrives at the focus group facility, they will be formally recruited into the study (See attachment B_3A) and read a consent document (see attachment B_3B) by the focus group moderator and verbally invited to stay for the focus groups.

Target Audience	# of Groups
College Students	8
Civil Engineering	2
Electronics Engineering	2
Contracting	2
Information Technology Management	2
Professionals Junior Level	4
Civil Engineering	1
Electronics Engineering	1
Contracting	1
Information Technology Management	1
Professionals Mid-Level	4
Civil Engineering	1
Electronics Engineering	1
Contracting	1
Information Technology Management	1
Total	16

3. Maximization of Response Rates, Non-response, and Reliability

Only focus groups will be used to collect information. We will take steps to maximize response rates and minimize non-response rates for the focus groups including:

- Providing potential participants adequate advanced notice of the groups
- Attempting to accommodate potential participants' schedules
- Holding the sessions at a professional facility
- Providing reassurance of the legitimacy of the study as well as of the confidentiality of participants' information. Attachment B_3A is a formal recruiting document that is read to potential participants when they arrive at the focus group facility. Attachment B_3B is an oral consent document which is given to and read to potential participants, followed by the moderator asking them if they would like to stay for the focus groups.
- Telling participants that there will be refreshments, which is industry standard for focus groups
- Paying participants a sufficient honorarium (the amount will be based on levels proven to be effective for the target population in each location), also industry standard for focus groups.
- We will recruit 10 people per group in order to seat 8 participants. It is typical for one or two focus group recruits to not show up for the focus groups. By recruiting 10 people, there is a greater likelihood of having at least 8 recruits show up to participate.
- As this data is more qualitative in nature and sample sizes are small, results will not be generalizable to the universe under study.

Here is how we will address different aspects of the focus groups that impact reliability:

- The sample will accurately represent the target population (within a margin of error). This is addressed in section 2 above.
- The questions are framed in the research instrument (in this case the moderator's guide, see attachment B_3C) and presented to respondents by the interviewer (in this case the focus group moderator) to produce consistent, unbiased results.
- The groups have been sized to provide representation but to prevent domination of the discussion by one or two participants. The moderator also will ensure broad participation in the discussion.
- The senior researchers (including the moderator) are deeply experienced in the field, and will draw on their knowledge to guide the questions, probes, and discussion. All groups will be moderated by the same moderator.
- Individual participants who exhibit behavior that the moderator believes might bias other participants will be politely asked to leave the group. (They will still be paid the honorarium.)

4. Test of Procedures

These focus groups will be conducted to inform and refine the study's Phase II quantitative survey (to be submitted in a separate submission) and therefore reduce the survey respondent burden and improve the Phase II survey collection instrument utility.

Identification and screening of potential participants are based on a structured process conducted by experienced interviewers to guarantee strict adherence to specifications. The moderator's guide and discussion within the focus groups will be based on established rules and procedures for in-person discussions.

The detailed discussion guide covering all topics of interest is prepared, extensively reviewed, and approved in advance.

Results will be reviewed following each group to determine if any refinements should be made to the guide or discussion to improve future groups.

5. Statistical Consultation and Information Analysis

The information gathered from focus group discussions will be analyzed using summary statistics e.g., number of times a certain comment was made or similar statistics. Statistical analysis will be carried out and overseen by the RAND Corporation, with support from Echo Cover Research & Consulting. The principal investigators each have more than 25 years in marketing and recruiting research.

The focus group moderator is Altagracia Ramos, Echo Cover Research & Consulting, 703-975-7465.

Also overseeing the research is Richard Schreuer, Echo Cover Research & Consulting, 978-578-4028.