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**Focus Groups**

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**FOCUS GROUP MODERATOR GUIDE:  
Public Assistance Customer Satisfaction  
Survey**

**CUSTOMER SATISFACTION  
ANALYSIS SECTION**

**PUBLIC ASSISTANCE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION  
FOCUS GROUPS  
Moderator Guide**

**INTRODUCTION:**

**1 Welcome / Introduce team**

- Welcome applicants to session and thank them for volunteering. Introduce Moderator, Scribe.

**2 House keeping**

- Location of restrooms
- Evacuation Plan

**3 Ground Rules**

- Very informal / Relax and enjoy session
- Talk freely but only one at a time
- Emphasize no right or wrong answers
- Reason for note-taking

**4 Explain purpose of research:**

- The primary reason we have invited you here today is to learn what aspects of customer service are the most important to you with the companies you do business with.
- Secondly, capturing the voice of the customer is important because like most successful companies we recognize that your feedback is essential to providing exceptional customer service.
- And lastly, to identify any areas where your expectations relative to the recovery process were not met.

**5 Attendee Introductions: Name / Occupation**

10  
min

**TRANSITION: Are there any questions before we get started?**

10 Min	<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">FAVORITE COMPANIES:</h2> <p><b>1. LIST FAVORITE COMPANIES:</b>  Studies have shown that it is important for customers to feel good about the companies they do business with. Let's begin with finding out which companies are your personal favorites? These would be companies that impress you or make you feel good about doing business with them.</p> <p>For this exercise I would like each of you to come up with at least one company that is a favorite and has made a positive impression on you. Take a few minutes to think about your favorite companies and then I will ask each of you to tell me the name of one or more of your favorite companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Probe each attendee: This could be a local company like Wall Mart, or a car dealership, your favorite restaurant or even an internet company like Amazon.com.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>List companies on Spreadsheet / flip chart:</b></li> </ul>
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20 Min	<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">ATTRIBUTE SERIES:</h2> <p><b>2. LIST CUSTOMER SERVICE ATTRIBUTES:</b>  Next, I would like you to tell me specifically what these companies do to distinguish them apart from other companies and make you feel good about doing business with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Probe: Is it their people, the way they resolve problems, how they treat you? Try to determine specifically what it is that sets them apart from other companies.</b></li> </ul> <p>Who would like to start?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Build attribute list until all possibilities have been exhausted and the group can no longer offer new attributes.</b></li> </ul>
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Now I would like to shift your focus from your experience with your favorite

companies to your recent experience with FEMA.

5 Min	<p><b>3. CAPTURE ATTRIBUTES UNIQUE TO FEMA::</b> Considering all the important service attributes we've discussed, Which ones from your perspective would be important to you in conducting business with FEMA?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ (Using the base attribute list, the scribe will highlight those important to FEMA)</li></ul> <p><b>3a. ADDITIONAL FEMA ATTRIBUTES (NOT ON LIST)</b> Are there any additional attributes that would be important in doing business with FEMA that are not on our list?</p> <p>➤ <b>PROBE: When we think of FEMA, what attributes need to be added to this list?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Add additional attributes to existing list.</li><li>■ Allow a few minutes for scribe to add new attributes to list.</li></ul>
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10 Min	<p><b>4. FIVE MOST IMPORTANT FEMA ATTRIBUTES:</b> Ok, we have a good list here, now I would like you to take your pad and pen and over the next few minutes write down what you feel are the five most important customer service attributes in doing business with FEMA?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ After they have finished writing their five choices on their scratch pads, <u>begin polling each attendee</u> for their five selections and allow the scribe enough time to record their choices.</li><li>■ Scribe will sort in descending order so top attributes will display toward top of screen. Scribe will then cut and paste into ranking spreadsheet.</li></ul> <p>Ok, let us see which five you selected. <b>(Begin Polling)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ After recording the five most important attributes, discuss their selections with them to determine if they would like to add or delete any.</li></ul>
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Now that we have your feedback regarding the customer service attributes that are the most important to you, I would like you to think back to the time immediately and the days after the disaster, before the Kickoff Meeting.

5 min	<p><b>Information:</b></p> <p><b>5. LIST INITIAL INFORMATION WANTED/NEEDED</b></p> <p>What specifically did you expect FEMA would do to help your organization recover from the disaster?</p> <p>➤ <b>PROBE: What types of information did you expect FEMA to provide to your organization? (i.e. Kickoff Meeting, Documents, Public Assistance mitigation funding, etc.)</b></p>
5 Min	<p><b>5a. DIFFERENCE IN EXPECTATIONS</b></p> <p>Now, let's talk about the expectations we've listed. Did any of you find that the assistance you received did not match your initial expectation and if so how was it different?</p> <p>➤ <b>PROBE: In what way did FEMA fail to meet your expectation?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Poll those that had unmet expectation regarding what needs were not met</b></li></ul> <p><b>5b. POINT REALIZED EXPECTATIONS NOT MET</b></p> <p>At what point in the recovery process did you realize that that your expectations may not be met?</p> <p>➤ <b>PROBE: For example, did you realize your need might not be met during the project worksheet process, or perhaps during your site visit?</b></p>

## PERSONAL INTERACTION/CUSTOMER SERVICE:

### 6. Understanding of Eligibility Requirements

Mo Did the field staff provide you with the eligibility requirements?  
Were requirements clear?

#### 6a. SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIRMENTS

10 min.

Having received eligibility requirements from FEMA, what would you suggest to help them communicate with you more effectively?

- (Record comments on spreadsheet / flipchart)

If there is no other information or customer service suggestions, I would like you to change topics again and would like you to think about the project worksheet process that was performed.

## PROJECT WORKSHEET PROCESS:

10 MIN

### 7. PROJECT WORKSHEETS

How was the FEMA field staff involved in the creation of project worksheets?

- PROBE: Did the staff offer to write them or did you write them? Which way was more beneficial to your organization?

#### 7a. MITIGATION FUNDING

If you received Public Assistance mitigation funding, how satisfied were you with the process?

#### 7b. IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF SITE VISIT(S)

From your perspective, what aspects of the site visit were the most important to you?

- PROBE: For example, was the site visit too early or late to be helpful?

#### 7c. FEMA DEFINED SCOPE OF WORK AND DAMAGE REPAIR ESTIMATES

If FEMA developed the scope of your projects or identified damage repair cost estimates, were you satisfied with the outcome?

#### 7d. SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE PROJECT WORKSHEET PROCESS:

Based on your experience, what do you think FEMA could do to improve the process involved in the project worksheet?

- (Record suggestions on spreadsheet / flip-chart)

The project worksheet process leads us to another area of importance for most organizations recovering from a disaster. Now I would like you to think specifically about the actual financial assistance you received from FEMA. If you did not receive a monetary award from FEMA, we can discuss that as well.

## PROGRAM RESULTS:

### 8. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ROLE

First, what should the federal government's role be in assisting organizations in recovering from a disaster?

15 min

#### 8a. SATISFACTION WITH FEMA'S FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

How satisfied are you with the level of financial assistance your organization received from FEMA in helping you recover from the disaster?

➤ If 1 is very satisfied and 5 is not at all satisfied, how satisfied were you with your inspection?

- Poll each applicant for satisfaction level.

#### 8b. FACTORS INFLUENCING SATISFACTION WITH ELIGIBILITY

What factors do you consider when you determine your overall level of satisfaction with the assistance your organization received from FEMA?

#### 8c. PROVIDING FUNDS

Based on your recent experience in applying for public assistance, what do you feel constitutes fair and reasonable assistance?

- Record responses on spreadsheet / flip-chart until topic has been exhausted and then make transition into next topic.

For our last topic today, I would like you to think about the whole disaster recovery process. That is from the time of your Kickoff meeting until now.



5 min

## 9. SUGGESTIONS TO MEET NEEDS:

If you could give FEMA suggestions on how better to meet your organization's disaster-related needs what would it be?

- Probe for suggestions until participants are no longer able to provide feedback.

## CLOSING:

We are just about through with this session and before I give you this last exercise to complete, on behalf of FEMA I would like to thank you for your participation and assure you that the feedback you provided today will be used to improve service to disaster assistance victims across the country.

- Hand out ranking sheets

### 10. RANKING EXERCISE:

Before leaving, on the graphic we have the top attributes you identified earlier as being the most important in doing business with FEMA. Before leaving, I would like each of you to take a few minutes to think about the attributes you indicated were the most important in interacting with FEMA. On the ranking sheet I have passed out, I would like you to rank the top seven of these attributes in their order of importance. When you have finished ranking these attributes, give me your ranking sheet as you leave. If you have any questions, please let me know.

- As organizations complete ranking exercise and turn in their ranking sheet, again thank them for volunteering and for the feedback they provided.

## ATTRIBUTE RANKING SHEET

MOST IMPORTANT	1.	

