

Focus Group Discussion Guide  
St. Louis, MO  
November 7, 2018

DRAFT #5

**Introduction**

- √ Talking about issues in the news, not products
- √ Moderator's role—keeping us 'on track'/traffic cop, hearing all opinions
- √ Opinion research—no right or wrong answers
- √ 100% confidential; first names only
- √ Disclosure of viewers
- √ Respondent introduction:
  - Introduce yourself.
  - What you do for a living, affects perspective.
  - What organization or company comes to mind as doing a lot to volunteer and give back to the community here?

**Organizations / Structure**

1. Thinking about when you volunteer, how do you choose what organizations and efforts that you volunteer for?
  - What's important to you to know?
  - What are the questions you usually need answered up-front?
2. Thinking more broadly, how important is it to have local, state or even national organizations that provide the structure and framework for all of us to be able to volunteer in the community and give back?
  - Who stands out as organizations that provide an avenue and opportunities for getting involved with your community?
    - (1) If you were going to volunteer to tutor children, who would you reach out to and why? What about to help seniors? Why? What about to re-build a local park? Why? How about to volunteer at a local food bank? Why?
    - (2) Any others?
    - (3) Why are these organizations top of mind?

**National Organizations**

3. I'm going to read off some national organizations focused on service and volunteering, and briefly discuss each one. (RANDOMIZE FOR EACH GROUP)
  - The Corporation for National and Community Service or CNCS.
    - (1) First of all, have you heard of CNCS?

- (2) What is your impression of them?
- (3) What do they do? What are their strengths?
- (4) Are they active here in this community?
  - (a) If yes, how so?
- (5) Who do you think participates in CNCS?
- (6) If you haven't heard of them before, what does their name say to you?
  - (a) What does it make you think they do?
- AmeriCorps
  - (1) First of all, have you heard of AmeriCorps?
  - (2) What is your impression of them?
  - (3) What do they do? What are their strengths?
  - (4) Are they active here in this community?
    - (a) If yes, how so?
  - (5) Who do you think participates in AmeriCorps?
  - (6) If you haven't heard of them before, what does their name say to you?
    - (a) What does it make you think they do?
- Senior Corps
  - (1) First of all, have you heard of Senior Corps?
  - (2) What is your impression of them?
  - (3) What do they do? What are their strengths?
  - (4) Are they active here in this community?
    - (a) If yes, how so?
  - (5) Who do you think participates in Senior Corp?
  - (6) If you haven't heard of them before, what does their name say to you?
    - (a) What does it make you think they do?
- AmeriCorps VISTA
  - (1) First of all, have you heard of AmeriCorps VISTA or maybe AmeriCorps NCCC?
    - (a) Which one? Both? Neither?
  - (2) What is your impression of them?
    - (a) The same? Different?
    - (b) What makes them different from each other?
  - (3) What do they do? What are their strengths?
  - (4) Are they active here in this community?

- (a) If yes, how so?
  - (5) Who do you think participates in AmeriCorp VISTA?
  - (6) If you haven't heard of them before, what do their names say to you?
    - (a) What does it make you think they do?
4. Are all of these programs related in your mind? Similar?
    - How so?
    - Or are they completely different?
    - What do you think the relationship is?
  5. All of these organizations we've just been discussing are actually part of the same group or the same organization – the Corporation for National and Community Service. The CNCS empowers both AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members to solve local problems, as well as distributes grants to local partners.
    - Was anybody aware of that?
    - In your mind, does it make them stronger that they each have their own brand?
    - Or would they be stronger if they had the same brand?
    - Would it be easier to recruit new volunteers if they had one national brand? Harder? Or no difference? Why?
  6. Which name are you the most likely to recognize? Which name would be the strongest for them to communicate so you recognized them as a group that is active in the St. Louis area?
    - Should they all operate under or affiliate with that name?
    - Or would an entirely new name be a better idea?
      - (1) What are the benefits of that?
      - (2) What are the downsides of that?
      - (3) What do you think the new name should be?
  7. If I had come in here and asked, "what do you think of [INSERT RESPONDENTS PREFERRED NAME HERE]?", would you have been able to have given a stronger answer than when I asked "what do you think of CNCS?".
  8. Here are some logos that are out there in the volunteer community right now.
    - Which ones have you seen before?
    - Where/how have you seen them?
    - [AmeriCorps] Have you seen this logo before?
      - (1) What does it say to you?
      - (2) What does it convey?
      - (3) Does it get your attention?
    - [Senior Corps] Have you seen this logo before?

- (1) What does it say to you?
  - (2) What does it convey?
  - (3) Does it get your attention?
  - [Competitor Logo] Have you seen this logo before?
    - (1) What does it say to you?
    - (2) What does it convey?
    - (3) Does it get your attention?
  - Which of these is the strongest?
    - (1) Why? What makes that one the strongest?
9. What would you name a national organization that helps connect volunteers with local organizations, and provides grants and opportunities to local partners?
- Why do you think that is the best name?
  - What does that name say to you?
  - What makes that name important?

### ***Conclusions***

10. After talking more about volunteering and different organizations, has your opinion changed at all on having a national organization that provides structure, grants and opportunities for volunteers in communities across the country?
- Why or why not?
  - What is the best asset they bring to the table?
  - What are your concerns / their liabilities?
  - Is it better or worse if that national organization is a government agency?
11. Finally, thinking more broadly, what do you see as the biggest challenges for the future in volunteering and making an impact?
- Why is that?
  - What can local, state and national organizations do to help with those issues?
12. Thank and close.