

Emerging Tobacco Products Communication Initiative

Focus Group Moderator Guide

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The 90-minute focus groups with educators will comprise the following elements:

I. Welcome / Background (7 mins):

- a. Welcome—The moderator will thank the participants for taking the time to participate, explain the purpose of the session, review highlights from the consent form, and answer any remaining questions.
- b. Professional Background—The moderator will ask the participants about their work experience as educators.

II. Creative Themes (60 mins, 20 per concept):

- a. First Reactions (MURAL and Discussion) - What are participants' first impressions of the creative concept? How does it make them feel? What words, phrases, or visuals grab participants' attention?
- b. Main Message - What do participants think is the main point that the concepts are trying to convey?
- c. Relevance—To what extent do participants think the creative concept speaks to people like them?
- d. Comprehension - What language and/or ideas do they find confusing, unclear, or difficult to understand?
- e. Self-Efficacy - After seeing the creative concept, how confident are participants that they can speak with students about e-cigarettes in a way that will resonate with students?
- f. Motivation - How motivated do participants feel to talk with students about e-cigarettes after seeing the creative concept?
- g. Visual Design - What do participants think about the overall look and feel of the concept?

III. Creative Theme Reflection (20 mins):

- a. Ranking (Rating Sheet)—Which concept do participants like best? Which do they like least?
- b. Appeal - Which creative concept are participants most drawn to?
- c. Motivation - Which creative concept do participants think would be most motivating for people like them?
- d. Credibility - To what extent do participants trust the information in these creative concepts? What would make the concepts more trustworthy?
- e. Communication Preferences - On which channels or platforms (e.g., Facebook, association newsletters, CDC website) would participants prefer to see this information?
- f. Recommendations - What changes to the creative concepts do participants recommend?

IV. Closing (3 mins). The moderator will ask for final thoughts and thank the participants for their time.

WELCOME (3 MINUTES)

Welcome, everyone, and thank you for participating in our discussion today. My name is _____, and I work for RTI International, a nonprofit research organization. We are conducting this study on behalf of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC. The CDC would like your feedback on some potential themes and creative ideas for a new campaign about youth e-cigarette use that focuses on middle and high school educators. Our discussion will help identify where improvements might be needed before developing a full campaign, so your feedback is very important. Our discussion will last about 90 minutes.

Before we begin, I want to review a few highlights from the consent form you were sent via email:

- **Participation.** First, your participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to answer, and you may stop participating at any point.
- **Recording.** With your permission, we will audio and video record today's session so that I can give you my full attention and not take a lot of notes. Please minimize background noise by finding a quiet location away from other people and distractions.
- **Observers.** We also have some members of the research team—including staff from RTI and CDC—watching our discussion so they can hear your opinions directly from you. You won't see them on video, but you might see them listed as observers.
- **Privacy.** We will keep your identity secure to the extent permitted by law. Only the recruitment staff have your full name and contact information, and they will not share that information with anyone.

I also want to highlight a few ground rules for our discussion:

- **Timing.** I have a discussion guide in front of me to help us stay on track. We have a lot of topics to cover, so I may need to break off our conversation at times so that we can move on to the next topic.
- **Speak One at a Time.** I'm interested in hearing opinions from all of you, so you don't have to wait for me to call on you to join the conversation. Please just speak one at a time. I may occasionally interrupt you to make sure everyone gets a chance to speak and ensure that responses are accurately recorded.
- **Cell Phone.** If you haven't already, please silence your cell phone and other devices.
- **Technical Assistance.** If you need technical assistance at any point, please let me know.
- **Honest Opinion.** Most importantly, there are no right or wrong answers. I just want your honest opinions about the ideas we'll be discussing.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND (4 MINUTES)

During today's discussion, we're going to use a tool called MURAL. Everyone should have received a link to this tool before the group. Is everyone signed in to MURAL and able to see the section that reads "Professional Background?" [\[Post link in chat for any participants who are not logged into the platform. Make sure all participants can access the MURAL board.\]](#)

I'd like to begin the discussion by having everyone introduce themselves. First, please post the following information on MURAL using the sticky note function. Please tell us:

- Your first name
- How many years you've worked as an educator
- Your current role at your school

Now we'll go around the screen and share the information we posted.

[CALL ON SPECIFIC PARTICIPANTS TO SHARE, ONE BY ONE.]

CREATIVE THEMES (60 MINUTES, 20 PER THEME)

Next, I am going to show you some draft creative themes that have been developed for a new campaign focused on educators. With your input, these creative themes are going to be developed into ads for the campaign. I'm going to show you three themes and ask you questions about each of them. A theme is a creative idea that is used to shape a communication campaign and its creative materials, so they are cohesive and recognizable. Each theme takes a slightly different approach to the text and the design. For now, let's avoid comparing them. Instead, let's consider each set on its own.

We'll view each theme on MURAL. I'll ask you to comment on each theme on your own, and then we'll discuss each theme as a group.

Creative Theme A (20 minutes)

Let's view the first theme on MURAL. [DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO THE FIRST CONCEPT ON MURAL] Can everyone see it? As you'll see, we've included three different items to help convey this theme - a brief text description, a mood board to convey the visual look and feel, and a storyboard, which includes the images and script for a video advertisement. You'll see we've included labels for each on the MURAL.

Before we discuss the creative theme as a group, I'd like everyone to add at least one sticky note describing their initial reactions. How did these materials make you feel? What did you first think of when you saw these materials?

Now let's discuss your thoughts and reactions as a group.

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Probes</u>
1. First Reaction. What was your first impression of this theme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What do you like about it? Why?▪ What do you dislike about it? Why?▪ How does it make you feel?▪ Would the mood board or storyboard grab your attention? If yes, what specific words, phrases, or visuals caught your attention?▪ Is the information in the storyboard helpful to you? Why or why not?
2. Main Message. How would you describe the main idea of the storyboard?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ What is the storyboard trying to say?
3. Relevance. Who do you think the storyboard is trying to reach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Who do you think would benefit most from seeing this storyboard once it is shared as an ad online?▪ Would you say that this the storyboard is intended for someone like you? Why or why not?

<p>4. Comprehension. What aspects of this storyboard are confusing or unclear?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are there any words or phrases you find confusing or do not like? If so, which ones? ▪ If so, how might this be said differently? ▪ What about this storyboard might other educators find difficult to understand?
<p>5. Self-Efficacy. After seeing this storyboard, how confident are you that you can speak with students about e-cigarettes in a way that will resonate with them?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why is that? What about the storyboard was particularly meaningful? ▪ What would make you feel more prepared to speak with students in a way that resonates with them? ▪ What other information, tools, or resources would you need to have these conversations with students?
<p>6. Motivation. What action would you take after seeing this storyboard? Why is that?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ After seeing this storyboard, how motivated are you to talk with students about e-cigarettes? ▪ Why is that? ▪ What would make you more motivated to speak with students about e-cigarettes?
<p>7. Visual Design. What would you change, if anything, about the way this theme looks?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why is that? ▪ What do you like about the design in the mood board and storyboard (e.g., photo, colors, font)? Why? ▪ What do you dislike about the design? Why?

Now we'll look at a second set. **[DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO THE SECOND CREATIVE THEME ON MURAL. REPEAT STICKY NOTE REACTIONS AND Q1-Q7.]**

Now we'll look at a final set. **[DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO THE THIRD CREATIVE THEME ON MURAL. REPEAT STICKY NOTE REACTIONS AND Q1-Q7.]**

CREATIVE THEME REFLECTION (20 MINUTES)

Now that you've seen all three creative themes, let's spend some time comparing them. We'll start with a silent poll, which you should now see on Zoom.

[START THE POLL. ONLY ADVANCE TO THE NEXT POLL QUESTION ONCE ALL PARTICIPANTS HAVE SUBMITTED A RESPONSE.]

<p>Poll questions (to be programmed into Zoom)</p> <p>[Display thumbnails of concepts on screen alongside poll.]</p>	<p>Concept A</p>	<p>Concept B</p>	<p>Concept C</p>
<p>1. Which theme do you like the most?</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>B</p>	<p>C</p>
<p>2. Which theme do you like the least?</p>	<p>A</p>	<p>B</p>	<p>C</p>

3. Which theme do you feel is most relevant to you?	A	B	C
4. Which theme would most motivate you to talk with students about e-cigarettes?	A	B	C
5. Which theme is most memorable?	A	B	C

Now let's discuss the creative themes overall.

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Probes</u>
8. Appeal. If you saw these storyboards as video ads online, which would you be most likely to click on? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do you like about this ad idea? ▪ What would you be looking for or expecting when clicking on the ad? ▪ Which ad would you be least likely to click? Why? ▪ What do you dislike about this ad idea?
9. Motivation. Which storyboard do you think would be the most motivating for educators like you? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which elements of this storyboard were motivating? ▪ What about this storyboard makes it more motivating than the others?
10. Credibility. How much do you trust the information and ideas in these storyboards? Why is that?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How believable did you find these storyboards? Why? ▪ Which storyboard do you find most trustworthy? Why is that? ▪ Which storyboard do you find least trustworthy? Why? ▪ Was any of the information in these storyboards unfamiliar or new? What was unfamiliar or new?
11. Communication Preferences. Where would you expect to see ad ideas like these?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have you seen similar ads before? If so, where? ▪ [If yes] What do you remember most about those ads? ▪ On what channels or platforms are you most likely to pay attention to ads when you see them (for example, on television, websites, social media, apps, billboards, etc.)? ▪ Where do you prefer to get information about professional topics? ▪ Which of these channels do you trust when viewing ads?
12. Recommendations. What changes would you make to these creative themes to improve them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are there elements of one theme that you think should be incorporated into another (e.g., colors from one with photo from another)? ▪ If so, which elements?

13. Information Gaps. What questions do you have about e-cigarettes and youth after seeing these storyboards?

- What else would you want to know about e-cigarette use before talking with your students?

CLOSING (3 MINUTES)

This conversation has been very helpful. Do you have any questions for me before we close?

[CHECK CHAT BOX FOR ANY CLARIFYING QUESTIONS FROM OBSERVERS]

Thank you again for participating today. The recruiter will follow up with you soon to provide your token of appreciation.