



**BUREAU OF INDIAN EDUCATION**  
*Doing What's Best for Students!*

## Interviewing Former Students

ADAPTED IN PART FROM:  
**THE TELEPHONE INTERVIEWER'S HANDBOOK:  
 HOW TO CONDUCT STANDARDIZED  
 CONVERSATIONS BY PATRICIA GWARTNEY**

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**IMPORTANT  
ANNOUNCEMENT**




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### Achieving this Year's target response rate depends on you...

PSO Response Calculator

	Overall	LD	ED	MR	AD	Female	Minority	ELL	Dropout
Target Leaver Totals	421	287	44	33	57	149	421	0	149
Response Totals	247	169	23	23	32	91	247	0	62
Target Leaver Representation	68.17%	10.45%	7.64%	13.54%	35.29%	100.00%	0.00%	35.29%	
Respondent Representation	58.42%	9.31%	9.31%	12.96%	38.84%	100.00%	0.00%	25.10%	
Difference	0.25%	-1.14%	1.67%	-0.58%	1.45%	0.00%	0.00%	-10.29%	

Note: Positive differences indicate over-representation; negative differences indicate under-representation. A difference of greater than +/- 3% is highlighted in red. We encourage users to also read the WIOA/PSO paper PSM, Service Customers, Response Rates and Non-response Bias, found on the NPSQ website at <http://www.psoindia.org/submitting.html>.

Last Year's (FFY 2016) Response Rate: 58.67%




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### Session Outline

- Getting to the Interview
- Making the Calls
- Introducing the Project
- Responding to Questions
- Preventing/Reducing Refusals
- Practicing the Interview



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PSO Interview data are only as good as the interviewers who collected it.



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### Getting to the Interview

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| Interview Purpose  | Role-playing with other interviewers                                     |
| Interview Design   | Tape-recording yourself conducting an interview and then listening to it |
| Typical Interview Training...for professional interviewers | Learning to better control your voice or handle certain problems         |
| 15 - 25 hours of training                                  | Confidentiality  |
| Listening to lectures                                      | Ethical issues   |



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## Making the Calls

- Begin making calls now– December 15
- Calling from school, home, or park bench
- Potential selection bias
- 8 rings
- Multiple attempts, over a couple of weeks, varying days and times
- 10 – 20 attempts, not uncommon, at least 3 attempt at different times and days
- Recommend that you record and analyze attempts




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## Disposition Codes

Youth	Interview Completed	Interview Began, not completed	Missing Contact Information	Incorrect Contact Information	No Answer	Language Barrier	Refused to participate	Notes
Alverson	2/12/2012							
Baker					2/12/2012			2 – left message
Carter				2/12/2012				Person did not know youth

Codes: Completed = 101; Began not completed = 102; Missing Contact information = 103; Incorrect contact information = 104; No Answer = 105; Language barrier = 106; Refused to participate = 107

Youth	Date	Code	Notes
Alverson	2/12/2012	101	
Baker		105	Left message
Carter	2/12/2012	104	Person did not know youth




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- First, know in advance what you are going to say.
- Memorize the introduction
- Be prepared with answers to questions frequently asked
- Second, control your voice pitch.
- Third, enunciate.
- Fourth, control your voice volume.
- Finally, speak at a normal pace, or slightly brisk.
- Unless the respondent need you to slow down




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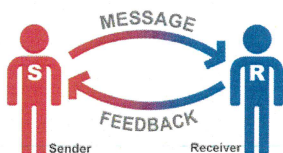
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## Introducing the Project

Introduction can make or break the entire interview

Informative without overwhelming



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## Introduction with Former Student

Hello. May I speak to/ Is this [former student by name]?

The Bureau of Indian Education has asked some teachers (or school staff) at [\_\_\_\_\_ High School] to conduct a 10 to 15 minute interview with former students who left high school in the last year. The purpose of the interview is to learn what former students do after they leave high school. This information is used to help schools improve programs for students with disabilities who are still in high school. This is (I am) \_\_\_\_\_. I want to assure you that I am not selling a thing, and that this interview is completely anonymous and voluntary.

Do you have any questions about the interview before we begin?

Yes: (answer questions)

NO: We appreciate your help. I'd like to begin the interview now.

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## “You had me at hello”

- Introduction tells the respondent
- who is calling
- why you are calling
- where you are calling from
- on whose behalf you are calling (the interview sponsor)
- the interview's purpose
- approximately how long the interview will take
- that participation is anonymous and voluntary

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## Potential Death Sentences

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_ and I am calling from [organization].  
How are you doing this (morning/ afternoon/ evening)?



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## Responding to Questions

Respondents often have questions before they agree to the answer any interview questions.  
Typical questions are about  
Why the interview is being conducted (purpose)  
Who's paying for it  
How they were selected to participate  
Taking the time to answer these questions will facilitate completing interviews



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## Frequently Asked Questions

**What is the purpose of this interview? How will these data be used?**  
The purpose of the interview is to learn what former high school students are doing after they leave high school.  
The interview results will be used to help the BIE and the school improve programs for children with disabilities.  
Former student's opinions are very important to the BIE.



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### Frequently Asked Questions

**How did you get my telephone number? How was I chosen for this interview?**

You were selected to participate in this interview because you left high school within the last year and received services for a disability.

Only a few former students are being asked to participate, so your answers are very important.

**Who is sponsoring (paying for) this study?**

The BIE or \_\_\_\_ school



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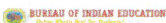
### Frequently Asked Questions

**How long will the interview take?**

The interview will take about 10-15 minutes, depending on your answers.

I can talk fast if you are in a hurry.

We can complete part of it now and I can call back tomorrow to finish the rest.



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### Frequently Asked Questions

**Is this interview confidential/anonymous?**

This interview is completely confidential.

Your name and telephone number are not linked to the answers you give.

The results of all the interviews are reported in the form of percentages and averages.

It is not possible to identify any individual person or response in the results. Confidentiality and anonymity are very important to the Department.



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What if I do not want to answer a question?

The questions are about what you have done since leaving high school. You may skip any question you wish.

You may also end the interview at any time.

### How can I be sure that this is real/legitimate?

You may call Dr. Eugene Thompson at the BIE Division Performance and Accountability at 505-563-5394 or \_\_\_\_\_ at the school at \_\_\_\_\_.



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why are you calling me. You can't call me because ... I signed up for the 'Do Not Call'.

We are calling to conduct research. Research is exempt under the Do Not Call laws, because your answers are (anonymous/confidential) and no attempt is made to sell you anything. Your information is important in helping the BIE and school make decisions that affect students with disabilities.



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## Listen to the Questions

Avoid yes/no questions in the introduction  
Can I call you back at another time – opens the door for them to say no.



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The Telephone Interviewer's Handbook: How to Conduct Standardized Conversations

By Patricia A. Gwartney

Say This:	Don't Say This:
Please tell me a good time to call back.	Is there a better time to call back?
If a weekday: I can call you back on Saturday morning.	Could you suggest a better day for me to call back when you're not so busy?
If a weekend: I can call you back on Monday or Tuesday. What time of day would be best?	
Let's try a few questions.	Would you like to try a few questions?
I'm sure we can find several reasons why you would be interested in participating.	Is there any particular reason why you're not interested?
But we are interested in you, because you represent hundreds of others like you whose opinions need to be heard even if you are not very interested.	Do you mind if I ask why you are not interested in this topic?
I'd like to begin the interview now.	Is this a good time to start the interview?
I'll call back in a few days to see if you feel well enough to do the interview then.	Can I call you back in a few days to see if you feel well enough to do the interview then?

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## Preventing/Reducing Refusals


Most reluctant respondents do eventually decide to participate.

Completed interviews = response rate

Higher response rate = better

Better representation = more trustworthy data

**Your Goal: Completed Interview**

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## Refusals: What's in a No

Respondent must hear the introduction to make an informed decision about participating

- Initial** - excuse or objection made after the introduction without outright refusing to participate
- Soft Refusals** – always too busy at the moment, request call back, still too busy; never say 'no', but never take the time to respond
- Hard Refusals** – remove the person from the call list; informed and refuse to participate

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## Avoiding Initial Refusals

Be familiar with the study

Know the study's purpose, why it is important, question areas, the sponsor, how to contact the sponsor, the nature of the target sample, why that sample is important, how respondents were chosen, why each respondent's participation is necessary, and all elements of informed consent

Memorize the introduction, transition statements, and answers to frequently asked questions

Practice at home, with other interviewers, and on the system

Read the introduction, answer respondents' questions, and move into the first interview questions swiftly, yet without making respondents feel rushed.



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## Handling Soft Refusals

Soft Refusals are time consuming

Be persistent

Stern tone in your voice

Pleasant but business like

Remind why the study is important

Tell them that their participation is important



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## Hard Refusals

### Informed dissenters:

Know the study's purpose, sponsor, importance, length of task, and anonymity/confidentiality

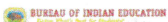
Know it is voluntary and they do not want to volunteer

May be very polite but immovable

### Uninformed dissenters:

Cut off interviewers before they get through the entire interview introduction (phone slams).

Different interviewers called at different times of the day on different days of the week to try to inform them of what they are refusing, but never get through.



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## Hard Refusals

### Repeated soft refusals:

Some interview research organizations automatically code 10 or more dial attempts as 'hard' refusal  
2 - 3 'soft' refusals as "hard" refusals

### Victims:

See themselves as victims of harassment  
Credibly claim they will file a formal complaint with your employer, call the police, hire a lawyer, or sue your employer

### Bullies:

Say threatening things to you  
Do not apologize. Politely and evenly say: *I am going to hang up the telephone now. Do it.*



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## Your Goal: Completed Interview

Conversions -- convincing a reluctant respondent to participate in an interview  
Identify and address their concerns  
Provide information they need  
Appeal to their civic duty or sense of altruism  
Youth have said about getting them to respond:  
Tell us how this will help others  
Tell us how the information will be used



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## Probes

Probes are used to solicit additional information from respondents

- Should be
- Neutral, not leading
- Open ended, not requiring yes/no response

### Examples

- "Tell me more about that."
- "What do you mean?"
- "Tell me about it."



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## Feedback to Respondents

Comments to convey understanding and encourage respondents to continue to participate  
Your goal: Completed Interview ....with accurate information  
Provide neutral feedback  
"Thank you."  
"Alright, we have just a few more questions."  
Avoid adding quality statements; they may encourage socially appropriate responses  
"Great!"  
"Good for you."



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## What have been your experiences when conducting the interviews?



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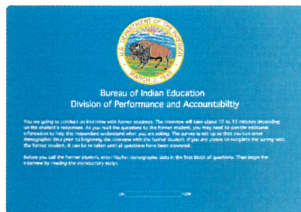
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## Online Data Entry

BIE Post-School Outcomes interview

Screen 1: Introduction to data collector



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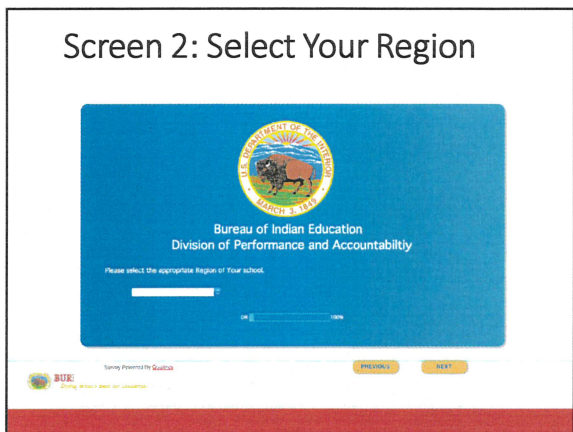
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### Screen 2: Select Your Region



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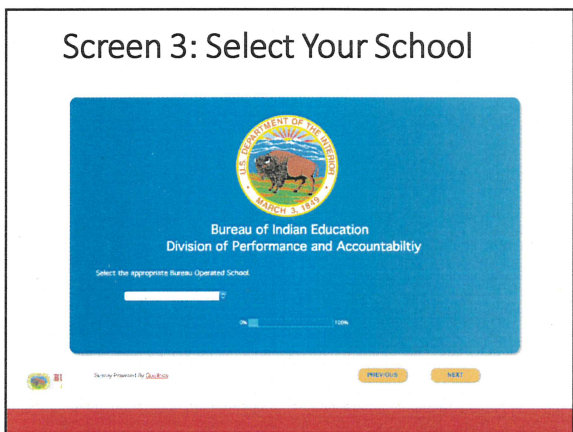
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### Screen 3: Select Your School



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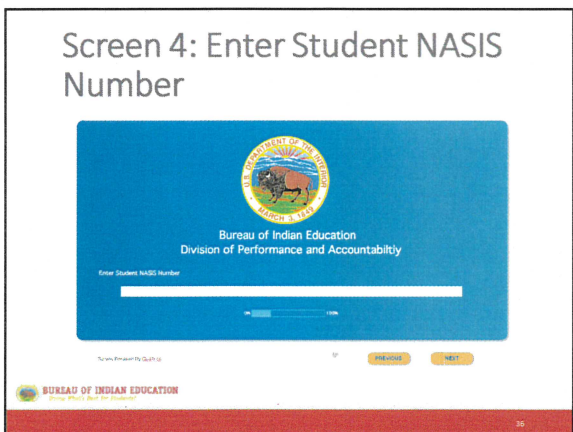
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### Screen 4: Enter Student NASIS Number



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### Screen 5: Introduction

Bureau of Indian Education  
Division of Performance and Accountability

Read the survey introduction to further understand...

Next: May (page 1) (Survey started by user)

Do you have any questions before we begin?  
 Yes, please ask your questions.  
 No, we appreciate your time. It is our hope the survey goes well.

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### Screen 6: Result of Contact

Bureau of Indian Education  
Division of Performance and Accountability

What is the result of the initial contact?

100%

PREVIOUS NEXT

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### Slide 7...: PSO Questions

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Division of Performance and Accountability

At any time since leaving high school, have you ever been involved in any school, job training, or education program?

PREVIOUS NEXT

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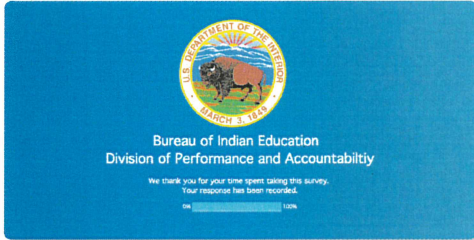
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## The End



Survey Financed by Quince  
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## Interviewer Behaviors Checklist

- Answers respondents' initial concerns properly.
- Reads the entire interview exactly as written, including the introductory sentences, all questions, and appropriate probes.
- Uses appropriate phrases to gain cooperation from a reluctant respondent.
- Enunciates all words clearly.
- Professional, yet personable tone of voice.
- Confident and assertive sentence intonation; not over-friendly, timid, or inappropriately apologetic.
- Interviews directly, without extra chatty words.
- No "empty air" or awkward pauses.
- Probes when necessary, without leading the respondent.
- Gives neutral feedback, as appropriate.
- Does not offer inappropriate information about self when asked.
- Records answers exactly and accurately

P. Gwartney

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## What can you do now?

- Collect accurate, complete, and multiple contacts for youth still in school
- Provide multiple pre-notifications to students and parents, starting now.
  - Flyers
  - Videos
  - Letters or informational briefs
- Visit [www.transitionta.org](http://www.transitionta.org) for pre-notifications materials
- Teach students about the interview process

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PSO Interview data  
are only as good as  
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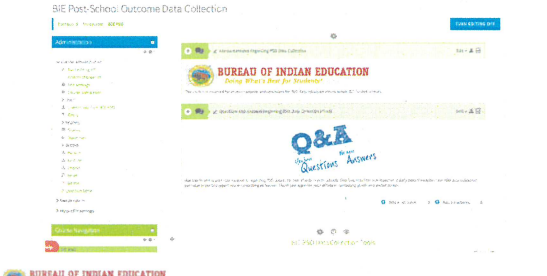
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Support Materials: Where do I  
Find Them?

BIE Post-School Outcome Data Collection



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Don't forget to complete the  
online evaluation!!

[https://oregon.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uP5FbaEwwF5BvT](https://oregon.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uP5FbaEwwF5BvT)

**Excellent**  
 **Very good**  
 **Good**  
 **Fair**



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## Further Information

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