Interviewing Former Students

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

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Achieving this Year’s target response rate depends on you...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rollout</th>
<th>LA</th>
<th>CA</th>
<th>NE</th>
<th>OH</th>
<th>TX</th>
<th>NC</th>
<th>NY</th>
<th>MO</th>
<th>Sup</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>512</td>
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<td>104</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>82</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>630</td>
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Last Year’s (FFY 2016) Response Rate: 58.67%
Session Outline

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

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

Getting to the Interview

Interview Purpose
Interview Design
Typical Interview Training...for professional interviewers
15 – 25 hours of training
Listening to lectures

Role-playing with other interviewers
Tape-recording yourself conducting an interview and then listening to it
Learning to better control your voice or handle certain problems
Confidentiality
Ethical issues
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

Disposition Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Interview completed</th>
<th>Interview complete</th>
<th>Meeting Contact Information</th>
<th>Interview Contact Information</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
<th>Language barrier</th>
<th>Refused to participate</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>11/1/2012</td>
<td>2, 3</td>
<td>Message</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Codes: Completed = 101; Interview not completed = 201; Missing Contact Information = 105; Incorrect Contact Information = 204; No Answer = 100; Language barrier = 106; Refused to participate = 107

CallMe!

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
Introducing the Project

Introduction can make or break the entire interview
Informative without overwhelming

Introduction with Former Student

Hello. May I speak to [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 old in high school. This is [P] only [I don’t want to tell 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.

“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
Potential Death Sentences

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

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.

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.
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

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.

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.
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 __________.

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.

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

By Patricia A. Quintero

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

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
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.

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

Hard Refusals

Informed dissenter:
- 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 dissenter:
- 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.
Hard Refusals

Repeated soft refusals:
- Some interview research organizations automatically code 2 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.

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

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."
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."

What have been your experiences when conducting the interviews?

Online Data Entry

BIE Post-School Outcomes Interview

Screen 1: Introduction to data collector
Screen 2: Select Your Region

Screen 3: Select Your School

Screen 4: Enter Student NASIS Number
The End

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

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 for pre-notifications materials
Teach students about the interview process
PSO Interview data are only as good as the interviewers who collected it.

Support Materials: Where do I Find Them?

Don’t forget to complete the online evaluation!!

https://oregon.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_SuPSFbaEwwF5BvT

☑ Excellent
☐ Very good
☐ Good
☐ Fair
Further Information

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