

Appendix C.

CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

1. An interview consists of three basic parts: an introduction, the interview proper and the end.
 - ◆ In the introduction, you need to introduce yourself, explain what the survey is about, who is sponsoring it and how long it takes to complete it. Then you need to ask the person if they would be willing to be interviewed.
 - ◆ In the interview proper, you need to carefully follow the questionnaire format provided and can make use of the tips in #2-#5 on good interviewing methods.
 - ◆ The end of the interview involves thanking the respondent for their time and bidding them good bye. If you have an incentive of some sort to give them, this is the time to present it. It is also a good time to provide any information that the respondent may want concerning area attractions, lodging, shopping or restaurants. Make sure that you have been provided with information about these amenities so that you can pass information on to respondents.
2. Try to keep the interview as conversational as possible, but do not modify the question wording too much. However, if it is clear that the person did not understand the question, rephrase the question or ask it in a different way.
3. If you are not sure you have understood the response or the response is incomplete, try one of the following techniques:
 - ◆ rephrase what the person has said, say it to them, and ask them if you understood them correctly,
 - ex. "I understood you to say that you are just passing through the area, is that correct?"
 - ◆ ask the person if they can rephrase their comment or explain further,
 - ex. "Can you tell me a little more about why you are visiting our area?"
4. Use responses from earlier questions to check responses of later responses, especially in the expenditure section.
 - ◆ ex. say you are asking about other expenses and the person gives you a very low estimate. You might ask: "Does that include the admission fees to the attractions that you mentioned visiting earlier?"
5. Be careful how you ask follow up questions to make sure that they are not insinuating something or suggesting a certain response. Leading questions or a leading tone of voice can bias responses to a question. As much as possible, ask questions in a neutral way since there are no right or wrong answers to the questions.
 - ◆ ex. neutral question: "Did you visit the park downtown on this trip?"
 - ◆ leading question: "You didn't visit that old park downtown on this trip, did you?"
6. You may need to develop methods for getting respondents back on track if they begin talking in detail after one particular question.
 - ◆ ex. respondent is going on in detail about how much they are enjoying their trip. The interviewer might affirm what they say and move on to the next question: "I am glad you are having a good time in our community, how many nights are you planning to stay?"

7. Interviewers need good listening skills. This includes paying careful attention to what people say, looking alert and interested in the interview, giving appropriate verbal and nonverbal cues that show that you are interested and paying attention.