

Working Together in Washington:
Assessing Collaboration within Coalitions of Interest Groups

Instrument for Lobbyist Interviews
Revised December 7, 2014

Introduction

Hello, may I please speak with _____?

My name is _____ and I am a _____ at the University of Michigan.

I am conducting research on the extent to which advocacy organizations work in coalitions with other organizations. As part of this project, I am building a database of interest-group coalitions in the United States. For this purpose, I am interviewing hundreds of advocates to ask a few short questions about your involvement in interest group coalitions.

Would you be willing to participate in a brief, 15-minute interview on how you do or do not work with coalitions? It is anonymous and is strictly for academic research. If you participate, you would be free to skip any question that you wish not to answer or end the interview at any time without penalty to you. Participating in the interview would not expose you to any significant risks or provide you any benefits.

[Receive respondent's response.]

Questions

1. As you are aware, a coalition exists any time two or more advocacy organizations choose to work together on a common advocacy project.
 - A. Thinking only of the past 12 months, which coalitions have *you personally* worked with?
 - B. For each coalition, please tell me the issue area that it works on?
 - C. I am interested in *all types* of interest group coalitions—small and large, formal and informal, ad hoc and permanent, etc.—so please take as much time as you need to list all of the coalitions in which you've taken part. Are there any coalitions that you would like to add to the list?
 - D. So, you have told me that you have worked with the following coalitions over the past year. [Read list.] Are there any other coalitions that you would like to add to this list?
 - E. Are there any other coalitions?

2. For each coalition that you just mentioned, in comparison to other coalitions of which you have been a part, how cooperative are the members of this coalition in working together? [Solicit an answer for each coalition named.]

_____ Much more cooperative
_____ Somewhat more cooperative
_____ About typical
_____ Somewhat less cooperative
_____ Much less cooperative

3. For each coalition that you just mentioned, considering the issues that the coalition has worked on in the past year, how effective do you think that it has been in achieving its goals? [Solicit an answer for each coalition named.]

_____ Highly effective
_____ Somewhat effective
_____ Not at all effective

4. [At this point in the interview, the interviewer uses a random number generator to select one and only one of the coalitions identified in question 1.] I have just randomly selected _____ from the list of coalitions that you just provided me. Could you tell me:

A. Who is the leader of this coalition? _____

B. Which organization does _____ work for? _____

C. [If the respondent gives the name of an organization in question 5.A., then ask:] Is there an individual person in organization _____ that acts as a leader for the coalition? _____

D. [If the respondent says that there is no leader of the coalition, or many leaders, then ask:] Is there someone whom you believe would know the most about the history and inner-workings of the coalition? If so, could you tell me their name and organizational affiliation? _____

5. Demographic questions. I would like to ask a few brief demographic questions in order to assess the representativeness of the sample. As I mentioned earlier, you are free to skip any questions you don't wish to answer.

A. [Interviewer records sex/gender without asking.]

B. Could you tell me how many years you have worked for [your organization]?

C. Could you tell me how many years you have been a registered lobbyist?

D. Have you ever worked for Congress or a member of Congress?

- E. Have you ever worked for a federal government agency?
- F. Could you tell me the year in which you were born?
- G. Could you tell me how you identify your race/ethnicity?
- H. Could you tell me, do you personally identify as a Democratic, a Republican, or a member of another party? Or, do you prefer not to identify with any party?
- I. Could you tell me, where would you place yourself on the right to left ideological spectrum? Are you: (i) to the right of very conservative; (ii) very conservative; (iii) somewhat conservative; (iv) moderate; (v) somewhat liberal or progressive; (vi) very liberal or progressive; (vii) to the left of very liberal or progressive. Or do you not think of yourself as being on this spectrum?

Conclusion

Thank you for your time. Would you like for me to send you a copy of the results when the study is completed? _____

[If yes, then ask:] How would you like me to send it to you? _____

Please let me know the e-mail or postal address that you prefer. _____