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**Gaining Cooperation with the Current Population Survey:  
Subjective Experiences from the Field**

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*Disclaimer:* This report is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.

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### **Gaining Cooperation with the Current Population Survey**

As a federal statistical agency, the U.S. Census Bureau is responsible for collecting and distributing information on the people and the economy of the United States. The information the Census Bureau collects is vital to policy decision-makers and researchers in a variety of settings. Although response rates to Census Bureau surveys are quite high (above 90%), in recent years, response rates to these surveys have been declining (Bates, 2006). This trend reflects the increasing difficulty of collecting survey data due to several key factors: the lifestyle, mobility, and increase in cell-phone only households that make it more difficult to locate and make contact with potential respondents; and the increasing privacy and confidentiality concerns that make it difficult to gain the public's cooperation with large-scale government surveys. While methodologists and statisticians can develop new ways of designing samples, locating, and contacting respondents, the challenge of getting the contacted respondent to participate remains.

Survey methodologists have spent no shortage of time addressing the issue of survey cooperation. Within the last decade, Groves and Couper (1998) put forth a comprehensive review and synthesis of theories that predict survey participation based on the relationships between household, respondent, and interviewer characteristics. Indeed, a significant portion of the survey methodology literature has used this same method of linking demographic information (such as age, race, education, and employment status) with household characteristics (such as household income, housing type, family composition, urban or rural housing locations) to predict or describe the types of people who respond to federal surveys (DeMaio, 1980; Groves & Couper, 1998; Goyder, 1987; Goyder, Lock, & McNair, 1992; Redpath & Elliot, 1988). However, these studies are limited because they tend to focus on survey participation from the respondent perspective. The results tend to be summaries, predictions, or models of survey participation based on certain respondent characteristics, survey content, or the use of persuasive materials and messaging. Less attention has been paid to survey participation from the interviewer perspective and the role of the interviewer in successfully garnering survey participation (see Couper & Burt, 1994; Groves & Couper, 1998, for some examples of studies on interviewers.). This limited focus may be due to the lack of availability of interviewer data or access to interviewers and the abundance of publicly available federal survey data. Researchers also may have difficulty implementing the types of experimental designs necessary to systematically study interviewer and respondent interactions during the critical survey data collection periods. Such efforts would heavily interfere with the process of data collection.

One way to surmount these obstacles would be to study survey participation on a micro level in a laboratory setting. Cognitive and social psychologists long have studied the constructs instrumental to cooperation, conformity, persuasion, and compliance, based on knowledge of how people process information and respond in social contexts (Asch, 1956; Milgram, 1963; Petty, Wegener, & Fabrigar, 1997). This systematic study of human information processing and social interaction in a laboratory setting has been critical for isolating and identifying individual factors that affect participation and cooperation. While such carefully designed laboratory experiments suffer from a significant lack of external validity, they would allow methodologists to study survey participation from the same "bottom-up" perspective.

Accordingly, we have begun a comprehensive exploration of survey participation from both the respondent and interviewer perspectives, using multiple methods. First, we intend to develop a basic understanding of survey data collection from the interviewer perspective through exploratory pilot studies. We also intend to use existing survey data to describe a current picture of survey response and survey nonresponse through the relationship between survey respondent characteristics, interviewer characteristics, and general geographical characteristics. Finally, our efforts will involve developing a research program of lab-based experiments that will explore the effectiveness of different respondent and interviewer interactions and the effect of these interactions on cooperation and survey

participation. In the current paper, we present the results of our initial exploratory efforts at gaining an understanding of survey data collection on a large-scale, federally-sponsored survey.

Our primary goal in the current studies was to gain a general understanding of how survey supervisors and interviewers, based on their direct experiences “in the field,” view the challenges of gaining public cooperation. We collected information from the field staff that works from the Census Bureau’s twelve Regional Offices throughout the United States. The staff at these Regional Offices is responsible for the management of field data collection. This staff consists of supervisory staff (Survey Program Coordinators and Survey Supervisors) and interviewers (Senior Field Representatives and Field Representatives). The supervisory staff oversees the daily administrative operations of survey data collection. The interviewers conduct the survey interviews with selected respondents, collecting the data using a variety of interview modes (telephone interviews, in-person interviews, paper surveys, and computerized surveys).

Although we intended these studies to be as broad as possible, for ease of participant recall and simplified analyses, we asked our participants to focus only on their experience with a particular Census Bureau survey: the Current Population Survey (CPS), a multi-modal panel survey. The Current Population Survey is comprised of eight monthly interviews with each selected household over a sixteen month period. Each household completes four consecutive monthly interviews, has an eight month reprieve, and then completes the final four consecutive monthly interviews. Interviewers must complete the first and fifth interviews with an in-person interview, conducted face-to-face at the respondent’s home. The remaining six interviews can be either an in-person interview, a telephone interview with the same in-person interviewer, or a telephone interview from a centralized national phone bank (with a different interviewer). Also, because household selection for this survey is based on a sample of addresses, and not the household itself, addresses remain in the sixteen-month interview period regardless of changes in the household. In other words, if a household moves out of a sampled address and a new household moves in during the sixteen-month data collection period, this new household and its members must be interviewed.

Because of these complex design features, the CPS simultaneously allows us to gather information on multiple interviews, multiple modes, and changes in interviewers and household composition. Interviewers who work on this survey will be able to provide feedback on a variety of gaining cooperation issues these different design features present. It is possible that some supervisory staff or interviewers have past experience with other surveys. In the case of interviewers, it is possible that they also currently work on other surveys. Because of this experience, participants might have had difficulty limiting their recall of gaining cooperation behaviors to just their experiences on the CPS. However, given the unique design of CPS, in which interviewing is limited to one week each month only, this limited focus most likely was not an onerous task for our participants. While the current studies were limited to experiences with the CPS, we intend to expand our research program to include other Census Bureau surveys.

## **General Method**

### *Participants*

Our participants included regional survey supervisors and a nationally distributed sample of senior interviewers working on the Census Bureau’s CPS.

### *Questionnaires*

We administered a paper-based, open-ended questionnaire to both groups of participants. Through the questionnaires, we collected basic descriptive information on the Regional Office from which the participant worked, the length of time he or she had been working as either a Supervisor, or a Coordinator, or a Senior Field Representative, and the length of time he or she had been working on

CPS.<sup>1</sup> We did not collect any demographic characteristics, such as age, sex, race, or ethnicity, on these participants. Copies of the questionnaires we administered to the supervisory staff and the interviewers can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B, respectively.

The questionnaire then asked participants to provide candid information on successful and unsuccessful factors that contribute to gaining respondent cooperation with CPS interviews. Because these two studies were purely exploratory, we intended to communicate a broad definition of what might contribute to gaining cooperation. Participants could focus on any aspect of gaining cooperation, including any behaviors, practices, techniques, or recommendations that field staff might use for successfully completing interviews. Respondents were also free to structure their responses in any format.

### *Data Coding and Analysis*

The data analyses we present in these two studies are rudimentary. Since we only intended to use these data to form a brief and subjective picture of survey interviewing, we did not develop testable hypotheses that would guide our analyses. We did not have any *a priori* expectations about the types of responses we would receive from the participants. We wanted our participants to adopt their own interpretation of our questions and to answer accordingly. As a result of the general nature of our questions, participants provided a variety of responses in a variety of response styles. Some participants provided brief bullet points, while other respondents constructed fluid narratives, or related anecdotes of personal experiences. Given this diversity in response styles, it was not possible to “tally” or count the frequency of specific responses. However, we felt it was important to use some descriptive and objective measures for summarizing participants’ responses. Therefore, we present limited statistical analyses on the content those responses.

To summarize the content of responses, we developed a *post hoc* coding scheme based on common themes in participant responses. After the first study data collection, we reviewed participants’ responses and noticed that they tended to fall into four broad behavior categories. These categories were administrative behaviors, self-directed behaviors, interview behaviors, and general, miscellaneous behaviors<sup>2</sup>. Administrative behaviors characterized responses that focused on the management of case loads and the general organization and scheduling of interviews, and knowledge of the survey. Self-directed behaviors characterized responses that focused on the interviewer’s appearance or attitude. Interview behaviors characterized responses that focused on interacting with respondents and conducting interviews. General, miscellaneous behaviors characterized responses that were overly vague and could not be easily interpreted or coded into one of the three specific behavior categories. For example, some participants indicated that “being pushy” was unsuccessful at gaining cooperation. This “pushiness” could refer to administrative behaviors, such as repeatedly visiting a household, calling a household, and always leaving informational brochures on each visit, or it could refer to a style of interacting with a respondent when attempting to complete an interview. Without clarification from the respondent, we did not feel that we could accurately interpret the intended meaning of these types of responses. Because there were a number of these unspecified indefinable behaviors, we included them as a separate category in the analysis. These vague or unspecified behaviors may be the grounds for future experiments. In the following sections, we present the detailed method, and summary results and discussion from our two exploratory studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Although we collected this background information, we did not use it in our analysis. We may use these data in future exploratory studies.

<sup>2</sup> The first author of this paper coded the individual responses from both studies into these general categories.

## **Study 1: Gaining Cooperation from the Supervisory Staff Perspective**

In November of 2006, we completed the first exploratory study. We collected data from the supervisory staff that works on the Current Population Survey from the Regional Offices.

### **Method**

#### *Participants and Procedures*

We distributed the questionnaires to the 33 CPS Program Supervisors and Program Coordinators that were attending an annual Current Population Survey Conference in Arlington, Virginia. The analysis included the responses from 29 participants. We eliminated two participants because they had just begun work on the CPS, and therefore, did not feel they had sufficient job experience to answer the questionnaire. We also excluded the data from two other participants because they provided illegible responses.

The conference organizers set aside an allotted time period for us to administer our questionnaires in-person. After handing out a questionnaire to each supervisory staff member, we gave verbal instructions on how to fill out the questionnaire, and urged participants to be as open and honest as possible. The Coordinators and Supervisors filled out the questionnaire at their own pace. We walked around the room, answering any questions the participants might have had. After 20 minutes, we collected the questionnaires.

#### *Questionnaires*

Because the supervisory field staff usually has limited experience with conducting survey interviews, we did not ask these participants to provide recommendations that they personally may have used when conducting interviews. Instead, we asked these participants to provide the recommendations they may give to the interviewers they supervise. In other words, we were asking the supervisory staff to list behaviors that they thought would be either successful or unsuccessful at gaining cooperation. These behaviors did not necessarily have to be something that the supervisory staff members personally have ever employed.

These participants listed factors that they perceived to be successful at gaining respondents' cooperation when answering the following question: "What are the practices, techniques, and/or recommendations *your field staff* use that *you* believe to be most successful for gaining cooperation in the Current Population Survey?" They also listed factors that they perceived to be unsuccessful at gaining respondent cooperation when answering the following question: "What are the practices, techniques, and/or recommendations that *your field staff* has used in the past that *you* believe were not successful at gaining cooperation in the Current Population Survey?"

### **Results and Conclusions**

#### *Data Analysis*

We coded a total of 232 individual responses across all 29 participants' answers to the two questions. Although we coded four categories of behaviors we only analyzed the administrative, self-directed, and interview behaviors. The supervisory staff did not provide enough general, miscellaneous behaviors to analyze the data. Table 1 provides examples of each type of coded behavior.

Because our goal was to gain a general sense of what supervisors and coordinators perceive as important to gaining respondent cooperation, the results of interest were which types of behavior participants reported and if this reporting differed between reporting successful and unsuccessful efforts at gaining cooperation. In other words, what types of behaviors did supervisors and coordinators most often report, and did they view this type of behavior as contributing to both successful and unsuccessful attempts at gaining cooperation? To this end, we analyzed the number of each type of response in a 2 X 3, Valence (successful or unsuccessful practices) x Type

(administrative, self-directed, and interview behaviors) Repeated-Measures Analysis of Variance. The results revealed a significant main effect of Valence ( $F(1, 28) = 22.39, p < .001$ ), a significant main effect of Type ( $F(2, 56) = 4.11, p < .05$ ), and a significant Valence X Type interaction. ( $F(2, 56) = 5.01, p < .05$ ). Table 2 shows the mean number of each type of behavior participants gave in their responses to the questions.

#### *Main effect of Valence*

Overall, the supervisory staff tended to provide more successful behaviors (4.86) than unsuccessful behaviors (3.14). This result may reflect the fact that it may be easier to single out behaviors that seem to have a positive impact on the respondent. Conversely, it may be more difficult to judge which particular behaviors might have led a respondent to refuse an interview. Some respondents may have an *a priori* tendency to not participate in surveys, regardless of what happens before, during, or after contact with an interviewer.

#### *Main effect of Type*

Overall, participants also tended to report more administrative behaviors (3.48) than either self-directed behaviors (2.00) or interview behaviors (2.52). Our participants may have tended to report more administrative behaviors simply because they are supervisors and coordinators who tend to focus on the overall management of the survey and data collection. They may not be as aware of the self-presentation and interview skills that are necessary when interacting with potential respondents as they are of the managerial aspects of interviewing.

#### *Valence x Type interaction*

Finally, when looking separately at successful and unsuccessful administrative, self-directed, and interview behaviors, the results are slightly different. When participants reported successful behaviors, they tended to report more administrative type behaviors (2.45) than both self-directed (1.14) or interview behaviors (1.28). However, when reporting unsuccessful behaviors, participants tended to report more interview type behaviors (1.24) than both administrative (1.03) and self-directed behaviors (.86). This interaction between the type behaviors that contribute to successful and unsuccessful interviews suggests that the effects of awkward or inappropriate interactions with a respondent during are transparent. The regional supervisory staff typically does not have much experience with survey interviewing. Having interviewing experience is not a job requirement. While supervisory staff do conduct a number of telephone interviews with reluctant or hostile respondents at the request of an interviewer, their field experiences largely are limited to observing the interviewers they supervise. They may have a limited perspective on what contributes to unsuccessful gaining cooperation. Because of this outside perspective, it may be easier for these participants to attribute lack of respondent cooperation to the actions of the interviewer rather than attributing it to the respondent or other situational variables. It may be much more difficult to map poor organization, case management skills, or personal appearance and self-relevant behaviors onto a respondent's refusal to complete an interview. Finally, if many potential respondents have an *a priori* tendency to not participate in surveys, these refusals will account for a large proportion of interview attempts. While a respondent can communicate this propensity toward refusal through a variety of behaviors, such as refusing to answer the door when an interviewer knocks or not responding to letters or phone calls, this reluctance to participate will most likely become apparent to the interviewer only during actual interactions with the respondent. If the supervisory staff largely handles these types of respondents, then this experience may skew their perceptions of gaining cooperation.

In general, the supervisory staff in this pilot study seemed to view being organized and ready for interviews as important to gaining cooperation. They also seemed to view inappropriate interactions during the interview as contributing to unsuccessful attempts at gaining cooperation. In

other words, these participants suggested that properly organizing cases, having knowledge of the survey and data uses, making use of letters, cards, and informational materials, or starting the interviews on the first day are instrumental in gaining respondent cooperation. In contrast, the supervisory staff seemed to indicate that not listening to the respondent or not addressing his or her concerns can decrease cooperation.

## Study 2: Gaining Cooperation from the Interviewer Perspective

In December of 2006, we conducted the second exploratory study on gaining cooperation with the Current Population Survey. As with our first exploratory study, we intended to garner an understanding of gaining cooperation from the perspective of interviewers.

### Method

#### *Participants and Procedures*

We attempted to collect data from a sample of 60 Senior Field Representatives (SFRs) working from one of the twelve Census Bureau Regional Offices. SFRs are field interviewers who not only have interview case loads, they also have supervisory responsibilities. They oversee a team of junior field interviewers, in addition to conducting survey interviews. We worked with the staff from the Field Division, which oversees all regional field operations from Census Bureau Headquarters, to draw a sample of at least one SFR from each of the twelve Regional Offices. The sample was based on limited criteria that would ensure a sample that was representative of the diversity of the Census Bureau's entire interviewer workforce.

Because we could not gather our participants into one centralized location, we employed mailing procedures to distribute and collect our questionnaires. The Field staff at headquarters provided the addresses of the selected participants. With the exception of one Regional Office (Chicago), participants' questionnaires were not sent or received through any of the Regional Offices. We mailed out the packets directly to the sample of interviewers. However, for the selected participants working for the Chicago Regional Office, we mailed the questionnaires to the Regional Office, which distributed, collected, and returned them back to us.

The questionnaire packets included a brief letter introducing the purpose of the study, a copy of the self-administered questionnaire, instructions on filling out and returning the questionnaire, and a pre-paid return envelope. Participants filled out the questionnaires at their own convenience and mailed them back directly back to us at the Census Bureau Headquarters within a specified time period. Responses were anonymous. We did not ask respondents to identify themselves on the questionnaire or on the return envelope.

We received back a total of 56 questionnaires. At least one SFR from each Regional Office participated. Our analysis included the responses from 50 participants. We excluded the data from six participants because they did not provide complete questionnaires with codeable responses.

#### *Questionnaires*

As in the previous study, from these participants we collected information on the Regional Office from which the SFR worked, the length of time he or she had been working on the CPS, and the length of time he or she had been working as a field interviewer. In addition, we also asked these interviewers to provide the typical number of assigned interviews per month, foreign language proficiency, and any other relevant interview or job experience (including jobs outside of the Census Bureau or interviewing, if they felt that experience was relevant).<sup>3</sup>

We asked the SFRs to provide candid information on successful and unsuccessful behaviors that contribute to gaining respondent cooperation with CPS interviews. Participants could include any practices, techniques, or recommendations they might have used for gaining respondent cooperation and successfully completing interviews. The SFRs listed these factors that they perceived to be successful at gaining respondents cooperation when answering the following question: "What are the practices, techniques, and/or recommendations *you* use that *you* believe to be most successful for gaining cooperation in the Current Population Survey?" The SFRs also listed factors that they

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<sup>3</sup> We did not use this additional information in our analysis of this study. However, as with the other background information we collected, we may use it in future exploratory studies.

perceived to be unsuccessful at gaining respondent cooperation when answering the following question: “What are the practices, techniques, and/or recommendations that *you* have used in the past that *you* believe were not successful at gaining cooperation in the Current Population Survey?”

## Results and Conclusions

### *Data Analysis*

We coded a total of 370 individual responses across all 50 participants’ answers to the two questions. Using the same coding scheme we developed for the first study, we coded these responses into the four behavior categories: administrative behaviors, self-directed behaviors, interview behaviors, and miscellaneous behaviors. Unlike the supervisory staff, these participants tended to report a large number of general miscellaneous successful and unsuccessful behaviors. Therefore, we analyzed responses from all four categories. Table 3 provides examples of each type of coded behavior.

As with the first study with the supervisory staff, the goal of this analysis was to gain a general sense of what interviewers believe to be important to gaining respondent cooperation. Also, because these participants were interviewers, we assumed that their responses would be based on actual field experiences. The results of interest for the analysis were which type of behavior the interviewers reported most often, and if this reporting differed when focusing on successful and unsuccessful attempts at gaining cooperation. In other words, what types of behaviors did interviewers most often report, and did they view this type of behavior as being important to both successful and unsuccessful attempts at gaining cooperation? To this end, we analyzed the number of each type of response in a 2 X 4, Valence (successful and unsuccessful behaviors) X Type (administrative, self-directed, interview, and miscellaneous), Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance. The results indicate a significant main effect of Valence ( $F(1, 49) = 68.79, p < .001$ ), a significant main effect of Type ( $F(3, 147) = 16.68, p < .001$ ), and a significant Valence X Type interaction ( $F(2, 147) = 6.55, p < .001$ ). Table 4 shows the mean number of each type of response.

### *Main effect of Valence*

Overall, SFRs tended to report more successful behaviors (5.18) than unsuccessful behaviors (2.26). This unbalanced reporting could be due to the fact that the types of behaviors that can create a turning point in cooperation in an interview or contribute to making contact with a respondent are much more transparent than behaviors that do not seem to create such a turning point in cooperation. For example, when a potential respondent voices concerns about the privacy or confidentiality of their personal information, the interviewer responds to those concerns, and the respondent then agrees to participate, those specific interviewer behaviors are easy to interpret as successful cooperation techniques. The interviewer receives immediate feedback from the respondent. However, when a participant refuses to cooperate or an interviewer has difficulty contacting a respondent, determining individual specific behaviors that could have contributed to this lack of cooperation may be difficult. Potential respondents could refuse cooperation for more than one reason or have *a priori* and unspecified objections to participating in a survey.

### *Main effect of Type*

Overall, these interviewers also tended to report more administrative (2.82) and miscellaneous behaviors (2.50) than self-directed (.84) and interview behaviors (1.24). In other words, these participants tended to view case management, organization, and other abstract behaviors, such as not “being pushy” or “being “flexible,” as important influences on cooperation success. They seem to focus less on the contribution of their own interactive behaviors to lack of respondent cooperation. This result may be due to the nature of being a SFR. These interviewers rarely have a traditional case load. They have managerial responsibilities that take up a significant proportion of their duties,

preventing them from being able to complete a “traditional” set of interviews during the data collection period. Their interview assignments tend to consist of mostly difficult households and prior refusals. These interviews are more likely to fall into the category of households with respondents who have *a priori* and unspecified objections to participating in surveys. Because the respondents sometimes refuse to specify concerns or even speak with the interviewer, these types of households and respondents often do not provide the interviewer with any significant feedback on their interviewing skills. For example, a potential respondent may slam the door on the interviewer, or refuse to answer the door on subsequent interviewer visits. This limited contact makes it difficult to tell what type of interactions could have converted the refusal into cooperation. If these types of households make up a large portion of the SFR work-load, the lack of experience with more likely-to-cooperate households may skew and constrain these interviewers’ beliefs of successful and unsuccessful gaining cooperation behaviors.

#### *Valence x Type interaction*

Finally, when reporting successful behaviors, participants tended to report administrative (1.98) and interview behaviors (1.86) equally and more often than both self-directed (.68) and miscellaneous behaviors (.64). The SFRs tended to report the self-directed and miscellaneous behaviors equally. However, when reporting unsuccessful behaviors, SFRs tended to report more administrative behaviors (.84). They also reported unsuccessful interview (.64) and miscellaneous behaviors (.60) equally, while reporting very few self-directed behaviors (.16). Participants may have reported very few unsuccessful self-directed behaviors because these types of behaviors are the most “self-incriminating.” Proper hygiene and dress may be automatic assumptions on the part of an interviewer. These behaviors are tightly coupled with simply maintaining a professional appearance at any job, not just when interacting with potential respondents. Very few SFRs probably would be willing to admit that their appearance, hygiene, or attitude occasionally might not have been appropriate.

### **General Conclusions**

In general, it appears that the supervisory staff and interviewers have divergent perspectives on what is most important to gaining the public’s cooperation with survey interviews. The supervisors tended to focus their reports of successful gaining cooperation behavior on more administrative tasks, while the interviewers tended to focus their reports on administrative tasks and interactive behaviors equally. Supervisors and interviewers also seem to have different views on unsuccessful cooperation. Interviewers tended to focus their reports of unsuccessful behavior on administrative tasks, while supervisors tended to focus their recommendations on interactions with the respondent. However, since we did not design and execute these two studies to make formal statistical comparison between the separate results, we cannot conclude that there are any real differences in perspective between our two different groups of participants. More carefully designed experiments will be necessary to specifically test this hypothesis.

Also, the participants in both of these studies have limited experience with the diversity of interviewing situations. The supervisory staff does not consistently have interviewing assignments, and they do not regularly collect data “in the field.” They often complete interviews from the Regional Office at the request of respondents or interviewers. The SFRs also do not carry a traditional, diverse interviewing assignment. Because of the additional managerial responsibilities of the job, these interviewers typically handle the difficult or reluctant respondents. These interviewers may not have as much experience with more cooperative respondents. One question might be what perceptions do average interviewers have regarding gaining cooperation?

To answer this question, we have begun a third exploratory study, administering these questions to a sample of Field Representatives working on the CPS. We intend to combine those results with the results of these two studies and develop a catalogue of successful and unsuccessful

behaviors that will become a part of our larger research program aimed at finding out the awareness, tools, and training necessary for gaining public cooperation with survey data collection. Ultimately, we hope that the results of these pilot studies and the results of future investigations will be informative to interviewer training and data collection procedures at the Census Bureau and other survey research organizations.

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Table 1. Examples of Successful and Unsuccessful Behaviors from Supervisory Staff

	Administrative Behaviors	Self-directed Behaviors	Interview Behaviors
Successful Behaviors	“Knowledge of the survey specifics and the ability to cite statistics and uses”	“Believe, ‘I am going to get the interview!’”	“Building a rapport”
	“[Having] letters and brochures on hand”	“Speaking professionally and fluently”	“Keep the interest of the respondent”
Unsuccessful Behaviors	“Going at dinner time”	“Looking sloppy, smell[ing] like smoke”	“Rushing the respondent”
	“Not starting early enough”	“Not smiling”	“Bullying”

Table 2. Mean Number of Each Type of Behavior Participants Reported in Study 1

	Administrative Behaviors		Self-directed Behaviors		Interview Behaviors		Total	
	Mean	# of responses	Mean	# of responses	Mean	# of responses	Mean	# of responses
Successful Behaviors	2.45	71	1.14	33	1.28	37	4.86	141
Unsuccessful Behaviors	1.03	30	.86	25	1.24	36	3.14	91
Total	3.48	101	2.00	58	2.52	73	8.00	232

Table 3. Examples of Successful and Unsuccessful Behaviors from Interviewers.

	Administrative Behaviors	Self-directed Behaviors	Interview Behaviors	Miscellaneous Behaviors
Successful Behaviors	“Leaving a note every time.”	“Approach each case with the attitude that I will complete [it].”	“Explaining confidentiality and explaining Title 13.”	“Instinctually ‘read’ the respondent”
	“[Having] full knowledge of the survey.”	“Dress neat.”	“Offer the respondent and anonymous interview.”	“Understanding people.”
Unsuccessful Behaviors	“Leaving too many messages.”	“Dress[ing] too casual.”	“Do not use the word ‘Government’ too much”	“Know when to ‘back off’.”
	“Sending cases to CATI.”	“Being stressed, cranky, or bored.”	“Apologizing for being there.”	“Overselling the survey.”

Table 4. Mean Number of Each Type of Behavior Participants Reported in Study 2.

	Administrative Behaviors		Self-directed Behaviors		Interview Behaviors		Miscellaneous Behaviors		Total	
	Mean	# of responses	Mean	# of responses	Mean	# of responses	Mean	# of responses	Mean	# of responses
Successful Behaviors	1.98	99	.68	34	1.86	93	.64	32	5.18	258
Unsuccessful Behaviors	.84	42	.16	8	.64	32	.60	30	2.26	112
Total	2.82	141	.84	42	2.50	125	1.24	62	7.40	370

**Appendix A**  
**Study 1 Questionnaire**

**CPS Field Experiences Questionnaire**

Below is a series of questions about Field Representatives' experiences in the field with the Current Population Survey. Please read each question carefully and write your responses in the space provided. We encourage you to be as honest as possible. We would like to obtain as much candid information about field practices and experiences with the Current Population Survey. **Please consider only your experiences with the Current Population Survey.**

If you need additional writing space, please continue writing on the back of the questionnaire and clearly indicate which question you are answering.

**Part I: Background information**

The first section of questions asks about some background information. Although we are interested in the experiences of field interviewers with CPS in general, we also are interested in both the *similarities* and *differences* between people with different backgrounds. This information will help us understand you and your staff's unique techniques, practices, and experiences.

From which Regional Office do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

On what team do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

*For each of the following questions, circle the appropriate response.*

- 1) How many total years have you worked as a field supervisor or program coordinator (include experience at other jobs or on other surveys)?
  - a. Less than 1 year.
  - b. 1-5 years
  - c. 6-10 year
  - d. More than 10 years
  
- 2) How many total years have you worked as a field supervisor or program coordinator *for the Current Population Survey* (i.e. 6 months, 2 years, etc)?
  - a. Less than 1 year.
  - b. 1-5 years
  - c. 6-10 year
  - d. More than 10 years
  
- 3) Have you ever worked as a Field Representative or Interviewer (include experience at other jobs)?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No



**Appendix B**  
**Study 2 Questionnaire**

**CPS Field Experiences Questionnaire**

Below is a series of questions about Field Representatives' experiences in the field with the Current Population Survey. Please read each question carefully and write your responses in the spaces provided. We encourage you to be as honest as possible. We would like to obtain as much candid information as possible about field practices and experiences with the Current Population Survey. Your responses will be kept confidential. **Do not write your name on this questionnaire.**

If you need additional writing space, please continue writing on the back of the questionnaire and clearly indicate which question you are answering.

**Part I: Background information**

This first section of questions asks about some of your background information. Although we are interested in the experiences of field interviewers in general, we also are interested in both the *similarities* and *differences* between different interviewers with different backgrounds. This information will help us understand your unique techniques, practices, and experiences.

From which Regional Office do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

On what team do you work (for example, team "A", team "B", etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

How many cases do you typically have during a typical field period? \_\_\_\_\_

*For each of the following questions, circle the appropriate response.*

- 4) Do you proficiently speak any languages other than English?      Y      N  
If "yes", what language(s)? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) How many total years have you worked as a field interviewer (include interviewing experience at other jobs)?
- e. less than 1 year.
  - f. 1-5 years
  - g. 6-10 year
  - h. more than 10 years
- 6) How long have you worked as an interviewer *on the Current Population Survey*?
- e. less than 1 year.
  - f. 1-5 years
  - g. 6-10 year
  - h. more than 10 years

