

9683

Water blend comms

Focus Group Discussion Guide (1.75 hours)

(Hotspot GROUP – 8 participants)

For moderators, throughout bear in min the eight key BehSci ‘levers’ when considering responses and when probing:

- Messenger
- Losses
- Gains
- Social norms
- Saliency
- Affect
- Expectation
- Transparency

(I) Introduction	10 mins
<p>Brief explanation of the purpose of the research</p>	<p><i>Moderator to explain the nature of the research;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I work for a company called DJS Research, we are an independent market research company and today we are working on behalf of United Utilities • Our client is looking to understand what people think about the water that United Utilities brings to your home. <p><i>Moderator to reassure respondents about confidentiality / GDPR compliance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback will be summarised into a report along with other research, we won't pass names/specific details of who we have spoken to back to our client • There are no right and wrong answers; we are just interested in your views, opinions and ideas. • Brief explanation about audio/video recording information (as appropriate) – we may use anonymised quotes &/or video clips in our report to illustrate the research findings for our client, but these will not be attributed to your personally. • Introduce any client observers
<p>Introductions</p>	<p><i>Moderator to invite respondent(s) to introduce themselves;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, let's do some introductions! I'm (MODERATOR NAME) from DJS Research and I'll be leading tonight's discussion. • Introduce any client observers • Please could you now introduce yourselves, giving your name, who you live with, are you on a water meter. • Experiences of dealing with United Utilities in the last 1-2 years

(II) Experience of water quality/blend	5 mins
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- How does this affect the water in your taps?**
- Do you drink your tap water at home?
 - Do you process it in any way, for instance, chill it, carbonate it, filter it?
 - How important is the *taste* of your tap water to you?
 - Why?
 - [If any Health Vulnerable in attendance] How does this impact upon how you manage any health conditions you may have?
 - Do you like the water from your tap?
 - What tastes/qualities does it have?
 - Positive/negative
 - [Moderator: keep ear out for mentions of water source/quality changes]
 - Who is familiar with hardness and softness in water?
 - What impact can hard or soft water have on your experience when using and drinking water in the home? (Spontaneous)
 - [If not already covered] Is your own water is hard or soft?
 - How important would you say it is that you know where your water is sourced from?
 - What different qualities can water from different sources have?

- In a few words, where does the water in your tap come from and how does water get to your door.
 - What are the different places water can come from?
 - Where does it go along this journey?
- Give quick overview of this process. **SHOW SLIDE 1**

What do you know about how your water gets to you?

The water cycle: getting water to you

The diagram illustrates the water supply process in three main stages:

- They collect it:** More than 90% of the water we supply each year comes from rivers and reservoirs. The rest comes from groundwater via aquifers. This stage is labeled 'Catchment' and shows a landscape with a river and trees.
- They treat it:** Water is first treated at a Water Treatment Works to ensure it meets drinking water standards. This stage shows a factory-like building labeled 'Water treatment works'.
- They deliver it:** It is then transferred through a network of pipes and mains straight to your home or business. This stage shows a 'Pumping station' followed by pipes leading to 'Household property' (one metered, one non-metered) and 'Commercial property' (metered).

(II) Hotspot water blend changes	20 mins
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**Recall of water
blend change**

[Moderator: Please note, groups will contain a mix of those familiar with the blend changes and those who are not]

- Does anyone in the group recall any changes to their water they receive through their tap in the last two years?
 - [If so] What do you remember happening?
- [If so] How do you remember feeling at the time?
 - Concerned, interested, annoyed/angry, neutral, worried, happy?
 - Why was that?
 - How do you feel now?
- [If so] What impact did this have on you and your household?
 - Was the change for the better or for the worse?
 - Why?
 - What was it like before the change?
 - [Variable blend areas only] How long did it last?
 - [If any Health Vulnerable in attendance] How did this impact upon managing any health conditions you may have?
- [If so] What, if anything, did you do once you found out that the qualities of your water had changed?
 - (P) Happy with it? Ignored it? Waited? Changed the way you use water [moderator get specifics]? Searched for more information?
 - Why did you choose this approach?
 - [If looked for more information] Where did you look?
 - Why did you choose this source?
 - Did you find what you were looking for?
 - Did you speak to anyone about these changes?
 - [If so] Who did you talk to? (Friends, family, neighbours/community, strangers)
 - [If so] How did you do this? (In person, messaging, social media)
 - Did you contact or consider contacting United Utilities about it?
 - What made you decide to contact United Utilities?
 - Were you looking for more information, to make a complaint, or something else?
 - What did you say/ask when you contacted them?
 - Is there any information you could have been given at the time that would have prevented the need to contact/consider contacting United Utilities?
- Does anyone here feel that they know *why* the water was changed in their area?
 - [Probe for reasons]
 - Is there anything about the reasons behind the blend change that you didn't feel was clear?
 - Do you think that United Utilities made a good case for changing your water blend?
 - At the time, did you think that changing your property's water blend was an acceptable thing for United Utilities to do?
 - Has that changed since?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The reason for the water changing in your area was <i>[give reason relevant to area]</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowing this, does changing the water in your area seem any more or less acceptable to you?
Communications from United Utilities	<p>1 PARAGRAPH EXPLANATION OF WHAT HAPPENED IN EACH AREA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does anyone in the group recall hearing from United Utilities about this water blend change? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [If so] What do you recall hearing from United Utilities? ○ What format was it in? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letter, email, text message etc ○ What did they say? [It might be hard for some to remember] <p>[Moderator: If needed, show examples of communications from the time]</p> • [If so] How did you feel when you first received this communication from United Utilities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Did you feel concerned? Reassured? Annoyed? Confused? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What caused this? ▪ [If concerned] what were your main concerns on receiving this communication? ▪ [If any Health Vulnerable in attendance] Were there any concerns you had specifically in relation to managing any health conditions? • [If so] In all, do you feel that the communication that you received from United Utilities about your household's water blend change was adequate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [If yes] What was particularly helpful? ○ [If no] What more would you have wanted? ○ Did they make it clear what was going to happen and why? ○ Did the expectation they set out match the reality of what followed? ○ Were there any methods of communication that worked better than others? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Which? Why? • [If not] For those of you who didn't receive any communication from United Utilities, did any of you notice a change in your water? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ [If yes] What did you notice? ○ [If yes] did you hear it from someone or somewhere else? ○ [If yes] Is it an issue for you that you weren't notified? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why/why not? • If United Utilities were planning to change the water blend in another area, what suggestions would you make as to how they could improve the way they communicate about these changes in future? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What would you want them to repeat? ○ What information should they add? ○ What information should the make clearer? ○ What methods of communication should they use?

(III) Water blend changes	30 mins
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<p>Group task</p>	<p>In this next section of the discussion, I'm going to break you out into two groups of four.</p> <p>Using your collective experience of the water change your area underwent, I want you to design your own communication from United Utilities to inform households that are about to undergo a similar water blend change.</p> <p>Crucially, I want you to draw on your experience of having undergone a water change in your area to build your own communication that would have addressed any questions, worries, or frustrations you had at the time.</p> <p>I don't need you to draft the communication itself, just write down a bullet point list of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ what information you would include ○ the language/tone you would use ○ how it would look ○ what mode of communication you would use. <p>The aim of this will be to have the blueprint for communicating a household water blend change that would be most useful and acceptable to you as a group.</p> <p>At the end of it, one representative from each group will give feedback, so pick that person before you start!</p> <p>You have 5 minutes.</p> <p><i>[Moderator to cycle between groups to oversee/guide conversations]</i></p> <p><i>[Give the groups 5 minutes to run through the materials together]</i></p> <p><i>[Bring back as one group and invite each group to talk through their ideas – probe each on why they're suggesting it]</i></p>
<p>Introduce UU Materials</p>	<p><i>[Moderator pass out relevant change letter]</i></p> <p>In front of you, you have a mocked-up letter that might be sent by United Utilities. I want you to imagine that you have received this letter yourself.</p> <p>I would like you to give the letter a full read through. After which, I will have a few questions for you.</p> <p><i>[Allow a minute for participants to read through letter]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From reading the letter, what would you say is the key message (or messages) of the letter for the household receiving it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How easy is it to understand? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What's easy/less easy? • I'd like you to complete the following sentence, "after reading this letter I feel [xxx]" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why do you say that? ○ [If annoyed or upset] Is it something that you would want to speak to United Utilities about? • If you received a letter like this one, what do you think you'd do? If anything? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (P) Speak to friends and family? Social media? Research online? Contact United Utilities? Something else? [If any Health Vulnerable in attendance] medical professional or information source? ○ Why? • Looking at the document in front of you, to what extent is it important to you that it is signed by [Cycle order in groups: Chief Scientific Officer/ Chief Executive Officer]? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Why? ○ What does this title mean to you? What does it suggest? ○ Does it matter who it's signed by?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How do you feel seeing that it is signed by [Chief Scientific Officer/ Chief Executive Officer]? ○ Seeing that it's signed by [Chief Scientific Officer/ Chief Executive Officer], what benefits, if any, do you expect to receive from this letter being signed by them instead of someone else? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does this change with seniority? How about technical knowledge? ○ Would you prefer to receive a letter from this individual, the [Pick alternative: Chief Scientific Officer/ Chief Executive Officer], or the Chief Engineer? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does this letter compare to the communication that you created in your groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What does yours do that this doesn't? ○ What does this one do that yours doesn't? ○ What difference does this make to you as a recipient? • If you had received this letter ahead of your own water blend change, what difference, if any would this have made to how you felt at the time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More or less concerned, or no difference? ○ More or less annoyed, or no difference? ○ More or less reassured, or no difference? ○ More or less convinced by the reason behind the blend change, or no difference? ○ [For each] Why do you say that? • How do you find the language and tone of the letter? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why do you say that?
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(IV) Communication needs	35 mins
Reaction to the content	<p>MODERATOR: THROUGHOUT COMMS REVIEWS, PROMPTS ARE DESIGNED TO ELICIT SOME DISCUSSION AND THOUGHTS RELATING TO THE BEHAVIOURAL PRINCIPLES COVERED DURING THE BRIEFING – SEE SLIDE</p> <p>I now want you to break out into two groups of four. In your groups I want you, together, to review the letter informing the household of a [permanent / variable] change and, at the end of it, one representative from each group will give feedback on each of the following.</p> <p><i>[Moderator: use letter applicable to the hotspot area]</i></p> <p>Group one, you're going to be discussing whether you feel that the letter is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to find the important information or difficult? • Clear or unclear? • Informative or lacking detail? <p>Group two, you're going to be discussing whether you feel that the letter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes a good case for the changes or fails to do this?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is reassuring or concerning? • Feels trustworthy or untrustworthy? <p>For each of these, I want to get a sense of why you feel this is the case, so be sure to have your reasons and any examples to hand for when we come back together to share our thoughts.</p> <p>If you are the nominated representative for your group, please write down the thoughts from your group on the pad of paper in front of you.</p> <p>You have 15 minutes.</p> <p><i>[Moderator to cycle between groups to oversee/guide conversations]</i></p> <p><i>[Give the groups 15 minutes to run through the materials together]</i></p> <p><i>[Bring back as one group and probe on feedback and reasons/examples]</i></p>
Suggested improvements	<p>I now want you to break out into your same two groups of four again.</p> <p>This time I want you, as a group, to improve the letter, based on the feedback we've just heard.</p> <p>There should be pens, post-it notes and highlighters in front of you, so feel free to scribble over it!</p> <p>Group one, you're going to be discussing how you would make the letter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to find the important information • Clearer • More informative <p>Group two, you're going to be discussing how you would make the letter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a better case for the changes • Be more reassuring • Feels more trustworthy <p>Again, you have 15 minutes.</p> <p><i>[Moderator to cycle between groups to oversee/guide conversations]</i></p> <p><i>[Give the groups 15 minutes to run through the materials together]</i></p> <p><i>[Bring back as one group and probe on feedback and reasons/examples]</i></p>
Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now that we've made our improvements to the letter, does anyone have any other thoughts or recommendations as to how we could improve it? • If you received a letter like this one, what do you think you'd do? If anything? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (P) Speak to friends and family? Social media? Research online? Contact United Utilities? Something else? ○ Why? <p>Are there any other ways you would be interested in receiving communications from United Utilities on this subject, other than what we have looked at today?</p> <p>[PROBE ON: social media, UU webpage, SMS, local newspaper]</p>

(VI) Sum up	5 mins
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Final thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To what extent, if at all, has your view of United Utilities changed as a result of seeing this letter?• Are there any final thoughts or questions you have about water blend changes that you would like to put to United Utilities?
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Any final questions from the clients/observers

Thank & Close