

Interview Protocol: Retailers and Plain Packaging Study

Introduction

Hello, I'm NNN, I arranged to meet with you now to talk about some research we are conducting into retailers perceptions of plain packaging and its potential business implications.

Before we start, I would like to show you some information about the interview and check to see whether you have any questions about our work. Here is an information sheet, please take a few moments to look through this information.

Provide the respondent/retailer with the Information Sheet and outline the key points in this (allowing time for respondent to read the IS in full).

You will see that we're doing this work as part of a research project for the Ministry of Health. As a participant in the research, you have the right to ask questions at any time, to decide you would prefer not to answer some questions, to receive a copy of the findings, and to withdraw from the research at any time.

- Check whether respondent has any questions about interview/discussion.
- Explain recording of the interview and respondent rights in relation to this.
- Further check on questions; if none, begin recording.
- Ask respondent to sign the Consent Form.

Participant's Store

1. How would you describe your business? (e.g. Service station, Convenience store)
2. How long have you been working in retail? And what about in this particular outlet?
3. How long have you been the manager/owner of this store?

4. How important is selling tobacco to your business?

PROBE: What proportion of your revenue would come from tobacco sales? And what proportion of your profit would come from tobacco?

5. How do you feel about selling tobacco? Have you ever considered not selling tobacco? What made you think about that?

Plain Packaging

Now, I would like to ask you some questions about plain packaging.

6. First, what do you think plain packaging means? Where did you find out about this from? Who told you that? **Probe all sources of information. Check to ensure you clarify who provided specific pieces of information.**
7. Earlier this year, the Government introduced legislation that will change how tobacco products look. **Show image or example of a plain package. This is what plain packaging would look like.**

What do you think of this idea?

Explore each individual concern raised by the retailer in turn

E.g. If the respondent replies, "I think it will create unnecessary transaction times..." follow with

- "What makes you say that?"

8. What effects do you think plain packaging could have on your business?

PROBE: Any effect on sales? On the profit you get from selling tobacco? Any other ways plain packaging might affect your business?

Probe each effect mentioned in full.

Arguments from Submissions made to the Ministry of Health

Now, I'd just like to check your views on some arguments that people have put forward about plain packaging.

(Questions from the list below will be asked if the subject matter has NOT been discussed during the first part of the interview)

9. What do you think plain packaging will be like for small retailers? What about large retailers?

- What makes you say that?

10. What do you think it will be like serving customers if plain packaging is introduced?

(PROBE: transaction times and retrieval errors if mentioned; also PROBE customer frustration if mentioned)

- What makes you say that?

11. Some people say plain packaging could increase safety for staff but others think it might pose a security risk. What do you think?

- What makes you say that?

12. Do you think plain packaging will affect stock management of tobacco products? In what way?

- What makes you take this view?

13. Some people say plain packaging could increase illicit trading of tobacco products but others think New Zealand's border security will mean illicit tobacco is not a serious problem; what view do you hold?

- What makes you say that?

14. Some people think the plain packaging of tobacco could lead to plain packaging of fast foods and alcohol, but others think this is unlikely because food and alcohol are very different from tobacco; what view do you hold?

- What makes you say that?

15. Some people think that plain packaging takes away tobacco companies' Intellectual Property rights but others argue that tobacco companies will still own their brands and no-one else will be allowed to use them; what view do you hold?

- What makes you say that?

16. What do you see as the biggest benefits plain packaging could bring? What about the greatest risks? On balance, do you think plain packaging will be more positive than negative, or more negative than positive? What makes you say that?

Practical effects

17. Once the legislation is in force, how long do you think you would need to adjust to it and ensure your business complies with the new law? What are the specific things you would need to do and how much time would you need to complete each of these?

Information needs

18. What information would you like to receive from the Ministry of Health in relation to plain packaging? What specific things could the Ministry of Health do to help retailers like you adjust to plain packaging?

Further action

19. Some people have also suggested that, as well as changing how tobacco packages look, cigarettes sticks should also be changed to a dark green or mustard colour. What do you think of that idea?
20. Some people have also suggested that there should be no descriptions, like "rich" or "smooth" on tobacco packs. What do you think of that idea?
21. People have also suggested that tobacco packages should have more information about the Quitline on them. What do you think of that idea?
22. Finally, are there any other comments you would like to make about plain packaging or about how tobacco is regulated?

Thank you very much for helping me with this study. I just have a short questionnaire that I'd like you to complete now, please.