PRODUCT TESTING OVERVIEW FOR

EXAMPLE: 4 PRODUCTS, 2 FOCUS GROUPS

OBJECTIVES:

1. **Collect Detailed Feedback on Flavor Preferences:** Gain insights into participants' perceptions of each of the four flavor options for a new lollipop, including first impressions, likes, and dislikes.
2. **Identify Potential Standout or Problematic Flavors:** Determine if any flavor is particularly well-received or if any are clear non-starters that require reformulation or removal from the product lineup.
3. **Assess Flavor Intensity and Balance:** Gather feedback on the intensity and balance of each flavor, identifying whether any flavors are perceived as too strong, too weak, or just right, and if adjustments in concentration are necessary.
4. **Explore Product Differentiation and Consumer Appeal:** Understand what elements of the products—such as flavor, aroma, or packaging—might differentiate them in the market and motivate consumers to purchase.

PRODUCT LIST AND ID CODE FORMAT:

Each product tested in the focus groups will be identified using a unique ID code. The format of the code consists of:

Two-letter Flavor Abbreviation
Honeydew – W Blackberry – Y Guava – A Mango – O

PRODUCT ROTATION:

To ensure balanced feedback, each consumer group will test the same four flavor combinations but in a different order.

Group 1 Testing Sequence	**Group 2 Testing Sequence**
Honeydew – W Blackberry – Y Guava – A Mango – O	Mango – O Guava – A Blackberry – Y Honeydew – W

DISCUSSION GUIDE:

I. Introduction (10 minutes)

1. **Welcome and Introduce the Moderator**
   Moderator will explain her/his role in guiding the session. The objective is to facilitate the discussion, ensure everyone's voice is heard, and collect unbiased feedback.

2. **Explain Privacy, Confidentiality, and Videorecording**
   Moderator will Inform participants that the session will be recorded for research purposes but assure them that their privacy is protected. The moderator will highlight the confidentiality of the project and remind them not to discuss the research outside of the session. Moderator will have participants confirm they have signed a non-disclosure agreement (NDA).

3. **Clarify Group Rules and Process**

   - There are no right or wrong answers; all feedback is valuable.
   - Everyone should participate, and it's important that each person shares their opinion.
   - Keep responses clear and concise to make the most of the session.

4. **Overview of the Product Testing Process**
   Explain that they will test four different flavored lollipops. After trying each one, participants will silently complete a rating sheet before discussing their impressions.

   - **Important note:** Before and after trying each lollipop, participants should cleanse their palate with water (this will occur before and after their licks).

5. **Demonstration:** For each product test: Cleanse your palate with water before starting.

   - Remove the lollipop from the wrapper.
   - Take a few moments to observe, touch, and smell the lollipop.
   - Take a taste or lick as you would typically.
   - After you are done, place the lollipop onto the wrapper.
   - Silently complete the rating sheet without showing audible reactions to others.
   - Cleanse your palate with water after the test.

6. **Icebreaker Activity**
   To get everyone comfortable, we'll start with a quick introduction. Please share your name and a few sentences about your favorite type of lollipop and why it's your favorite.

II. Product Testing Questions (15 minutes per product)

Before each test, have the ID code-labeled products arranged in front of each participant in the correct testing order.

1. **Begin the Product Test**: Let's start by trying the first lollipop, which we'll refer to as "PRODUCT ID CODE HERE." I'll guide you through the testing steps:
    - Remove the lollipop from the wrapper.
    - Take a few moments to observe, touch, and smell the lollipop.
    - Take a taste or lick as you would typically.
    - After you are done, place the lollipop onto the wrapper.
    - Silently complete the rating sheet without showing audible reactions to others.
    - Cleanse your palate with water after the test.

    Once everyone has completed their rating sheet, we'll start the discussion.
2. **Discussion Questions**: Let's dive into your thoughts on this lollipop:
    1. **Overall Impression:** What are your main impressions of this product?
    2. **Likes/Dislikes:** What did you like most about it? Was there anything you didn't like?
    3. **Purchase Likelihood:** How many of you gave it a high rating (4 or 5) as something you would consider buying? Show of hands. How about moderate (3) or low ratings (1 or 2)? What were the key reasons behind your rating? What were the product's strengths or drawbacks?
    4. **Unboxing Experience:** When you opened the wrapper, what stood out to you? Was it what you expected, or was it different? In what way?
    5. **Flavor Experience:** What thoughts or impressions came to mind as you tried this lollipop?
        - How did you feel about the flavor? (Probe: What did you like or dislike? Did it remind you of something? How does it compare to other flavored lollipops you've tried?)
        - Was the flavor intensity too strong, too weak, or just right? Would you make any adjustments to it?
    6. **Flavor Description:** If you had to describe this flavor to someone else, how would you do it?
3. **Repeat the Process for Remaining Products**: Follow the same series of questions for each of the remaining three products.

IV. Ranking (5-10 minutes)

1. **Rank Each Product:** Now that you've tried all four products, let's focus exclusively on flavor. Please use the provided ranking sheet to indicate your order of preference for the four products. If you feel the need to revisit any flavor, feel free to take a quick taste to refresh your memory. Complete only the "ranking" section of the sheet for now and leave the final section blank.

   Once all participants have completed their ranking sheet:

2. **Tally The Rankings:** We'll now tally the rankings as a group. Let's start by seeing how many of you chose each product as your top choice. We'll mark your responses on the easel. For each product, raise your hand if you ranked it as:

   - First choice
   - Second choice
   - Third choice
   - Last choice

Flavor	First Choice	Second Choice	Third Choice	Last Choice
Honeydew – W				
Blackberry – Y				
Guava – A				
Mango – O				

3. **Discuss Rankings:**
   1. It looks like Product [XX] performed very well. For those of you who ranked it as your #1 choice, why did you feel it was the best flavor?
   2. Product [XX] also received high rankings. What are its key strengths? For those who rated it lower, what factors influenced your ranking?
   3. **Continue the discussion** as necessary to explore what contributed to the participants' rankings and preferences.

VI. Wrap Up (2-5 minutes)

1. **Final Questions**: Before we conclude, let's check if any of the observers have additional questions for the group. [Pause for questions.]
2. **Participant Reflections**: Is there anything else you'd like to share about the products or the discussion that hasn't been covered yet? Any final thoughts or observations?
3. **Closing and Next Steps**: Thank you all for your time and valuable insights today. As a reminder, please keep everything we discussed confidential.

The session is now over. You can visit the host in the designated area to receive your payment.

Turn off the video recording.