TAX PROFESSIONALS ASKED… THE IRS LISTENED

Focus Group Results from the 2008 Nationwide Tax Forums

The IRS Nationwide Tax Forums provides tax professionals with seminars, workshops and the opportunity to voice opinions in small focus groups. Focus groups provide the IRS with tax professional insight and direction rather than statistical measures. Tax professionals share their positive experiences and offer suggestions for improving programs, communicating messages and developing future initiatives.

Correspondence Exam – How can we improve the process?

Tax professionals asked the IRS to review letters and notices to improve the language, readability and make them more specific.

The IRS listened to you and there is a team of experts currently reviewing all letters and notices. IRS Commissioner Doug Shulman chartered the Taxpayer Communications Task group (TACT) to study and improve the clarity, accuracy and effectiveness of written communications to taxpayers. Materials that are easier to understand improve our service efforts by helping taxpayers navigate the tax system. They also support our enforcement efforts by ensuring that IRS is clear in the way we communicate taxpayer responsibilities.

Improving Communications – The Exam Audit Process

Tax professionals asked to work with revenue agents in auditing the tax return.

The IRS listened to you and is currently identifying Field Exam audit processes that may be in need of review and revision. Your feedback about the Field Exam audit process from the practitioner's view will help direct our resources to improve the quality of communications and the length of the audit process.
IRS First Contact Experiences

**Tax professionals asked** the IRS to ensure their calls were assigned to a customer service representative that had the experience to resolve their issue.

The IRS listened and has several initiatives in place to improve customer service. IRS is reviewing and taking actions to improve the automation of the telephone system by ensuring that callers are assigned to an IRS representative who has the experience to resolve their issue expeditiously.

**Tax professionals asked** the IRS to make improvements to the IRS.gov Web site.

The IRS listened and created a more extensive search engine to facilitate user research and established an "Ask the IRS" page and a frequently asked questions page with links that connect IRS publications to the tax code.

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**2009 SB/SE Focus Group Topics**

- Effects of Federal Tax Liens During Foreclosures, Sales, or Refinancing
- Improving Customer Satisfaction in the OIC Program
- Your Clients and the Economy - How can the IRS help?
- Surviving an IRS Audit