List of Questionnaire Problems for Pre-Test Expert Review

- 1.PROBLEMS WITH READING: Determine whether it is difficult for the interviewers to read the question uniformly to all respondents. 1a WHAT TO READ: Interviewers may have difficulty determining what parts of the question are to be read. 1b MISSING INFORMATION: Information the interviewer needs to administer the question is not contained in the question. 1c HOW TO READ: Question is not fully scripted and therefore difficult to read.
- 2.PROBLEMS WITH INSTRUCTIONS: Look for problems with any introductions, instructions, or explanations from the respondent's point of view. 2a CONFLICTING OR INACCURATE INSTRUCTIONS, introductions, or explanations. 2b COMPLICATED INSTRUCTIONS, introductions, or explanations.
- 3.PROBLEMS WITH ITEM CLARITY: Identify problems related to communicating the intent or meaning of the question to the respondent. 3a WORDING: The question is lengthy, awkward, ungrammatical, or contains complicated syntax. 3b TECHNICAL TERMS are undefined, unclear, or complex. 3c VAGUE: The question is vague because there are multiple ways in which to interpret it or to determine what is to be included and excluded. 3d REFERENCE PERIODS are missing, not well specified, or are in conflict.
- 4.PROBLEMS WITH ASSUMPTIONS: Determine whether there are problems with assumptions made or the underlying logic. 4a INAPPROPRIATE ASSUMPTIONS are made about the respondent or his/her living situation. 4b ASSUMES CONSTANT behavior: The question inappropriately assumes a constant pattern of behavior or experience for situations that in fact vary. 4c DOUBLE-BARRELED question that contains multiple implicit questions.
- 5.PROBLEMS WITH KNOWLEDGE/MEMORY: Check whether respondents are likely to not know or have trouble remembering information. 5a KNOWLEDGE: The respondent is unlikely to know the answer. 5b An ATTITUDE that is asked about may not exist. 5c RECALL failure. 5d COMPUTATION or calculation problem.
- 6.PROBLEMS WITH SENSITIVITY/BIAS: Assess questions for sensitive nature or wording, and for bias. 6a SENSITIVE CONTENT: The question is on a topic that people will generally be uncomfortable talking about. 6b A SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE response is implied.
- 7.PROBLEMS WITH RESPONSE CATEGORIES: Assess the adequacy of the range of responses to be recorded. 7a OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS that are inappropriate or difficult. 7b MISMATCH between question and answer categories. 7c TECHNICAL TERMS are undefined, unclear, or complex 7d VAGUE response categories. 7e OVERLAPPING response categories. 7f MISSING response categories. 7g ILLOGICAL ORDER of response categories.

Checklist: - Which items require respondents to think hard before they answer? - What cognitive processes do they adopt to answer difficult questions? - Which items seem to produce irritation, embarrassment, or confusion? - Are there any items that respondents consider comical? - Does the style of the