

VW Special Offers Interview Guide

February 27, 2019

INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is And I am from a design agency called DDB. We have been hired by Volkswagen in order to help them understand how people research their upcoming car purchase.

The interview should take no more than an hour to complete. We'll start with a 20 minute conversation about your upcoming new car purchase, and then move on to a test on the Volkswagen website. All of your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous. Your name or identity will not be associated with the results in any ways.

It is important to remember that you are not the one being tested. In fact, you're the one doing the testing! If there is something that does not work or you find confusing, it is not your fault, but an improvement to be made to the design. Don't worry that you're going to hurt our feelings. We want to know any frustrations you experience so we can make the site better.

As we go through the test, I'm going to ask you as much as possible to try and think out loud: to say what you're looking at, what you're trying to do, and what you're thinking. This will be a big help to us in making the site better for its users.

If you are happy with this, please sign here.

ICE BREAKER

1. Let's start by you telling me a bit about yourself.
 - What do you do for a living?
 - Where do you live?
 - Do you share your household with anyone (partner, kids, etc.)?

CURRENT CAR

2. Do you currently own a car or multiple cars?
 - What kind of car do you drive?
 - When did you buy it?
 - Was it new or used? Why?
 - What do you like and dislike about your car?

3. How often do you (and other members of your family) drive?
4. How did you pay for your current car? (*Probe for financing, leasing or cash*)
 - How did you decide to pay with that particular payment method?
 - Looking back, are you happy with your decision to use that payment method?
- a. Why did you decide to lease your vehicle? What are the pros & cons of leasing?
 - *Probe on pros: Get new cars more often, lower payments, car stays under warranty, able to afford a more expensive car, no worries about trading in or selling at the end of lease period*
 - *Probe on cons: Never-ending monthly payments, excess mileage penalties, excess wear-and-tear charges, don't own the car at the end of the lease*
- b. Why did you decide to finance your vehicle? What are the pros and cons of financing?
 - *Probe on pros: Own car at end of finance period, good interest rate, no mileage cap, no wear-and-tear charges, freedom to customize the car post-purchase*
 - *Probe on cons: Higher monthly payments, post-warranty repair costs, have to trade-in or sell car if individual wants a different one*
- c. Why did you decide to pay for your car outright in cash?
 - *Probe on pros: No interest payments, no monthly payments*
 - *Probe on cons: Decrease in savings, lost opportunity to invest, post-warranty repair costs, have to trade-in or sell car if individual wants a different one*
5. Did you take advantage of any offers or promotions when you bought your current car?
 - If yes, can you recall where you learned about the offer or promotion?
 - If no, was there a reason why you didn't pursue any promotions?
6. Did you negotiate any additional deals with the sales person at the dealership when you bought your car? (*Probe on free oil changes, free accessories, trim upgrades, etc.*)
7. Did you negotiate on the price of the car? Walk me through that process.
8. What are you planning to do with your current car? (*Probe if the participant is planning to trade the vehicle in, sell it privately, give it to a family member, etc.*)
9. What did you learn from your past vehicle purchase(s) that you are planning to utilize for your upcoming car purchase?

DECIDING TO BUY A NEW CAR

10. Are you in the market for a new car?
11. How did you decide it was time to purchase a new car? (*Capture different reasons for first-time vs. repeat buyers*)
12. When are you planning to purchase your new car? Why?
13. Do you think there is a “best” time of year to get a good deal on the car? *Probe on year-end sales events to clear out last year’s offers, end of the month, holiday sales events, etc.)*
14. Is anyone else involved in the decision process?
 - If yes, what responsibilities do you have?
 - And what responsibilities does your (spouse/family member) have?
15. Do you have a particular brand or model in mind?
 - If yes, how did you find out about this brand/model?
 - Have you or someone in your family owned a Volkswagen before?
 - Are there any other cars you’re considering as well?
16. How did you decide on this type of car [*station wagon/compact/convertible/SUV/sedan*] in particular?
 - Explain to me how this type of car best meets you and your family’s needs.
 - Did you do any research that helped you narrow down the make/model of car you were interested in purchasing? Tell me about it. (*Probe if the participant has owned this type of car before, or if a lifestyle change such as a growing family or longer commute contributed.*)
17. Have you visited the Volkswagen site before?
 - What information were you looking for the first time?
 - On subsequent visits?

PAYING FOR NEW CAR

18. How are you planning to pay for your upcoming car purchase? (*Probe for financing, leasing or cash*)
 - (*If different than last car purchase*) Why did you decide on a different payment method for this car purchase?
 - a. Why are you considering leasing your vehicle? What are the pros & cons of leasing? Where did you learn about these pros and cons?

- *Probe on pros: Get new cars more often, lower payments, car stays under warranty, able to afford a more expensive car, no worries about trading in or selling at the end of lease period*
 - *Probe on cons: Never-ending monthly payments, excess mileage penalties, excess wear-and-tear charges, don't own the car at the end of the lease*
- b. Why are you considering financing your vehicle? What are the pros and cons of financing? Where did you learn about these pros & cons?
- *Probe on pros: Own car at end of finance period, good interest rate, no mileage cap, no wear-and-tear charges, freedom to customize the car post-purchase*
 - *Probe on cons: Higher monthly payments, post-warranty repair costs, have to trade-in or sell car if individual wants a different one*
- c. Why are you considering paying for your vehicle outright? What are the pros and cons? Where did you learn about these pros & cons?
- *Probe on pros: No interest payments, no monthly payments*
 - *Probe on cons: Decrease in savings, lost opportunity to invest, post-warranty repair costs, have to trade-in or sell car if individual wants a different one*
19. How have you determined your budget for the new car?
- When you considering payments, do you think in terms of total price of the car? Or what you can afford to pay monthly?
 - Are you planning to put a down-payment down on the vehicle?
 - Are you planning to use the trade-in value towards the purchase of the new car?
20. What comes first for you? Do you decide on a budget first and then research models that fit your budget? Or do you decide on a model and then figure out how it will fit your budget?
21. How do you establish that you're getting a fair price for your new car purchase?
- What kind of research have you done on car pricing?
 - Have you spoken to any friends or family about pricing?
22. Are you planning to negotiate on the price at the dealership? Walk me how you expect to do this.
23. Are there any deals or ad-ons that you are planning to negotiate for at the dealership? *(Probe on free oil changes, free accessories, trim upgrades, etc.)*
24. Have you done any research on special offers or promotions for your upcoming car purchase?

- Where did you look up or hear about promotions? (*Probe for online and offline touchpoints, such as radio ads or word of mouth*)
- *If participant mentions the VW website*) How many times have you visited the special offers page?

START USABILITY TESTING

Now we're going to switch over to the website portion of the test.

Recreate Previous Search

25. You mentioned earlier that you've done [*type of research on pricing or special offers*] before. Can you recreate that search for me right now?
26. How did you decide which website to go to as part of your research?
27. How trustworthy is this information to you?
28. How did you use this information?

Special Offers Page

29. Can you show me where you'd go on the website if you wanted to look up current deals and promotions?
30. Was this what you were expecting to see on the special offers page? Are there any other types of deals (not related to the car price) that you're interested in seeing?
31. Why do you think the site is asking you to view offers by province?

Once on the Special Offers page, observe if the participant filters the offers or starts scrolling down the page.

32. (*If participant scrolled past the filters*)
 - Is there a reason why you weren't interested in using any of the filters?
 - What kind of offers are you looking for when you scroll down the page?
33. (*If filtered by Model*) How sure are you on purchasing [*specific model*]? Is there a reason that you only want to see offers for one model vs. all models?
34. (*If filtered by Payment Type*) How sure are you about how you are planning to pay for your new vehicle? Are you interested in comparing offers for different payment types?

35. *(If sort by Lowest Weekly Payment/Lowest Interest Rate/Highest Bonus Cash)*
- Do you have a number in mind for what you are comfortable paying per week? How did you come up with this number
 - If you're planning to lease or finance, do you think you will make payments weekly, bi-weekly or monthly?
 - What does the phrase "bonus cash" mean to you? What is an acceptable or "good" amount that would make the offer worth pursuing? *(Probe if the participants think this translates to money off the final cost of the car vs. cash in hand)*

Finance Offer Details

1. *Observe if the participant notices the special offer is for a 2018 model. Are you surprised to see the offer is only for 2018 models? Are you interested in special offers for 2019 models?*
2. *Observe if the participant realizes that the offer is trim-specific. Are you familiar with the term 'trim'?*
 - If yes, what does the term Trendline/Comfortline/Highline/Execline mean to you?
 - If no, do you have any assumptions about what the term 'trim' might mean?
 - Is this offer available for all trim-lines?
3. How helpful is it for you to see the features of the vehicle as part of the special offer?
4. What do you think the term 'retail value' means? Do you think you can get a special offer AND negotiate to pay under 'retail value' for the vehicle?
5. What is an acceptable or "good" interest rate for you that would make the offer worth pursuing? How do you know that this is an acceptable rate? *(Probe for research or previous experience with interest rates)*
6. Is this special offer only valid if you pay full MSRP price for the vehicle?
7. Are you planning to put down a down-payment? Do you have a limit to how much you would put down?
8. Do you know what an effective rate is? How do you know if this is a good rate? How does the effective rate play in to the overall special offer?
9. Would you expect to get bonus cash AND a good financing rate?
10. How do you know that this is a good offer (ie. an offer worth pursuing for you)?

11. How would you capture or save this special offer?
12. What is the next thing you would do after visiting this page?
13. What dealership would you expect to be able to redeem this offer at?

Lease Offer Details

1. Are you surprised to see the offer is only for 2019 models? *(Probe if the participant realizes that leases are for 2019 models while financing special offers are only available for 2018 models)*
2. *Observe if the participant realizes that the offer is trim-specific.* Are you familiar with the term 'trim'?
 - If yes, what does the term Trendline/Comfortline/Highline/Execline mean to you?
 - If no, do you have any assumptions about what the term 'trim' might mean?
 - Is this offer available for all trim-lines?
3. How helpful is it for you to see the features of the vehicle as part of the special offer?
4. What do you think the term 'retail value' means? Do you think you can get a special offer AND negotiate to pay under 'retail value' for the vehicle?
5. What is an acceptable or "good" interest rate for you that would make the offer worth pursuing? How do you know that this is an acceptable rate? *(Probe for research or previous experience with interest rates)*
6. Are you planning to put down a down-payment? Do you have a limit to how much you would put down?
7. Is this special offer only valid if you pay full MSRP price for the vehicle?
8. How do you know that this is a good offer (ie. an offer worth pursuing for you)?
9. How would you capture or save this special offer?
10. What is the next thing you would do after visiting this page?
11. What dealership would you expect to be able to redeem this offer at?

Cash Offer Details

1. Are you surprised to see the offer is only for 2019 models? (*Probe if the participant realizes that leases are for 2019 models while financing special offers are only available for 2018 models*)
2. *Observe if the participant realizes that the offer is trim-specific.* Are you familiar with the term 'trim'?
 - If yes, what does the term Trendline/Comfortline/Highline/Execline mean to you?
 - If no, do you have any assumptions about what the term 'trim' might mean?
 - Is this offer available for all trim-lines?
3. How helpful is it for you to see the features of the vehicle as part of the special offer?
4. Is this special offer only valid if you pay full MSRP price for the vehicle?
5. How would you expect this discount would be applied?
6. How do you know that this is a good offer (ie. an offer worth pursuing for you)?
7. How would you capture or save this special offer?
8. What is the next thing you would do after visiting this page?
9. What dealership would you expect to be able to redeem this offer at?

BUILD & PRICE/SEE ALL TRIMS

If you'd like to configure a model and figure out how much it would cost you, please show me where you would go on the website to do this.

1. How do you decide what model to build & price?
2. How do you decide what engine and transmission to pick?
3. Was it easy or difficult for you to make this decision? Why?
4. What are your options on this page?
5. How do you decide on a colour for your car?
6. Do the different paint options affect the price of the car?

7. What are your options on this page?
8. How do you decide on an interior for your car?
9. Are there any options on this page that appeal to you?
10. If you are interested in a feature or add on, are you being given enough information here to make a decision? What other information might be helpful?
11. Are you interested in purchasing packages or accessories at this point?

NEXT STEPS

1. What is your next step in the purchase process?
2. Have you visited a dealership yet?
 - How do you decide when you're ready to visit a dealership?
 - How will you decide what dealership to visit? [*Probe for recommendation from friend, location, etc.*]
 - Are you planning to visit more than one dealership?
 - What are you planning to do at the dealership?
 - Will you bring anyone with you when you visit the dealership?