

Survey Design and Questionnaire Writing Guidelines

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Professional Equivalencies

ACPA ASK Standards

- Ability to evaluate and create a rigorous survey with focus on effective question wording, effective survey format for the intended sample population, appropriate administration method, along with ability to achieve appropriate response rate
- Ability to determine the manner in which participants with disabilities will utilize any assessment instruments selected
- Ability to review an instrument for inclusive and accessible language likely to be viewed as informed and respectful by those for whom use of the instrument is intended

NASPA's Assessment Framework

Assessment 301: Home Grown Surveys for Assessment

Overview of Session

- I. Why Survey Design is Important
- II. Survey Design Concepts:
 - Developing Content
 - Response Formats
 - Writing Questions
 - Structure & Length
 - Arrangement & Design
- III. Survey Administration



Overview

"Questions and answers are part of everyday conversation; they are part of the fabric of our social life."

"remote conversation"

"conversation with a purpose"



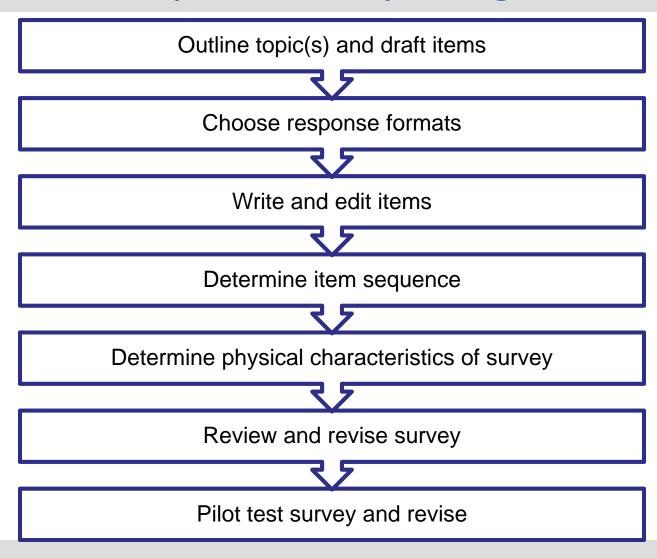
Initial Questions to Ask

- Is a survey the best method?
- What data is already available?
- Who should be involved?
- What can we learn from past assessments?
- Who will review results?
- How will this data be used?





Steps in survey design



Outline Items

- Begin with general data points
- Draft questions that most effectively measure data points
 - o Age
 - How old are you?
 - In what year were you born?
 - Satisfaction with program
 - How satisfied were you with the program?
 - How did the program compare with your expectations?
 - Understanding of alcohol policy
 - How would you rate your understanding of the alcohol policy?
 - "I fully understand the alcohol policy."



Response Formats

Open ended responses

- Free response text
- Numeric
- Yes/No with please explain

Types of multiple choice responses

- Yes/No
- Single response
- Multiple response (e.g., Check all that apply, Select 3)
- Ranking
- Scales



Response Considerations

- Scales that match
 - Match scale to question text
 - Symmetrical bipolar scales (e.g., Strongly agree Strongly disagree)
- Mutually exclusive answer choices
- Exhaustive answer choices
- Neutral/Not applicable/Non-response options

Choose not to respond

Not applicable

No opinion

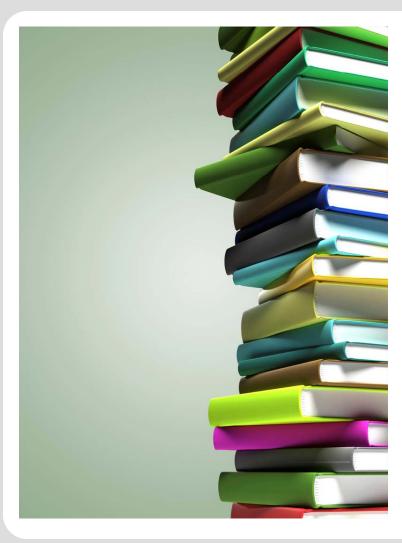
Neither ____ nor ____

Don't know

Unable to judge

Neutral

Writing Questions



- Consistency
- Simplicity
- Spelling
- Grammar
- Q&A instead of statements

Pitfalls to Avoid

Socially desirable responding – based on social norms

- Can never be eliminated
- Consider sensitive topics like race, drug and alcohol use, sexual activity, and other areas with clear social expectations

Leading questions – suggesting there is a correct answer

Double-barreled questions – asking more than one question

Double negatives – including negative phrasing which makes responding difficult

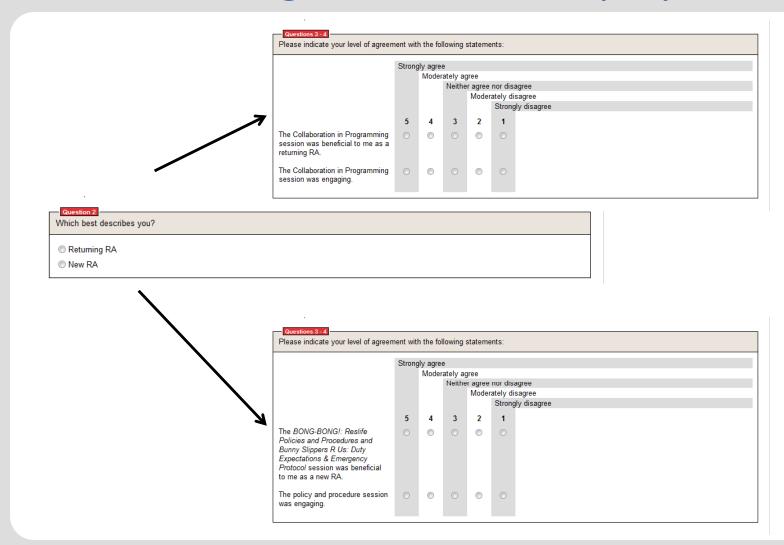


Creating Structure - Matrices

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Creating Structure – Display Rules



Creating Structure – Paths



0% Complete

The Profile of Today's College Student contains seven sections.

- · Academic Involvement
- Academic Integrity
- · Health and Wellness
- Technology Use
- Media Consumption
- Future Aspirations
- · Values and Beliefs

Each respondent will randomly see three of the above seven sections, plus a required demographics section.

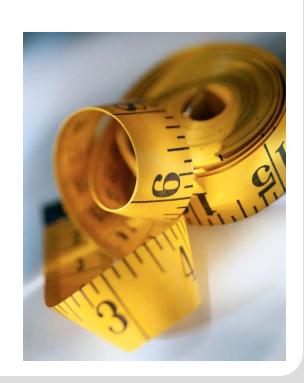
To allow for you to preview all sections, the Profile will be set to randomize in advance of your administration/launch date. Click NEXT to preview the Profile.

Evaluating Length

Greater attrition at 22 questions or 13 minutes

What to consider:

- Excluding "nice to know"
- Eliminate what you already know
- Outlining how results will be used
- Number of open-ended questions
- Number of required questions



Flow of the Survey

- Logic
 - First items should be clearly connected to the goals of the survey
 - Ask objective items before subjective items (e.g., "Have you participated in?" followed by "How would you rate.....?")
- Interest Begin with non-threatening but interesting items
- Trust Sensitive items should be asked well after the beginning of the survey but also before the end
- Drop-off
 - Do not put important items at the end
 - Save open-ended questions for the end
 - Demographics are better asked at the end than the beginning



Data Collection Methods

	Pros	Cons
	No data entry	 Audience is not usually captive
	 Accuracy is excellent 	 Possible misinterpretation (can't ask
Mob	 Technology benefits (e.g., display 	?s)
Web	rules, required questions)	 Technology issues
	 Immediate results 	Response sample unrepresentative
	 Anonymous 	
	No data entry	 Technology issues
	 Accuracy is good 	 Response sample unrepresentative
Mobile	 Technology benefits (e.g., display 	Limited formatting
Mobile	rules, required questions)	 Anonymity is questionable
	Captive audience	
	 Administrator is available for ?s 	
	Captive audience	 No benefits of technology
	 Administrator is available for ?s 	 Accuracy can be compromised
Paper	 No technology issues 	Data entry necessary
		Anonymity is questionable

Piloting Your Survey

- 1. Take it as if you were respondent
- 2. Seek reviews from colleagues with no prior knowledge
- 3. Administer to sample of actual population being studied
 - Focus group
 - Questions at end of survey
 - Observing





Confidentiality vs. Anonymity

Confidentiality:

data kept contained to a specific set of reviewers

Anonymity:

participants not individually identified





Invitations



- Importance/Purpose
- Relevancy to respondent
- Request for help
- How and by whom results are used
- How long it will take to respond
- Deadline
- Incentives/Compensation
- Contact information



Response Rate Strategies

- Preannouncement
- Reminders
- Timing
- Incentives/Compensation
- Sampling
- Culture of sharing results

Resources

- Brace, I. (2004). *Questionnaire design: How to plan, structure and write survey material for effective market research.* London: Kogan Page Limited.
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Questions/Discussion

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