



Surveys Refresher

Agenda

- What is a survey, when to survey, types of surveys
- Writing questions
- Formatting the survey instrument
- Administering the survey

What is a Survey?

A way of collecting information from individuals or organizations

- Representative information
- Large number of respondents
- Standardized questions

When To Survey

- Information is not available in existing reports, studies, or databases
 - File reviews, site visits, and interviews are impractical
- Self-reported information and opinions will be credible
- Representative information is needed from a large group of people and a contact list (or close proxy) is available
- Straight-forward questions will provide the information needed

Types of Surveys

- Electronic
 - E-mail, Internet
- Telephone
- Hard copy
 - Mail, drop-off, in-person

What Type of Survey is Best?

It depends on:

- The type of contact information you have
- Who you are surveying
- The time you have to complete the survey
 - Mail surveys usually take the longest time
- The number of staff available for the survey
 - Telephone surveys take the most staff/expensive



Writing Questions

Guidelines for Questions

Writing survey questions is often a balancing act

- Short is better than long
- Simple is better than complex
- Specific is better than vague

Question Format Options

- Choose one
- Choose all that apply
- Filter questions
- Rating and ranking questions
- Open-ended questions

Question Formats – Choose One

What was your PRIMARY reason for taking an acceleration course?

- ☐ To improve my high school GPA
- ☐ To take more challenging coursework
- ☐ To earn college credit while in high school
- ☐ To save college tuition money
- ☐ To improve my status for college admission
- ☐ To prepare for future college major
- ☐ I don't remember
- ☐ No particular reason for taking one course over another one
- ☐ Other (please specify):

Question Formats – Choose All That Apply

9. **Does your unit follow specific standards for its work?** (Check all that apply)

- ☐ We have not adopted formal standards.
- ☐ Government Auditing Standards (GAO Yellow Book)
- ☐ Program Evaluation Standards issued by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation
- ☐ American Evaluation Association (AEA) Guiding Principles
- ☐ Other (Please specify)

Question Formats – Filter

Has your county/municipality seen any changes resulting from the new statewide franchise law?

- ☐ **No.** Please click on Next. *(Skipped the question below and branched respondents to another page.)*
- ☐ **Yes.**

What, if any, benefits, has your county/municipality experienced since the adoption of the statewide franchise law in July 2007? (Please mark all that apply.)

- ☐ Consumer access to additional services such as high speed internet that was not available previously
- ☐ Improved quality of services resulting in fewer consumer complaints
- ☐ Lower rates for cable and/or video services
- ☐ Other (Please specify)
- ☐ Other (Please specify)
- ☐ No benefits identified

Question Formats – Rating and Ranking

On a scale of 1 to 5, in which 1 means you received bad service and 5 means you received excellent service, how would you rate your satisfaction with front desk staff?

1 (bad service) 2 3 4 5(excellent service)

Please rank these factors from 1 to 5 in terms of how they would impact improving attendance at the park(s) in your district.

___ Facility availability

___ Facility condition

___ Proximity to population served

___ Advertising budget

___ Activities (e.g., period festivals) available

Question Formats – Open Ended

How does your agency monitor homeless sex offenders in your county?

Please describe the no-cost streamlining efforts you have pursued in the last three years.

Wording Questions

Avoid

- Lengthy questions
- Ambiguous or vague questions
- “Double barreled” questions
- Loaded and leading questions
- Assuming too much about the respondent’s knowledge
- Incomplete/Overlapping Response Choices

Avoid Lengthy Questions

Students must take standardized tests in reading, writing, and mathematics. Some teachers feel that students take too many standardized tests.

Others feel more should be required to test students in science and social studies. Do you think that your students take too many standardized tests?

1 YES

2 NO

3 NO OPINION

Short Questions Work Better

Do you think that your students take too many standardized tests?

1 YES

2 NO

3 NO OPINION

Avoid Vague Questions

Did the conference meet your expectations?

1 YES

2 NO

Vague Questions Can Be Made More Specific

Please rate the quality of conference networking opportunities.

- 1 High
- 2 Somewhat High
- 3 Neither High nor Low
- 4 Somewhat Low
- 5 Low

Please rate the quality of the conference venue.

- 1 High
- 2 Somewhat High
- 3 Neither High nor Low
- 4 Somewhat Low
- 5 Low

Avoid Double-Barreled Questions

Does your summer program provide academic enrichment and physical recreation activities?

- 1 YES
- 2 NO
- 3 NOT SURE

Sometimes Two Questions Are Better Than One

Does your summer program provide academic enrichment activities?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Not Sure

Does your summer program provide physical recreation activities?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Not Sure

Avoid Loaded or Leading Questions

Did you “socially promote” any students last year?

1 NO

2 YES

Could be revised to

How often are students promoted in your school who are not ready academically but who would benefit by remaining with their peers?

1 FREQUENTLY

2 OCCASIONALLY

3 SELDOM

4 NEVER

5 NOT SURE

Don't Assume Respondents Have More Knowledge Than They Do

Do you agree with the governor's position on the fuel tax?

1 YES

2 NO

3 NO OPINION

Revise to

The state fuel tax should be raised in order to increase funding for highway construction and maintenance

1 STRONGLY AGREE

2 AGREE

3 NO OPINION

4 DISAGREE

5 STRONGLY DISAGREE

Incomplete/Overlapping Response Choices

How many hours a week do you spend on lesson planning?

1-5

5-10

10-15

Revise to

How many hours a week do you spend on lesson planning?

0

1-5

6-10

11-15

MORE THAN 15



Formatting the Survey Instrument

Survey Instrument Format


- Distinguish questions from answers
- Establish a vertical flow
- Provide directions
- Use transitions
- Do not continue questions across page breaks, if possible

Organizing the Survey Instrument

- Questions the respondent is most likely to perceive as important should come first
- Group questions with similar content together
 - Within content, group similar types of questions together
 - Within content, put the most objectionable questions after the least objectionable
- In general, put demographic questions at the end

Data Entry and Coding

Online surveys provide data entry advantage, as they do not require someone to enter completed survey results into a computer



Administering the Survey

Timeline for Surveys

- Get contact information
- Develop questions
- Pre-test
- Provide advance notice of the survey
- Send out the survey
- First follow-up
- Second follow-up
- Data entry, coding, and analysis

Get Contact Information

- Type of contact information can determine survey type
- Sometimes more difficult than developing questions
- Think creatively
 - A government entity might not be the best source for contact information

Pre-Test Your Survey

- Good idea to have a colleague who is not directly involved read through it
- Have target respondent(s) complete, if possible; helps to
 - Clarify any ambiguous questions and instructions
 - Possibly create a close-ended question from an open-ended one

Increase Your Response Rates with Advance Notice



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233-0001
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

March 8, 2010



TO RESIDENT AT
2463 LANCELOT DR
TALLAHASSEE, FL 32309-2907

3096 2558

Dear Resident:

About one week from now, you will receive a 2010 Census form in the mail.
When you receive your form, please fill it out and mail it in promptly.

Your response is important. Results from the 2010 Census will be used to help each community get its fair share of government funds for highways, schools, health facilities, and many other programs you and your neighbors need. Without a complete, accurate census, your community may not receive its fair share.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Increase Your Response Rates with Follow-Up



National Legislative Program Evaluation Society

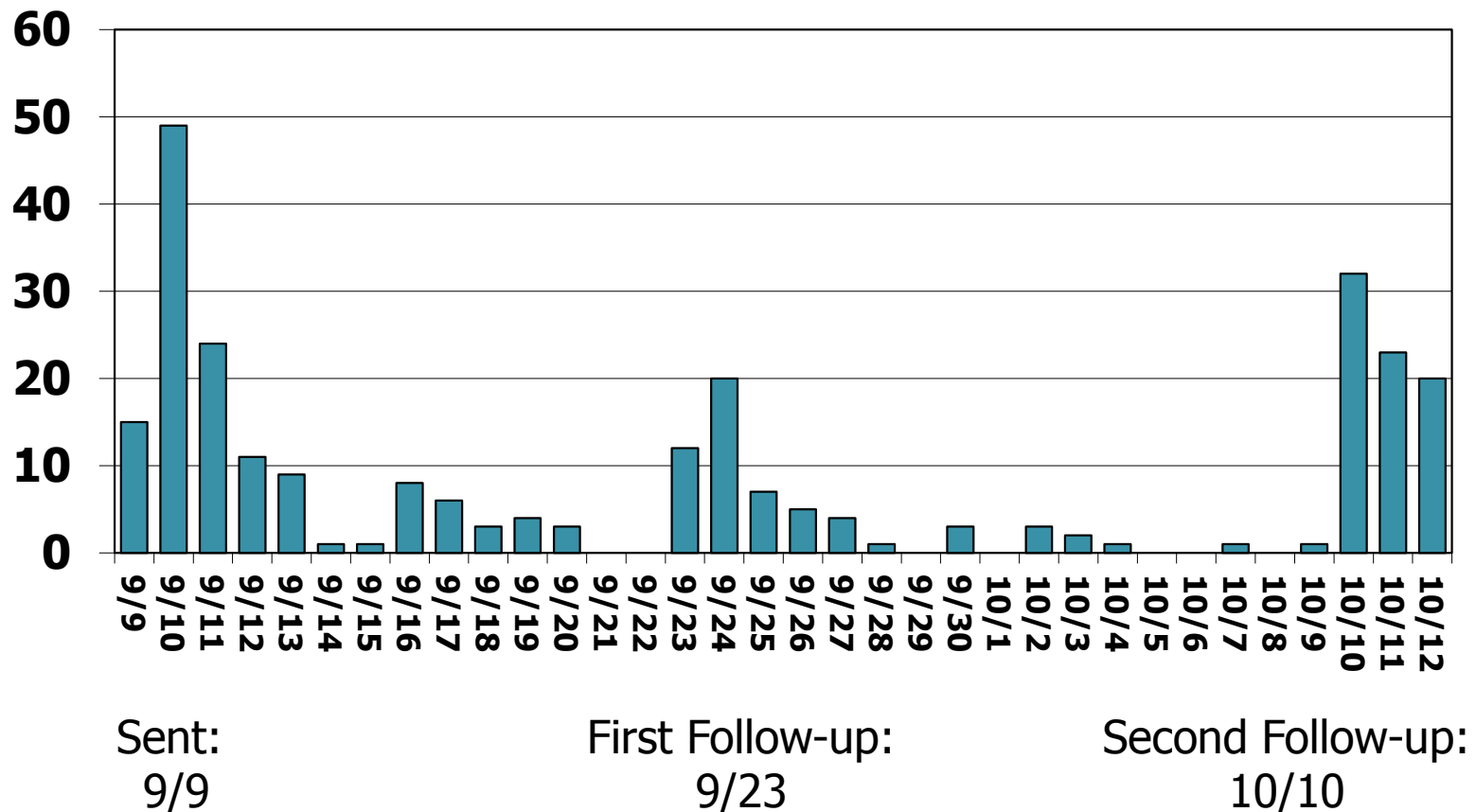
We need your help. We recently requested your assistance in completing a survey of NLPES member offices to update the *Ensuring the Public Trust* document. The survey should be completed by the office director or another person who can provide perspective on the office's interaction with its legislature and other stakeholder groups.

Please click <http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/nosearch/surveys/nlpes2011survey.htm> (or copy this URL into your browser if the link is not active) to complete the survey. We plan to compile and analyze the information and provide the final report at the NLPES professional development seminar in Denver in September.

We very much appreciate your assistance. If you have any questions please contact...

Follow-ups Increase Response Rates

**# Responses Received by Day Received;
later peaks reflect follow-up contacts**





Thank you!

**Good luck with
your survey!**