

Attributes of Well-Designed Surveys

Clarity

- No double-barreled questions
- No compound or complex sentences
- No double negatives
- Simple terms, simple phrases
- Avoid acronyms

Bias

- Response options that are exhaustive and mutually exclusive
- Balanced negative/positive options (bipolar scales)
- Only ask what respondents can answer
- Include filter questions
- No loaded or charged terms
- Avoid socially desirable responses

Fence Sitting

- Allow neutral response option
- Allow don't know or NA option
- Single response options instead of multiple response options

Organization

- Logical progression of a conversation
- Memory triggers/thoughtful question progression
- Most important questions toward the beginning
- Awkward, annoying, less important questions at the end (e.g., demographics)
- Readability

Motivation

- Incentives and rewards (e.g., cash, gift cards)
- Personal connection to problem, organization, person
- Personal benefit is evident
- Publicity

Do you prefer blue or purple?

- Yes
- No
- N/A

To what extent do you agree or disagree that education is unimportant and you have no role in promoting it within your community?

Which of the following activities do you like to do during the summer?

- Host barbecues
- Bicycle rides
- Gardening

On a scale of one to six . . .

- Poor
- Good
- Very good
- Great
- Excellent

Would you murder your spouse in the event s/he did not recover from an accident?

What is your age?

- 18 to 25
- 25 to 30
- 30 to 40
- 40 to 50

Do you identify as LGBTQ?

To what extent does your child's teacher employ pedagogically appropriate techniques for the discipline?

Who did your neighbor vote for in the most recent election?

Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Survey Methods

	Online	Phone	Mail	In Person
Cost	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Error Rate	Low Forced response settings, skipping and branching	Low Difficult to set forced response, skipping and branching	Medium No forced responses, self-administered skips	Low Requires well-trained interviewer
Attention Span	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Response Rate	Low Spam filtering, e-mail overload, outdated address, digital divide (no computer, internet, e-mail account)	Low to Medium Caller ID, cell phones, outdated numbers, multiple possible respondents in household	Medium Address service, multiple possible respondents in household	High Captive audience

