I ♥ Surveys: Where to Find IUPUI Survey Results and Best Practices for Crafting Your Own

Why Surveys?

- What can surveys do?

  - Gather information about a population

  - Understand expectations, satisfaction, knowledge, attitudes, behaviors of key constituents – faculty, staff, students (current/prospective), alumni, community

- For what purpose?

  - Program evaluation

  - To inform planning or programming

  - To inform future research

Is a Survey Needed?

- Is administering a survey the best way to get the information you need?

    - Does the information already exist?

    - Has there been previous research on your question at the university?

    - Are there other universities looking into this question – how do they do it? Have they answered it?

    - Is there a survey that already exists to which I can add questions?

    - Does the research question even lend itself to doing a survey?

    - How many people do I have?

Things to Consider Before Collection

- Will the findings be actionable?

- Who will use the data?

- Sensitivity/ethical considerations?

- Do I want to be able to compare to other institutions?

- Do I want to be able to compare over time?

- Is the purpose institutional improvement or research? OR both?

  Contact IU IRB

More Things to Consider

- What do you want to be able to say after I collect this data?

  - X% of students were satisfied by program Y.

  - X% of students have a better understanding of Y.

  - X% of students want Y service.

- You need to ask questions that allow you to make claims you want to make

9 Tips for Writing Good Survey Qs

1. Make sure every question is necessary

2. Keep it short and simple

3. Ask direct questions

4. Ask one question at a time

5. Avoid leading words/questions

6. Speak your respondent's language

7. Give mutually exclusive choices

8. Consider adding a "Prefer not to answer" option

9. Cover all the possible choices

More Tips

- Survey length

    - Don't ask questions you aren't going to use

- Question order

    - Sensitive questions

    - Demographic questions

Response Rates

- Response rates are dropping

- No magic number for response rates that is going to guarantee you have excellent data quality

- Quality v. Quantity

- Understanding response bias and ethically reporting results

Response Rates

- Tips to improve response rate

  - Intrinsic motivation – do the respondents care about the topic?

  - Incentives

  - Length of invitation / length of survey

  - Look and feel of survey

  - Wording/timing of reminders

  - Timing / coordination with other surveys

  - Confidentiality

  - Using the results and communicating that use

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