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Creating Surveys and Feedback Forms 101

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Quantitative questions are close-ended and they help collect hard facts and statistics from the respondent. These questions make great starter questions, as they are easier to evaluate and complete, and are often multiple choice questions that you can tally fairly quickly.

Some sample quantitative questions include:

- ▶ How did you learn of our event?
- ▶ What is your overall satisfaction with the conference?
- ▶ How many stalls did you visit at the international food fair?

Qualitative questions will help you discover the underlying factors that might be missed with quantitative questions. They are open-ended questions that ask for the opinion or experience of the respondent.

These are often feelings-based questions. You can provide multiple choice options and tally up responses, but you'll get more depth and information by giving respondents the freedom to answer on blank lines. These questions will provide insightful feedback through which you can look for trends in how people respond as well as areas for improvement.

Qualitative sample questions:

- Which parts of the experience did you enjoy most? Why?
- Do you have any suggestions on areas for improvement?
- What was your biggest learning or takeaway about the issue at today's event?

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10 Tips for Writing Effective Surveys and/or Feedback Forms

Tip #1: Keep it short and simple!

Find the shortest way to ask a question without losing its intent. Long drawn out questions can increase confusion or cause the respondent to lose interest.

Tip #2: Limit your overall survey questions.

If you have too many questions on your survey, you run the risk of receiving incomplete or entirely blank surveys. Keep the number of questions at a manageable amount that doesn't require a lot of time and helps respondents quickly complete the questionnaire.

Tip #3: Ask questions that fulfill your end goal.

Every single question that you include should have a well-defined purpose and a strong reason for being included.

Tip #4: Ask one question at a time.

For quality responses, give the respondent time to think through each individual question. Avoid bombarding the respondent with a series of questions.

Tip #5: Avoid leading questions.

Developing questions that lead respondents toward a certain answer will not be useful for your end results. Leading questions should be avoided to prevent biased responses.

Tip #6: Be specific!

Be specific when developing questions. Avoid any unnecessary words and/or phrases. This will reduce the uncertainty on the respondent's part.

Tip #7: Avoid extreme words.

Extreme words such as: all, any, anybody, never, ever, every, etc., place respondents in a situation where they must fully agree or disagree with the position in the question. Keep it as neutral as possible.

Tip #8: Put your questions in logical order.

Do not overload your survey with ranking questions.

Tip #9: Give a bonus!

Entice your audience to take your survey with incentives. Review your survey budget before deciding on an incentive, such as a gift certificate, a book give-away, an autographed memorabilia, etc.

Tip #10: Pre-test your survey.

It is important to test your survey before using it to collect data. Pre-testing can help you identify questions that don't make sense to participants or question that lead to biased answers. Consider sending your survey to a small group of people. After they have completed the survey, brainstorm with them to address any issue or improvements that can be made.