Survey Design:

A Communities of Opportunity Workshop
February 27, 2020
Sara Jaye Sanford & Kim Tippens
We gather today on the ancestral land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the Duwamish Tribe, and all of the Native people who call King County home.
PURPOSE OF THIS WORKSHOP

Through this workshop we aim to equip attendees with the knowledge and tools to build local data and evaluation capacity that utilizes a strong equity approach to highlight your organization’s strengths as well as identify opportunities for new or continued program investment and development.

What will we cover today?

- What is a survey
- Planning for your survey
- Types of surveys
- Types of survey questions
- Different ways to ask survey questions
- Questions & open discussion
Introductions

- Name
- Pronouns
- Organization
- One reason you came today
Before starting to develop a survey, it’s important to decide what you want to measure and why.

What are some things you’d like to measure in your survey?
What is your organizational capacity?

Money
Resources
Staff
Time
What is a survey?

- **Paper survey**
- **Online survey**
- **Oral survey**
Planning for your survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>What?</th>
<th>When?</th>
<th>How?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • All participants /clients  
• Group of clients  
• Community members | • Using questions from other surveys  
• Developing new questions  
• Language | • Before  
• After | • Paper  
• Online  
• Interview |
Example Surveys:

- Healthy Youth Survey: https://www.askhys.net/
- The General Social Survey: http://www.gss.norc.org/
- IPoll (database of 500,000 polls): http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.eresource:roperctr (Harvard ID / PIN required) Must register to access.
- Polling the Nations: http://poll.orspub.com.ezpz.harvard.edu
## What to ask? Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One question at a time</th>
<th>“Double Barreled”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Was this training relevant?”</td>
<td>• “Was this training fun and relevant?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “Was this training fun?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- “Double Barreled” refers to questions that ask about both the relevance and fun of the training.
- One question at a time avoids confusion by focusing on one aspect at a time.
What to ask? Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Leading or judgmental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “How would you rate the performance of Russell Wilson last season?”</td>
<td>• “How great was Russell Wilson last season?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What to ask? Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear and culturally relevant</th>
<th>Unclear or vague</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “How often do you eat breakfast?”</td>
<td>• “With what frequency do you consume a morning repast?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What would you change?

I do not want my child to attend this trip

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes
This training was relevant to my work.

- Asks whether respondents agree or disagree with a statement
- More nuance than a yes/no question
- As much as possible, provide consistent options
What to ask? Format: Scale of Opposites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irrelevant</th>
<th>Relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Was this training...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Uses two opposite adjectives
  - Other examples: Unimportant/Important; Hard/Easy; and more
- More nuance than a yes/no question
- Again, consistency is helpful for your respondents
- Be careful with vocabulary
What to ask? Format: Yes/No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Was this training relevant to your work?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- Simple
- Best for low literacy
- Doesn’t allow as much nuance
What to ask? Format: Open-ended

What suggestions do you have for improving this training to make it more relevant to your work?

- Helps answer the “how” and “why” questions
- No number
- Think about how many people you will survey
What to ask?

Demographics

- Important to describe WHO took the survey
- Usually at the *end* of the survey
- Only ask for the information you need and plan to use
- Many surveys, report by age, race/ethnicity, geography, and gender, at a minimum.

**EXAMPLE:**

7. What school do you attend?
   - [ ] School A
   - [ ] School B
   - [ ] School C
   - [ ] Other, please write in: _______________
What to ask?
Other Tips

- Think about what order to put questions in:
  - Most important questions go first
  - Put questions with the same topic or format together in sections
  - Sensitive questions and demographic questions go at the end
- Aim for 8th grade reading level for adults
  - For youth: 3rd grade; in general age-appropriate
- With any kind of scale:
  - Provide the number of options you actually care about
  - You can choose whether to provide a neutral option
- **Test it out!**
**When to ask: Retrospective Pre-Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate your confidence in the following skills?</th>
<th>BEFORE the class</th>
<th>AFTER the class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to solve computer science problems</td>
<td>Not at all confident</td>
<td>Not at all confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Somewhat confident</td>
<td>Somewhat confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very confident</td>
<td>Very confident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We may under- or over-estimate our knowledge at the beginning – “we don’t know what we don’t know”

No need to administer or analyze multiple surveys

More flexible timing

No need to link data, so it can be anonymous
When to ask:
Retrospective Pre-Test Analysis

- Calculate the average of each “before” question
- Calculate the average of each “after” question
- Compare!
When to ask: Pre- & Post-Test

• **EXAMPLE:**
  - I am confident in my ability to solve computer science problems. (Strongly Agree/Agree/Neither/Disagree/Strongly Disagree)
  - …six months pass….you give another survey and ask again
  - I am confident in my ability to solve computer science problems. (Strongly Agree/Agree/Neither/Disagree/Strongly Disagree)

• “Response shift bias” (we don’t know what we don’t know)
• Is it the same group of people? How will you know? Need to match responses
• Need to analyze 2 surveys to compare
When to ask: Pre- & Post-Test Analysis

Match respondents
Calculate the difference between their pre-test score and post-test score

EXAMPLE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre-Score</th>
<th>Post-Score</th>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Average (N=15)</td>
<td>28.47</td>
<td>36.27</td>
<td>7.80</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Average  (N=15)</td>
<td>24.27</td>
<td>33.27</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL AVERAGE</td>
<td>26.37</td>
<td>34.77</td>
<td>8.40</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to ask: Incentives

• Optional!
• Should reflect thanks for respondents’ time and information
  • Not payment for participating
  • Not enough to push people who don’t want to participate
• Can be a raffle with one or a few winners
• Can be non-monetary: special privileges, experiences, or swag – be creative!
How do we request assistance, or ask questions about data and evaluation?

Data Consultation and Technical Assistance
Email: CommunitiesCount@kingcounty.gov
Mariko Toyoji, Vanessa Quince, Sara Jaye Sanford, Kris Johnson
See more data and trainings at: communitiescount.org