

Survey Tips

The following tips can help you create useful and valid surveys:

- Emphasize that responses will be anonymous and confidential.
- Explain the purpose of the survey and what you will do with the results.
- Begin with interesting questions that make people think.
- Avoid leading questions (“Why would Josephine Smith be a bad governor?”)
- Avoid questions with obvious answers. (“Do you think reducing crime is important?”)
- When using number scales, such as 4 for completely agree and 1 for completely disagree, try not to use an odd number of choices. With an even number of choices, responders must express an opinion and cannot just select the middle choice.
- Try out your survey with people you know before giving it to strangers.
- Double- and triple-check for writing errors.

Writing Survey Questions

How to Write a Good Survey

www.accesscable.net/~infopoll/tips.htm

A list of guidelines for survey writing with simple explanations

Qualities of a Good Question

www.statpac.com/surveys/question-qualities.htm

A list of 12 characteristics of good survey questions

8 Tips for Writing Effective Survey Questions

www.constantcontact.com/learning-center/hints-tips/ht-2007-11os.jsp

A good collection of hints for writing good surveys

Online Survey Tools

SurveyMonkey

www.surveymonkey.com

A widely used survey tool that can easily be embedded into e-mail and Web pages

Zoomerang

www.zoomerang.com

A free survey tool that is easy to sign up for and use

Google Docs

<https://docs.google.com>

Includes Google Docs spreadsheets, which can be used to create surveys and collect data