

Checklist for Planning, Designing, and Conducting Customer Surveys

PLANNING THE SURVEY

PURPOSE, GOALS & OBJECTIVES
<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are specific and measurable.
<input type="checkbox"/> Objectives are linked to logic model, evaluation plan, and evaluation questions.
<input type="checkbox"/> Survey budget and constraints have been considered.
<input type="checkbox"/> Role for third-party evaluator determined, if applicable.
POPULATION OF INTEREST
<input type="checkbox"/> Population of interest defined.
If using a sample . . .
<input type="checkbox"/> Sample size calculated.
<input type="checkbox"/> Sampling strategy developed.
<input type="checkbox"/> Sample selected.
FREQUENCY OF DATA COLLECTION (CHECK ONE)
<input type="checkbox"/> One-time, specify month/year: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual, specify months/years: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre/post, specify months/years: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Longitudinal, specify months/years: _____
DATA COLLECTION METHODS
<i>(note: 1 for primary method, 2 for secondary method, etc.)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone/Cell phone
<input type="checkbox"/> Data collectors and supervisors identified/hired.
<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment, accessibility, and space needs identified.
<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone numbers obtained.
<input type="checkbox"/> Call schedule established.
<input type="checkbox"/> Mail
<input type="checkbox"/> Data collectors and supervisors identified/hired.
<input type="checkbox"/> Equipment, accessibility, and space needs identified.
<input type="checkbox"/> Mailing addresses obtained.
<input type="checkbox"/> Postage, return postage, printing, and supplies obtained.
<input type="checkbox"/> Mailing schedule established.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS (cont.)

(note: 1 for primary method, 2 for secondary method, etc.)

- In person
 - Data collectors and supervisors identified/hired.
 - Equipment, accessibility, and space needs identified.
 - Location(s) for data collection identified.
 - Schedule established.
- Smart Phone/Tablet
 - Software selected and obtained.
 - Email addresses obtained.
 - Link to online survey created.
 - Fillable PDF or word document created.
 - Accessibility verified.
- Web site
 - Software selected and obtained.
 - Survey embedded on web site or redirected to another site.
 - Pop-up invitation developed.
 - Accessibility verified.
- Email
 - Software selected and obtained.
 - Email addresses obtained.
 - Link to online survey created.
 - Fillable PDF or word document created.
 - Accessibility verified.

DESIGNING THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

- Survey content defined.
- Survey content linked to evaluation objectives.

Question type(s) determined

- Open format
- Closed format
- Mixed format

Questions and response options drafted and checked

- Concise and simple items
- No double-barreled questions
- No leading or loaded questions
- No vague or confusing language
- Sufficient response categories
- No overlapping response categories
- No open-ended questions that will not be analyzed

Formatting completed

- Title is easily understood and reflective of survey content.
- Survey instrument is as short as possible.
- Survey starts with an easy or interesting question.
- Most important questions are placed first.
- Questions are all relevant and specific to the topic.
- Language is gender, cultural, and ethnicity neutral.
- One question appears per line.
- Questions are numbered sequentially throughout.
- Questions flow smoothly and logically.
- Each new topic includes an introduction.
- Questions about the same topic or with the same response scale are grouped together.
- Sufficient space is provided to answer open-ended questions.
- Response instructions are included, e.g. "Select one."
- Response options follow logical order (e.g., from least to greatest, lowest to highest)

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT (cont.)

Layout completed

- Instrument is simple and uncluttered.
- Headers of grid or matrix questions are printed on each new page.
- Items/questions and pages are numbered.
- Demographic questions are at the end of the survey.
- Introduction content includes:
 - information about the organization conducting the survey and the purpose of the survey
 - how and why the respondent was selected
 - benefits to the respondent and your organization or program
 - explanation of how data will be used and kept secure
 - contact information for help with questions
 - time estimate for completing the survey
 - instructions on how and when to submit the completed survey
 - an expression of appreciation for the respondent's participation

Data collection pretest completed

- Review by survey expert
- Review by subject area expert
- Verbal feedback from respondents on a draft version of the survey
- Field testing
- Accessibility tested

Respondent invitation drafted

- Personalized, if applicable
- Brief, salient, and inviting
- On sponsor letterhead or logo
- With sponsor signature
- Content includes:
 - information about the organization conducting the survey and the purpose of the survey
 - how and why the respondent was selected
 - benefits to the respondent and your organization or program
 - respondent anonymity/confidentiality ensured
 - explanation of how data will be used and kept secure
 - contact information for help with questions
 - time estimate for completing the survey
 - instructions on how and when to submit the completed survey
 - an expression of your appreciation for the respondent's participation

MANAGING, COLLECTING, AND ANALYZING SURVEY DATA

DATA MANAGEMENT

- Data management and entry personnel trained**
 - Survey logging protocols established
 - Date returned/submitted
 - Incorrect email/addresses
 - Date of reminders
 - Responses complete/incomplete
 - Data entry protocols established
 - Data input form created
 - Data entry instructions documented
 - Procedures established for checking data accuracy and completeness
 - Data monitoring protocols established
 - Frequency of monitoring
 - Data completeness
 - Data security, privacy, and retention protocols documented
 - Location and media/format for data storage
 - Data access and security procedures
 - Respondent identifiers masked or removed
 - Dates for data retention and/or disposal
 - Data organization and backup
 - Data file naming protocols
 - Frequency of backup
 - Location and media/format for backup
 - Confidentiality training conducted
 - Training verification signed and filed
 - Obtain IRB approval if needed

DATA COLLECTION

- Timeline with milestones developed for data collection.
- Data collection protocol/instrument finalized.
- Data collection personnel trained.
- Pre-notification conducted.
- Respondent contacts and reminders scheduled.
 - Follow-up protocol established (e.g., post card, letter, or electronic message with follow up request and survey attached or link to it in electronic message)
 - Contact and attempts to contact logs
- Response enhancement strategies implemented and documented.

DATA PREPARATION

- Data preparation protocols documented**
 - Type of data entry
 - Automatic
 - Manual
 - Data cleaning and editing protocols established
 - Data coding protocols established
 - Data codebook

DATA ANALYSIS

- Descriptive statistics calculated.
- Non-response bias assessed.
- Subgroup analyses completed.
- Advanced analysis considered and conducted if appropriate (e.g., cluster analysis, factor analysis, reliability analysis, regression analysis).
 - Confidence interval and confidence level determined.
- Changes over time analyzed or graphed, if applicable.
- Open-ended questions analyzed.
- Data limitations documented.

This checklist was prepared as part of the Center to Improve Project Performance (CIPP) operated by Westat for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) under contract number ED-OSE-13-C-0049. The project officer is Dr. Patricia Gonzalez. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. government. Suggested citation: Carlson, E., & D'Agostino, A. (2015). *Checklist for Planning, Designing, and Conducting Customer Surveys*. Rockville, MD: Westat.