

Library Surveys for Success



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Today's Goals

By the end of today's session you will be able to...

- Understand why and how to conduct a survey
 - Discover the steps to running a survey
 - Describe the elements of an effective survey
 - Identify 5 main question types



How surveys impact our lives



Associated Press photo by Byron Rollins.

Why a survey?

- Make informed or “good” decisions
- The results might surprise you
- Fast & easy to administer
- Meeting peoples’ needs = succe\$\$

Surveys are great for:

- Short answers
- Identifying issues
- Evaluating programs
- Input from many people
- Decisions based on numbers (quantitative data)



Surveys are poorer for:

- Knowing why
- Complex issues
- Input from few people
- Knowing “how good” not “how much” (qualitative)



How to run a survey

- A. Steps to running a survey
- B. Elements of an effective survey
- C. Five 5 main question types

A. Steps in running a survey

1. Clearly define the goal of the survey



- Why are we conducting this survey?
- What do we want to know?
- How will we use this info?
- Keep your goal focused and specific.



- EX: “The goal of this survey is to understand the needs of our customers in the next two years- 2014-16.”

SMART goals



MISTAKES IN SETTING GOALS

too
BIG

too
MANY

not
SPECIFIC

not
WRITTEN

2. Decide whom to survey



3. Prepare questions that match the goals



- Children will read more books as a result of story hour

End the survey with a positive tone



4. Decide: online vs. paper, or both



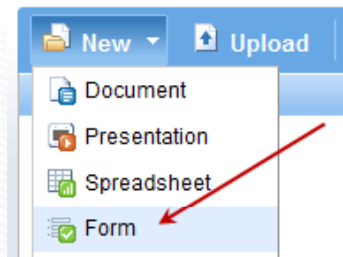
Free online survey tools



www.questionpro.com



www.surveymonkey.com

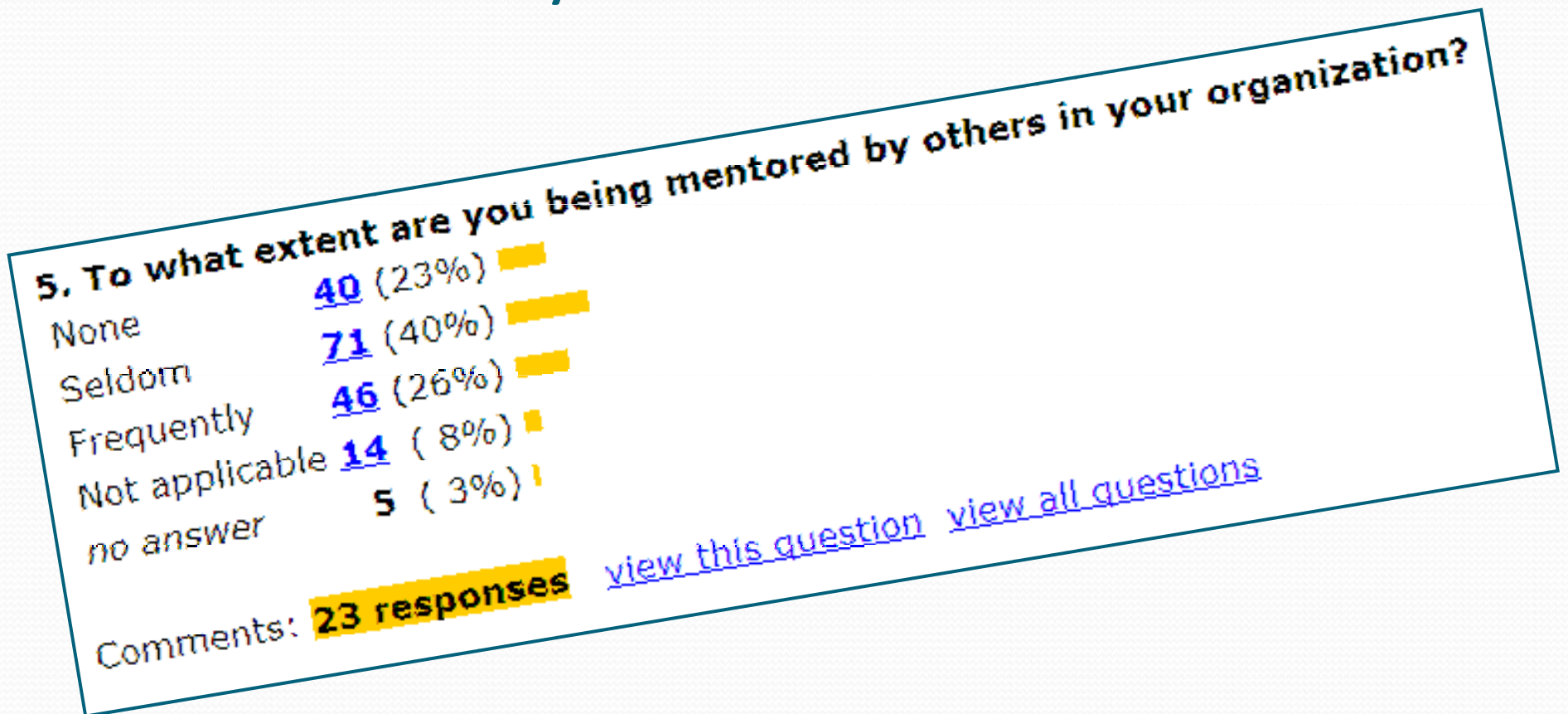
The Google logo, consisting of the word "Google" in its multi-colored, sans-serif font.

docs.google.com/forms



www.skydrive.com

Advantage: computerized surveys summarize for you



5. Pre-test your survey

- Ask 5-10 people to take the survey
- Was anything difficult or confusing?
- Look at how people responded—
Did the right questions get asked?
Did people answer consistently with what was asked?
(If you expected an apple did you get one?)



Make improvements based on the pre-test



6. Get the survey out

- Listservs
- Your website
- Facebook
- Utility bill
- Paper copy



Take
the **Survey**

**By March 31
2014**

Publicize the survey



- Be sure your target audience knows about the survey

Key elements of an effective survey



Effective library surveys

have clear questions & answers





KISS
keep it simple ...

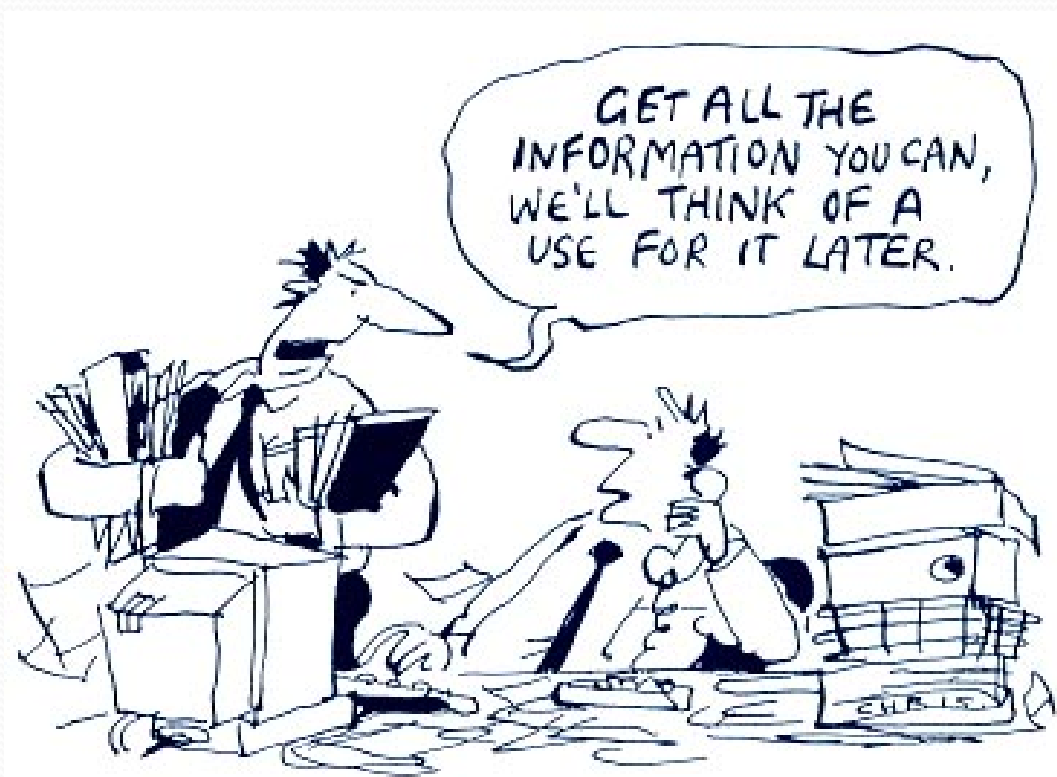
Keep It Simple
Surveyor!

- Clear, straightforward language that is easy for everyone to understand
- No trade talk (EX: library acronyms)
- No highfalutin words

Divide questions into 3 groups:

1. Must know
2. Useful to know
3. Nice to know

KISS
keep it simple ...



Focus on #1 and get rid of the rest

Clearly outline what info you need

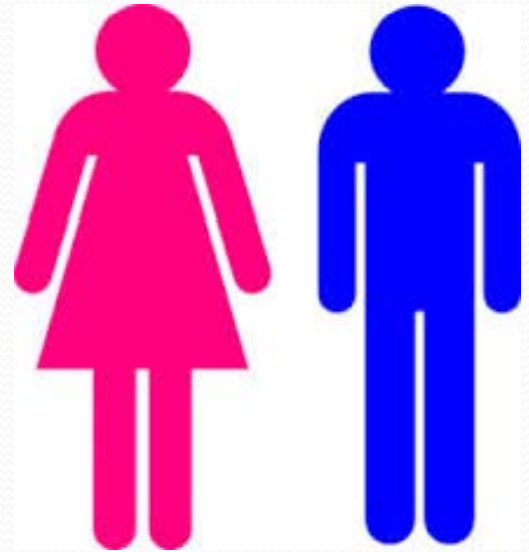


Logical flow to the questions



Use demographics

- Age in roughly equal ranges
- Gender
- Library use
- Other things that may impact the results



Add a comments section

- People can write in things not asked elsewhere
- Adds stories & interest to the results
- You'll get lots of positive feedback

25. Additional comments:

Survey 100% completed. Thank you for your time!



Consider your target audience & how to reach them



Avoid measurement errors

- Poorly worded questions
- Faulty assumptions
- Imperfect scales



Avoid biased questions

- EX: Do you think it is unfair for training to only be offered when mothers are at home during the day?
- Better: When do you think training should be offered at the library?

[illegible]

One word may bias a question



Avoid modifying adjectives such as

Usually Often
Sometimes Seldom
Rarely Many Several



Which may not mean the same thing to everyone

EX: I visit the library...

- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Seldom

2, 12, 120 times?

Avoid questions with negatives

- EX: Are you against having computer training for seniors?
- Better: Would you like computer training for seniors?



Avoid double questions

- EX: Do you think the library should offer computer training and offer follow-up training as requested?



A+B=?

Avoid

- Difficult questions
- Hypothetical questions: what if...



Effective Answers:

Have mutually exclusive options – A or B, not both
(unless they can check all that apply)

If using multiple choice, list **all** possible responses

Give “other” option and let them write in their
answer, if appropriate



Which answer set works best for, “Do you like children?”

Yes — No

OR

Yes— Maybe — No — N/A



Which answer set is better?

Poor –Average –Above Average –Excellent –Superior

Poor –Below Avg. –Average —Above Avg. –Excellent



Distinct answers

0% 100%

Your Advocacy Goal

*** Your individual advocacy skills. Now let's focus on your individual advocacy skills. How would you rate your advocacy skills as of today?
Choose one of the following answers**

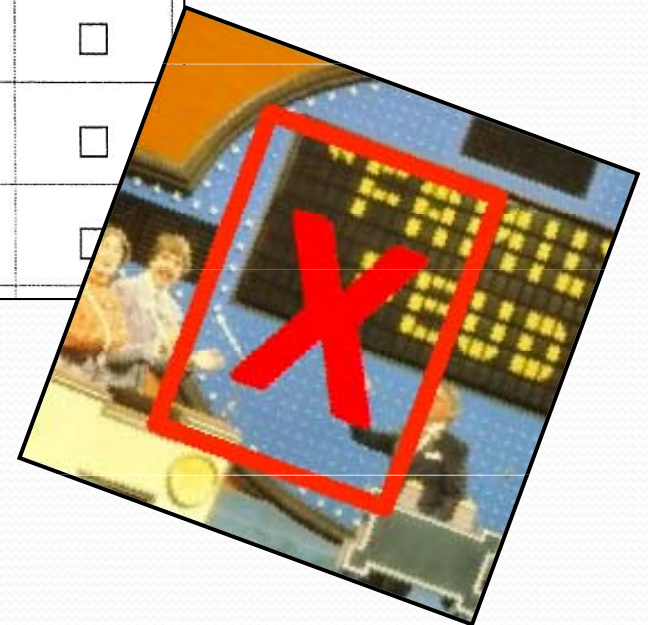
- ☐ Novice advocate
- ☐ Beginning advocate
- ☐ Average advocate
- ☐ Advanced advocate
- ☐ Expert advocate

Non-example

Standardize the arrangement of responses

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I learned something new today.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I now understand better the point of the author's book(s) and its ideas / subject.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This program left out important elements of the book and its subject that I had hoped to hear.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The author encouraged an open and respectful discussion involving more than one point of view.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

EX: high to low in all



Case study:
1936

Literary
Digest poll

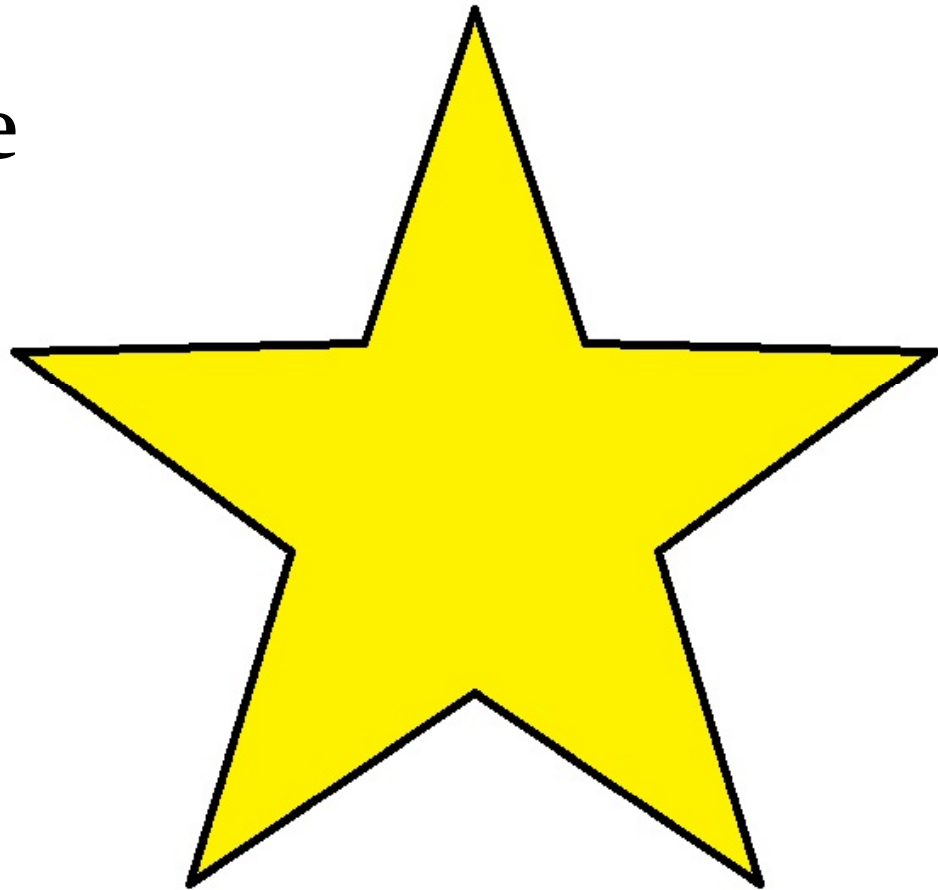
Largest
poll ever:

10 million
people



5 main types of survey questions

- Multiple choice
- Ordinal
- Interval
- Ratio
- Open ended



Multiple choice

- Choose from options



Use an “Other” option

Q3 Edit Question ▼ Add Question Logic Move Copy Delete

3. Which type of pet do you currently have? (Check all that apply)

☐ Bird

☐ Dog

☐ Cat

☐ Fish

☐ Horse

☐ Reptile

Other (please specify)



Ordinal

Please rank the following from 1-5 in order of importance, 1 for the least important and 5 for the most important.

- ___ Hours open
- ___ Computers available
- ___ Books/ materials I want
- ___ Programs
- ___ Children's homework help

Interval

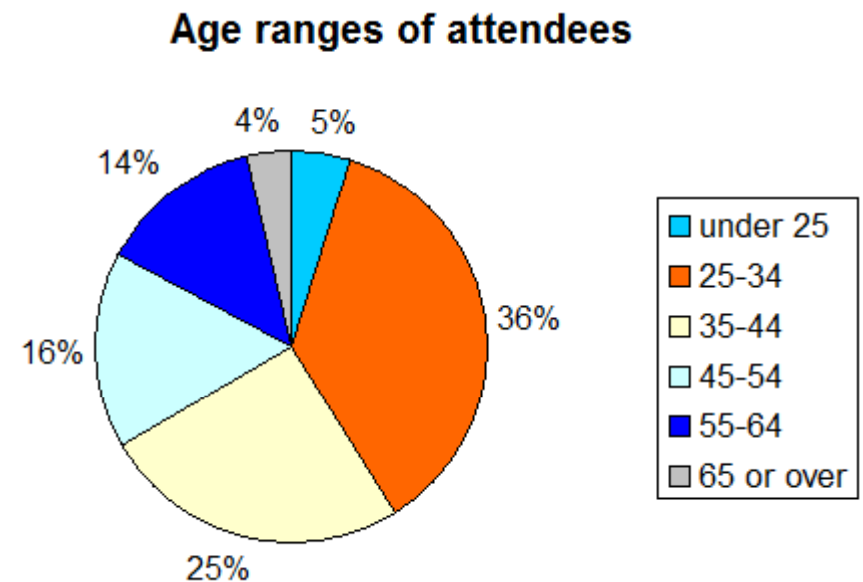
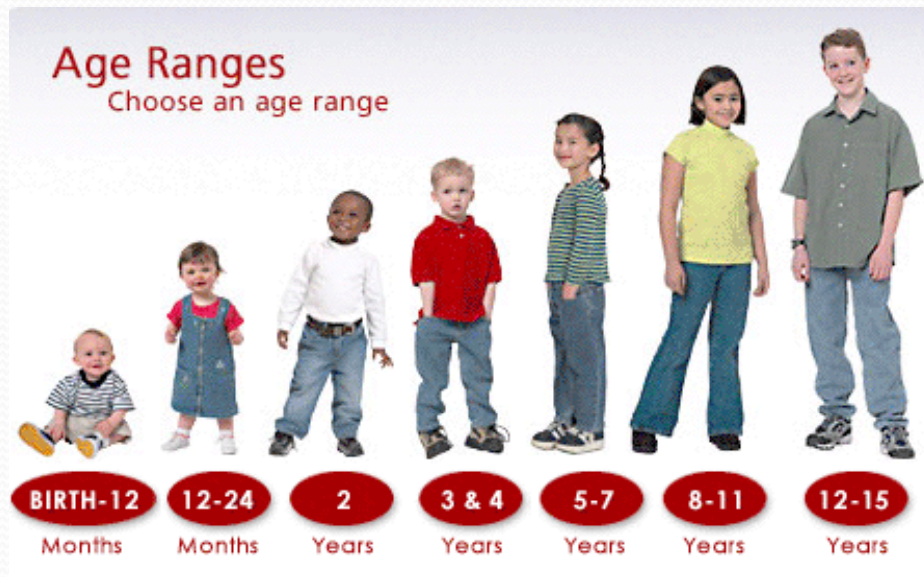
- Most commonly used—scales of agreement, satisfaction

Facility / Service

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) The Library is a comfortable, clean, well-lit place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(2) The Library has sufficient evening and weekend hours of service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(3) Library resources are well arranged, with clear directions on finding them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(4) The Library provides adequate training on resources and databases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Ratio

- EX: Income, hours, age



Open ended

1. Cannot be answered with simple "yes" or "no"
2. Begin with words and phrases such as:
 - *Who?*
 - *What?*
 - *When?*
 - *Where?*
 - *Why?*
 - *How?*
 - *Tell me about...*
 - *Explain to me...*



Use a combination of question styles

- Mostly checklists, with one or two open-ended questions. This way you can get hard facts and supporting beliefs and feelings.

Improving your response rates

- The shorter your survey the better the response rate
- Make the questions relevant to your audience
- Third party endorsement



**LET'S
KEEP IT
> SHORT <**

Incentives



Use the results to

Evaluate

Improve

Advocate

Save the galaxy



We can do this!

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