

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

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Questionnaire Design

presented to:

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# Introduction

- ❖ This chapter is about turning a list of questions into a finished questionnaire to which people can respond easily and accurately.
- ❖ A good questionnaire minimize respondent burden, decrease time required by respondent and lastly shows respect for them.
- ❖ Questionnaires may of three types: mail, telephone, and face-to-face and each rely on a different way of communicating.



# Mail questionnaire

- Mail questionnaire are unique because they stand on their own. No interviewer is present to convince respondents that they should fill out the questionnaire.
- Motivating people to respond is one of the important goals in designing mail questionnaires.
- A mail questionnaire should not be too difficult or take too long.

# A good mail questionnaire

- ✓ In a mail survey the visual impact is critical
- ✓ It should have consistent instructions
- ✓ Instructions should be as many as necessary
- ✓ They should be laid out clearly and exactly where they apply.
- ✓ The front of a questionnaire should attract people's interest.



# Format and printing

- The mail survey consists of :
  - The front cover: use the front cover to make the questionnaire look interesting.
  - It conveys the idea that someone has worked hard to develop the questionnaire.
  - People remember unusual covers.

# Front cover

- ❑ a well-designed cover includes only four items:
  - An informative title that motivates respondents to open the questionnaire,
  - A graphic design or illustration that helps identify the survey,
  - The name of the study's sponsor, and
  - The address where the questionnaire is to be returned.



**Opinions  
on**

**Drug  
Abuse**

**A Survey  
of  
Residents**

**in  
Spokane  
County**

*Fall 1989*

Please return your completed questionnaire  
in the enclosed envelope to:

**The Social and Economic Sciences Research Center**

**Washington State University • Pullman, WA 99164-4014**

# Front Cover

- ▶ Study title: it should be clear and to the point. Good titles are memorable but they should not threaten, mislead, suggest bias, or sound academic.
- ▶ Graphic design: it adds interest to the front cover. It can be simple or complex and need not symbolize the study topic.
- ▶ Name of sponsor and return address: this information is important. If a respondent loses the reply envelope and cover letter that comes with the questionnaire, he or she needs to know where to return the completed form.



# The back cover

- ❑ The back cover should contain:
  - An invitation to make comments,
  - Plenty of blank space where the respondent can write,
  - A thank you for completing and returning the questionnaire.
  
- ❑ Sensitive questions about income, political party, or religion, for example, are normally placed near the end of the questionnaire.

Your comments will be appreciated, either here or in a separate envelope.

*[The content of this box is extremely faint and illegible, appearing to be a questionnaire or survey form.]*

Thank you for your help.

*Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to:*  
**SOCIAL & ECONOMIC SCIENCES RESEARCH CENTER**  
Washington State University  
Pullman, WA 99164-4014



36. Which of the following categories best describes your yearly total household income?  
*Circle one answer.*

- 1) less than \$ 5,000
- 2) \$ 5,000 - 9,999
- 3) \$10,000 - 14,999
- 4) \$15,000 - 24,999
- 5) \$25,000 - 49,999
- 6) \$50,000 or more

37. Which of the following categories best describes your racial or ethnic identification?  
*Circle one answer.*

- 1) BLACK
- 2) CHICANO OR HISPANIC
- 3) NATIVE AMERICAN (American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut)
- 4) WHITE
- 5) ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
- 6) OTHER --Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

38. If you would like to make comments on health care delivery in your community, please do so. *(If more space is needed, continue on another page.)*

**Thank you for your help.**

Please return your questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to:

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Washington State University  
Pullman, Washington 99164-4014

# Between the questionnaires

- ❖ Overall ordering of the questionnaire: respondents are told in the cover letter what the study is about and why they should respond.
- The questions that go last are as important as those that go first.
- Put questions on the same subject together.
- Take advice of potential respondents if you have trouble ordering topics within.
- Group questions that are similar in structure.



# The first question

☞ No question gets more scrutiny than the very first one or two. In the first question :

- ▶ Don't ask something open-minded
- ▶ Don't ask something difficult
- ▶ Don't ask something embarrassing
- ▶ Don't ask people directly about themselves

# Individual page design

- ❑ The final step is taking all the questions and fitting them on individual pages. A questionnaire page should have the following features:
  - ∅ A vertical flow is established.
  - ∅ The questions are in bold type and the answers in light.
  - ∅ For questions that don't apply to everyone, the 'skip' arrows are used to show people where to go next.



## Contd..

- ∅ Brief instructions are given exactly where the information will be used.
- ∅ Numbers are used for answer categories rather than boxes or fill-in-the-blank lines.
- ∅ Answer choices are written in such a way that at least one applies to every respondent.
- ∅ Questions are made to fit each page so that respondents will not overlook anything.

# Pretesting a mail survey

- o The purpose of Pretesting a questionnaire is to find out whether it works to your satisfaction or has problems. The information you get from Pretesting is:
  - Is each question getting the information it is needed to get?
  - Are all the words understood?
  - Are the questions interpreted the same by all respondents?

## Contd..

- Do all close-ended questions have an answer that applies to each respondent?
- Are the questions answered correctly and in a way that can be understood?
- Are skip patterns followed correctly?
- Does any part of the questionnaire suggest bias on your part?

# Telephone questionnaire

- A telephone questionnaire depend entirely on verbal communication and must sound rather than look professional.
- Even the best mail questionnaires don't work on telephone.
- In a telephone survey, the person being interviewed can and often does ask for more information.
- Computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) systems are efficient but also expensive.

The park's ecosystem would be more complete if wolves were reintroduced.....

Visitors would have an opportunity to hear wolves howl.

People are responsible for the wolves' demise and therefore have a responsibility to reintroduce the species.....

Visitors should have an opportunity to see wolves in their natural habitat.....

A natural predator like the wolf would help keep elk and deer populations at a level that the park could support.....

Yellowstone Park is an important test case that would teach us how to reintroduce species in controlled situations.....



Goal	Possible goals	Not important ▽	Somewhat important ▽	Very important ▽
A	The park's ecosystem would be more complete if wolves were reintroduced.....	1	2	3
B	Visitors should have an opportunity to hear wolves howl.....	1	2	3
C	People are responsible for the wolves' demise and therefore have a responsibility to reintroduce the species.....	1	2	3
D	Visitors should have an opportunity to see wolves in their natural habitat.....	1	2	3
E	A natural predator like the wolf would help keep elk and deer populations at a level that the park can support.....	1	2	3
F	Yellowstone Park is an important test case that would teach us how to reintroduce species in controlled situations.....	1	2	3

Now, of the reasons we have just discussed, which one do you think is the most important? If you like, I would be happy to read the list again. (INTERVIEWER: PUT GOAL LETTER IN BOX.)

Most important

Which one is the second most important?

Second most important

Which one is the third most important?

Third most important



# Wording the questions

- ✓ One of the most important principle for writing a telephone survey questions is '*keep them short and simple*'.
- ✓ Questions should have a short series of answer choices.
- ✓ When it is necessary *to have* many answer choices, use a two step approach.
- ✓ ask respondents to rate each item individually and then, at the end of the question, to choose the most important.

# The interviewer's introduction

- The interviewer should completely identify himself or the survey. it should include:
  - The interviewer's name
  - The organization and city from which he is calling
  - A one sentence description of the survey, and
  - A conservative estimate of how long the interview will take.



# Ordering the questions

- Start with questions that are topically related to what the respondent already knows the interview is about and then move to the subjects that are less related.
- Group questions according to same topic
- Group questions according to same structure.
- Avoid situations where respondents have to repeat information they provided earlier.

# The first question

- ▶ The first question should be close ended with no more than two or three answer choices.
- ▶ The pace with which the questions are asked on the phone is important.
- ▶ Do not insert critical questions at the start of the interview.

# Face-to-face questionnaires

- ❖ Face-to-face questionnaires are similar to the telephone surveys.
- ❖ Face-to-face surveys are different from telephone surveys in:
  - o Interviewers have personal contact with respondents
  - o Interviewers can use visual aids to make sensitive questions less threatening or simple.

## Contd..

- ✓ Respondents like to follow along the interviewer on a blank copy of the questionnaire.
- ✓ Put see-through plastic covers on the pages so people will not mark their answers on the questionnaire.
- ✓ Put attractive cover on face-to-face questionnaires, much the same as we do in mail surveys.



**QUESTIONS**