ClearlyBetter

A publication committed to identifying, developing, and promoting effective communication tools for organizations and individuals

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4 Easy Tips

Take the Pain Out of Your Questionnaires

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Surveys, questionnaires, and forms can be valuable tools, giving your organization inexpensive and convenient means to collect information from your clients, customers, or staff. Many companies and government agencies regularly develop surveys to gauge how their customers feel about particular issues, to measure how specific programs have served their target audiences, or to gather constituents' perceptions about policies, publications, and services.

Designed and developed effectively, these useful documents can gather the data you need while making the experience pain-free and effort-less for your respondents. People would probably be more inclined to accommodate your needs if you only made it easy for them to do so.

Unfortunately, many organizations never think beyond their own immediate research needs. They spend countless hours designing the research plan; they agonize over the sampling techniques and the composition of the group of respondents. However, they seldom consider that most respondents are busy people who would be burdened by overly complex surveys and unnecessarily difficult forms.

Few organizations understand that by carefully considering the phrasing of the questions, the layout and design of the page, and the organization of the data elements, they could create cohesive surveys that people would find inviting and hassle-free. Clear documents that carefully integrate conversational, direct language with clean, functional design have been proven to help people understand information easily, help people do their jobs better, and often give people a more positive impression of the company that took the time to explain things in a comfortable, considerate way.

People are naturally more willing to fill out a clear, clean form. By making your surveys easy for your respondents, you can increase goodwill while you boost your response rate. You can start by following these four easy tips…

Following these tips will lead to increased responses, less follow-up, and clearer results. They'll save you time and money.

These tips also apply to employee and customer forms, inquiry letters, and more. Contact us at Clearly@aol.com to learn how we may be able to help you make your communication efforts clearly better.

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Align your answers vertically so that all the choices are visible at a glance. Don't force people to read across the entire page to answer your questions.

Section 1: Demographics

1. **First, what is your job title or position within your organization?**

   _____

   _____

2. **What is the service focus of your organization? Is it…** *(PLEASE MARK ALL THAT APPLY)*

   ☐ Education ☐ Public Safety ☐ Environmental ☐ Health ☐ Housing ☐ Other Human Needs

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. **Now I am going to ask you a few questions about your organizations relationship with the Corporation. Please answer yes or no. Is your organization…**

   a) A current "host" for Corporation service(s)/program(s)? ..... _____ Yes _____ No _____ DO NOT KNOW

   b) A former (but not current) "host"?..... _____ Yes _____ No _____ DO NOT KNOW

   c) A Corporation grantee? ..... _____ Yes _____ No _____ DO NOT KNOW

   d) Are your: Beneficiaries/members direct customers of Corporation programs? ..... _____ Yes _____ No _____ DO NOT KNOW

   e) Are your: Beneficiaries/members impacted by Corporation programs? .... _____ Yes _____ No _____ DO NOT KNOW

   f) Does your organization have a similar mission/goal to the Corporations' (it is a part of the national service network) but also have no relationship with the Corporation?..... _____ Yes _____ No

Before

Section 1: Demographics

1. **First, what is your job title or position within *your* organization?**

   _____

2. **What is the *service focus* of your organization? Is it…** [*Mark all that apply*]

   ❑ Education
   ❑ Public safety
   ❑ Environmental
   ❑ Health
   ❑ Housing
   ❑ Other human needs_____

   _____

3. **Now I'm going to ask you a few questions about your organization's relationship with the Corporation. Please answer *Yes or No*.**

   Is your organization…

   a) A current "host" for Corporation services or programs?
      ❑ Yes
      ❑ No
      ❑ Don't know

   b) A former (but not current) "host?"
      ❑ Yes
      ❑ No
      ❑ Don't know

   c) A Corporation grantee?
      ❑ Yes
      ❑ No
      ❑ Don't know

   d) Are your beneficiaries or members direct customers of Corporation programs?
      ❑ Yes
      ❑ No
      ❑ Don't know

   e) Are your beneficiaries or members affected by Corporation programs?
      ❑ Yes
      ❑ No
      ❑ Don't know

   f) Does your organization have a similar mission or goal to the Corporations' (it is a part of the national service network) but also has no relationship with the Corporation?
      ❑ Yes
      ❑ No
      ❑ Don't know

After

2

Landscape pages are often unwieldy and difficult to handle. By changing the page orientation, you can make the survey more inviting and easier to fill out.

FIRST DAY | ENTER DAY OF THE WEEK

1 ☐ None 2 ☐ TR | PROCESSING USE 3 ☐ BD 4 ☐ VC | 1 ☐ S 2 ☐ M 3 ☐ T 4 ☐ W 5 ☐ Th 6 ☐ F 7 ☐ Sa

a Line number	PROCESSING USE	b List all meals, snacks, and beverages purchased	c Total cost Include tax and tip		d Were alcoholic beverages included in total cost? Mark 00 one		e If "YES" – How much?	
		Part 1 – Food Away From Home	Dollars	Cents	Yes	No	Dollars	Cents
		FAST FOOD, TAKE-OUT, DELIVERY, CONCESSION STANDS, BUFFET and CAFETERIA – You pay BEFORE eating/drinking.						
101					1	2		
102					1	2		
103					1	2		
104					1	2		
105					1	2		
106					1	2		
107					1	2		
108					1	2		
109					1	2		
110					1	2		
		FULL-SERVICE MEALS, SNACKS, DRINKS – You pay AFTER eating/drinking.						
111					1	2		
112					1	2		
113					1	2		
114					1	2		
115					1	2		
116					1	2		
117					1	2		
118					1	2		
119					1	2		

a Line number	PROCESSING USE	b List all meals, snacks, and beverages purchased	c Total cost Include tax and tip		d Were alcoholic beverages included in total cost? Mark 00 one		e If "YES" – How much?	
		Part 1 – Food Away From Home	Dollars	Cents	Yes	No	Dollars	Cents
		VENDING MACHINES and MOBILE VENDORS – Include vending machines and carts and trucks that move from place to place.						
120					1	2		
121					1	2		
122					1	2		
123					1	2		
124					1	2		
125					1	2		
126					1	2		
127					1	2		
		EMPLOYER and SCHOOL CAFETERIAS – Include only food/drinks bought at a school or employer cafeteria.						
128								
129								
130								
131								
		BOARD or MEAL PLAN FOOD						
132								
133								
		CATERED AFFAIRS						
134					1	2		
135					1	2		
136					1	2		

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Before

3

Open up your pages. Too many lines and boxes confine the space and make the survey appear imposing.

Food and Drinks Purchased from Food Service Places

Fast food, take-out, delivery, cafeterias — *Where you pay BEFORE you eat or drink*

No.	Day	What did you buy?	Total cost? With tax and tip dollars	cents	Were alcoholic drinks part of the total cost? Yes	No	If so, how much? dollars	cents
	Wed.	Lunch from drive-through	5	77	☐	☒		
101					☐	☐		
102					☐	☐		
103					☐	☐		
104					☐	☐		
105					☐	☐		
106					☐	☐		
107					☐	☐		
108					☐	☐		
109					☐	☐		
110					☐	☐		
111					☐	☐		
112					☐	☐		
113					☐	☐		
114					☐	☐		
115					☐	☐		
116					☐	☐		
117					☐	☐		
118					☐	☐		
119					☐	☐		

Examples

Fast food lunch at drive-through

Pizza delivery for dinner

Popcorn at the movies (snack)

Snack from concession stand at a ball game

Take-out dinner Chinese food

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After

4

Make follow-up questions clear by placing them with the answer to which they apply.

Now we have some questions about other characteristics of your proposed ATP project.

3. Would you expect your proposed ATP project to result in cost savings at your company? *[Try to answer based on how you thought about your project at the time you proposed it to ATP].*

- ❑ Yes → What do you think would be the annual cost savings 5 years after
- ❑ No the project is completed? _____ Dollars
- ❑ Don't Know

Before

3. Aside from revenue impact, **would you expect your proposed ATP project to lead to cost savings at your company?**

(Try to answer based on how you thought about your project when you proposed it to ATP.)

- ❑ Yes… What do you think would be the annual cost savings 5 years after the project is completed?

  $_____ ❑ thousand ❑ million
- ❑ No
- ❑ Don't know

After