

WHAT ARE YOU ASKING?!
AN INTRODUCTION TO
SURVEY ITEM DEVELOPMENT

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AGENDA

- Introductions & overview
- Item development presentation
- Questions
- Pairs edit survey (yours or sample)
- Group reflection

RESEARCH PROCESS

- Research question
- Literature review
- Study design
- Data collection
- Data analysis
- Reporting

TOPICS NOT BEING COVERED

- Deciding whether to use surveys as a data collection method
- Sampling
- Overall survey design
- Survey format and administration
- Survey testing
- Analyzing survey data

SURVEY TERMS & PARTS

 NATIONAL MUSEUM of WILDLIFE ART
2009 Visitor Survey

Why did you decide to come to the Museum?

What topics are of interest to you? (check all that apply)

Art history Wildlife History Nature & Conservation Other _____

Please rate your knowledge of the following:

	<input type="checkbox"/> Novice	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Expert
Art	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
History	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

Which galleries did you find most engaging? Why?

Were you satisfied with the way the information was presented? Yes No
If not, why?

Were you satisfied with the wall labels? Were they the right length? Were they easy to read?

Please evaluate your comfort moving through the galleries:

- Did you ever get lost or find the layout disorienting? Yes No
- Are more directional signs needed? Yes No
- Were the galleries comfortable for you (temperature, seating, etc.)? Yes No
- How could we improve these features?

Did your experiences meet your expectations?

What was surprising or unexpected?

What questions are you left with?

How did you hear about the museum?

Internet Site Newspaper Travel guide Word of mouth eNews Other _____

Thank you for helping us improve the visitor experience in our galleries!

Items

Response Anchors

Response Scale

TYPES OF ITEMS

- Open-Ended Items

- Please describe how it felt to use the microscope.
- What do you think is most important to know about recycling?
- What, if anything, else would you like to mention about the exhibition?

- Closed-Ended Items

- How interested are you in viewing Italian Renaissance art?

Not at all interested Somewhat interested Quite interested Very interested

- As a result of this workshop, do you feel that you know how to make a functioning paper airplane? ____yes ____no
- About how frequently do you visit a zoo, in an average year?
 - A. More than 4 times per year
 - B. 1-4 times per year
 - C. Less than once per year

OPEN-ENDED VS. CLOSED-ENDED

- Are more qualitative in nature
 - Allow participants to respond in their own words
 - Can provide broader insight into the experience
 - May reveal unanticipated findings
 - Take longer to input and analyze
- Are more quantitative in nature
 - Have more consistency in responses
 - May be limiting in the information they provide
 - Can be used more easily in larger samples
 - Are simpler and faster to input and analyze
 - May require statistical knowledge to properly analyze

SURVEY ITEMS: CONTENT

RESEARCH QUESTION TO INDIVIDUAL ITEM

- Research Questions:
 - *What topics related to Heritage Museum & Gardens do visitors want to know more about?*
 - *Do different types of visitors have different topic preferences?*
- Possible Survey Items:
 - Rank the following topics from most to least interesting to you. (then list topics)
 - What, if anything, about gardens are you curious about?
 - Have you ever visited Heritage Museum & Gardens before? Yes/No

ASK ONE QUESTION AT A TIME

Avoid double-barreled items (asking two questions within one)

– Double-barreled:

Did you purchase something in the gift shop or restaurant?

– Better:

Did you purchase something in the gift shop?

Did you purchase something in the restaurant?

LIMIT COMPLEXITY

- Avoid complex sentences
- Avoid blanks in the middle of items
 - *Avoid*: I spent _____ of my time in the exhibit reading labels.
None A little Some Quite a bit All
 - *Better*: How much of your time in the exhibit did you spend reading labels?
None A little Some Quite a bit All
- Avoid cognitively taxing items like computations or long-term memories
 - *Complex*: In the last year, how many hours did you spend on the Internet?
 - *Better*: In an average day, how many hours do you spend on the Internet?

INCREASE CLARITY

- Highlight important terms using **bold** or underline
- Ensure the visitor has enough information to respond
- Consider what you really need to know

SURVEY ITEMS: WORDING

WATCH YOUR WORDS

- Use conversational structure
- Avoid jargon, technical language, and acronyms
- Avoid loaded or emotional language that might bias responses
- Balance questions/provide counterarguments
 - Emphasizes one side of the issue: *Do you support offering iPads in the galleries?* _____ *Yes* _____ *No*
 - More balanced: *Would you prefer:*
_____ *iPads not be offered in the galleries*
_____ *iPads be offered in the galleries*

AVOID ASSUMPTIONS

Do not assume that visitors engaged in all aspects of an exhibit or program:

- *What in the exhibit was fun for you?*
- *Did you enjoy the video?*

Better:

- *What, if anything, in the exhibit was fun for you?*
- *Did you watch the video? If so, did you enjoy it?*


BE SPECIFIC

Include a time frame or conditions where relevant

- *Vague*: Do you think you will visit again?
- *Specific time*: Do you think you will visit again during the next year?
- *Specific condition*: Do you think you will visit for the next family day?

SURVEY ITEMS: RESPONSES

CLOSED-ENDED RESPONSES

- Options
 - Multiple choice (select one or select all that apply)
 - Dichotomous (yes/no, agree/disagree)
 - Ratings
 - Rankings
 - Vignettes/Projective Items
 - Visual analog 
- Consider primacy effect – when reading, people remember the first thing they saw more than the rest

CLOSED-ENDED RESPONSES: RATINGS

- Best suited to measure attitudes
- Use 5-7 response anchors for unipolar concepts

Never *Rarely* *Sometimes* *Often* *Always*

Do Not *Slightly* *Somewhat* *Strongly* *Completely*
Agree *Agree* *Agree* *Agree* *Agree*

- Use 5-9 response anchors for bipolar concepts

Strongly *Disagree* *Somewhat* *Neither* *Agree* *Somewhat* *Agree* *Strongly*
Disagree *Disagree* *nor Disagree* *Agree* *Agree*

DEMOGRAPHIC ITEMS

- Often closed-ended
- Put at end of survey
- Use ranges for potentially sensitive personal information like ages or incomes
 - Too Personal: *What is your annual household income?*

 - Better: *Which range includes your annual household income?*
 - \$0-29,999*
 - \$30,000-49,999*
 - \$50,000-69,999 (etc)*

QUESTIONS?

TRY IT OUT!

- With a partner, **edit** the items on a survey you brought or on our example survey
- Keep in mind the research question/s. The example survey's research questions are:
 - *What topics related to Heritage Museum & Gardens do visitors want to know more about?*
 - *Do different types of visitors have different topic preferences?*
- Feel free to refer to the **Tips Sheet** as you work

REFLECT

Please share any take-aways
from the experience

THANK YOU!

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