

# CCCC Survey Question Design Tips



Thinking of creating a survey? Here are some helpful pointers you can keep in mind when composing your survey questions.

## Structure

## Purpose

-  Are answer choices appropriate? (overlapping choices, etc.)
-  Have we already asked this question in a different survey?
-  Can a question be added to an existing survey, rather than creating a new one?
-  There are  good and  bad ways to write survey questions. See examples below.

-  Why are we asking these questions?
-  How are survey answers being used?
-  Who will have access and ownership over this survey data?
-  Are all questions necessary? If not, can the survey be made more concise?

 **You recently attended a webinar. Did you find the content interesting and useful?**

A. Yes      B. No

**Problems:** This is a "double barrel" question. Its asking for a yes/no response to two different questions: whether the content was interesting and whether it was useful, each of which may require different answers.

 **Solution:** This could be posed as two separate questions, as one more broadly defined question, i.e. "rate your overall experience with the webinar", or as an open-ended question asking users to describe their feelings about the webinar.

 **How would you rate the excellence of the webinar you attended?**

A. Excellent      B. Great      C. Poor

**Problems:** This question has multiple problems. It presumes that the webinar is "excellent" in the question, and the answer choices do not display a full range of choices, forcing the respondent to choose something that likely does not align with their true opinion.

 **Solution:** A Likert scale could be used for question answers, with the question reworded appropriately. Example:

Indicate whether you agree with the following:

"I thought the webinar I attended was excellent."

- A. Strongly Agree
- B. Agree
- C. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- D. Disagree
- E. Strongly Disagree



**I receive not too many communications.**

A. Agree    B. Disagree

**Problems:** This question presents a double negative and the wording would likely be confusing for respondents.



**Solution:**

How do you feel about the amount of communications that you receive from us?

- A. Far too many communications
- B. Too many communications
- C. Appropriate number of communications
- D. Not enough communications
- E. I have received no communication at all



**How old are you?**

- A. 0-20
- B. 20-30
- C. 30-40

**Problems:** This question has multiple problems. Answer choices overlap, so it is not clear which choice a 20-year-old or 30-year old should select. Additionally, there are no choices for anyone over the age of 40. That person would not be able to complete the survey.



**Solution:** More appropriate answer choices:

- A. 0-20
- B. 21-30
- C. 31-40
- D. 40+

## Tips & Tricks



**You can increase the response rate for your survey and improve the overall user experience by following a few basic guidelines:**



**Test your survey!** Viewing your survey from the front-end can help you catch errors you might not have otherwise noticed. Ask others to help you test it as well.



**Avoid using acronyms.** These are confusing when respondents don't know their meaning.



**Consider different question and answer formats.** Would it be better as a list? A fill in the blank? A scale with slider bars? A matrix? Focus on ease of completion for the user.



**Tell respondents *why* they're being surveyed.** When people understand that their data will be used for beneficial purposes, they are much more likely to volunteer information.