BASIC PRINCIPLES

OF SURVEY QUESTION DEVELOPMENT

The webinar will begin at 1 p.m. Eastern.
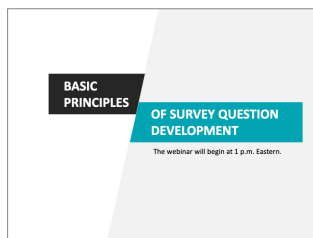

EvaluATE — Advancing excellence through evaluation
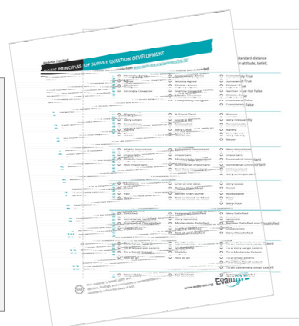
Webinars

Resource Library

Blog

ATE Survey Data

www.evalu-ate.org

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION
www.nsf.gov/ate

Materials

Slides

Handout

Recording

Introductions

| Mike Lesiecki | Lyssa Wilson Becho | Lori Wingate |

Luka Partners

EvaluATE

Behind the Scenes

| Emma Perk | Kelly Robertson | Sharon Gusky | Cynthia Williams | Janet Pinhorn | Shannon Payne |

EvaluATE
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

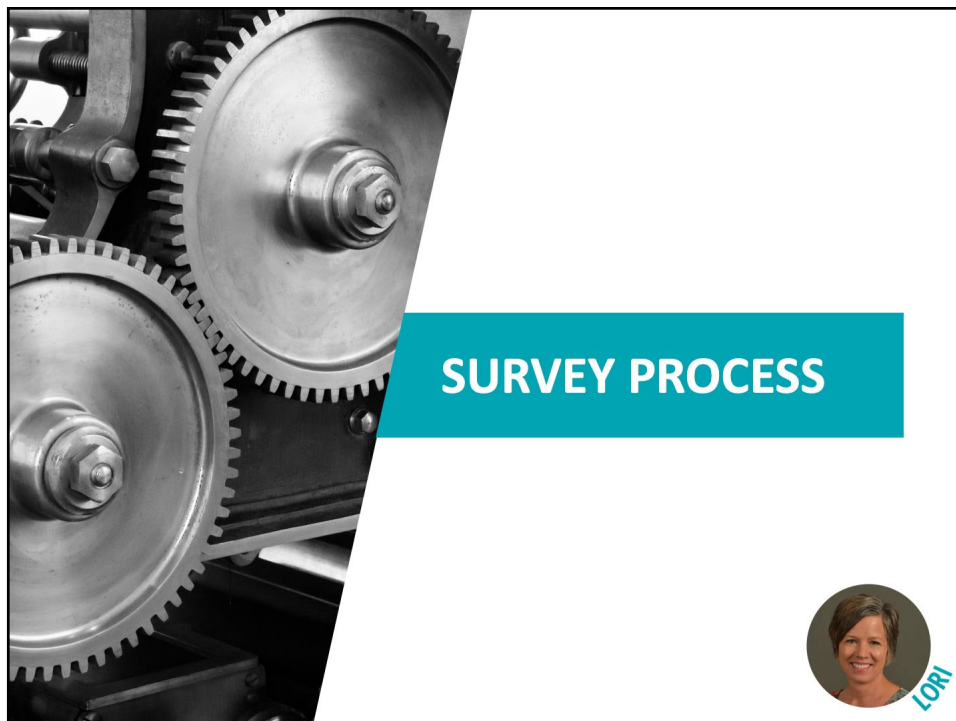NCCC NORTHWESTERN CONNECTICUT COMMUNITY COLLEGE · 1965 ·

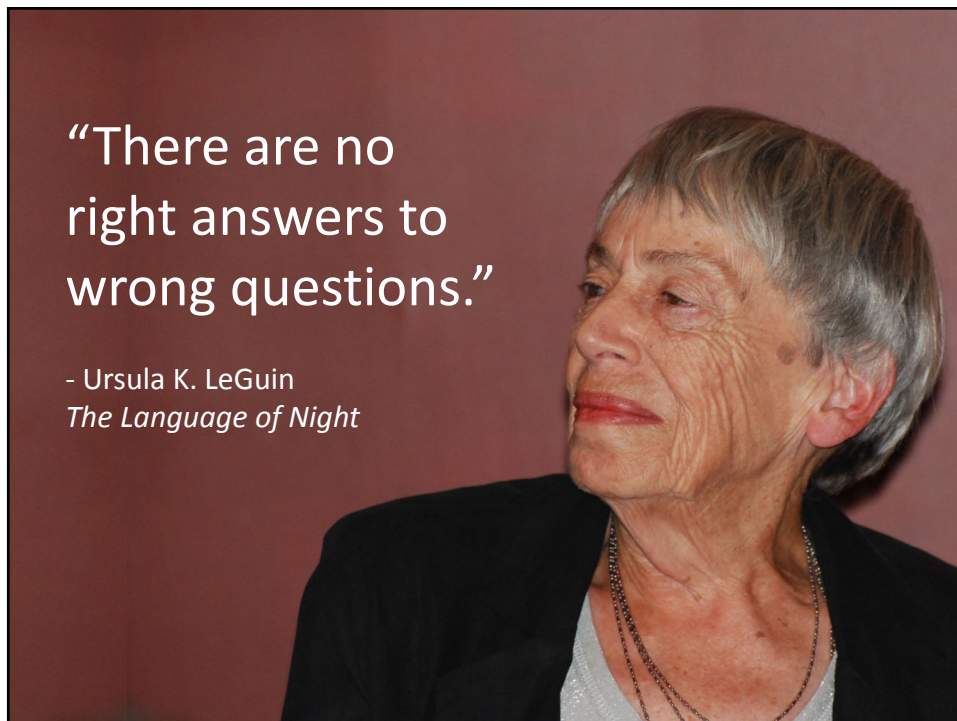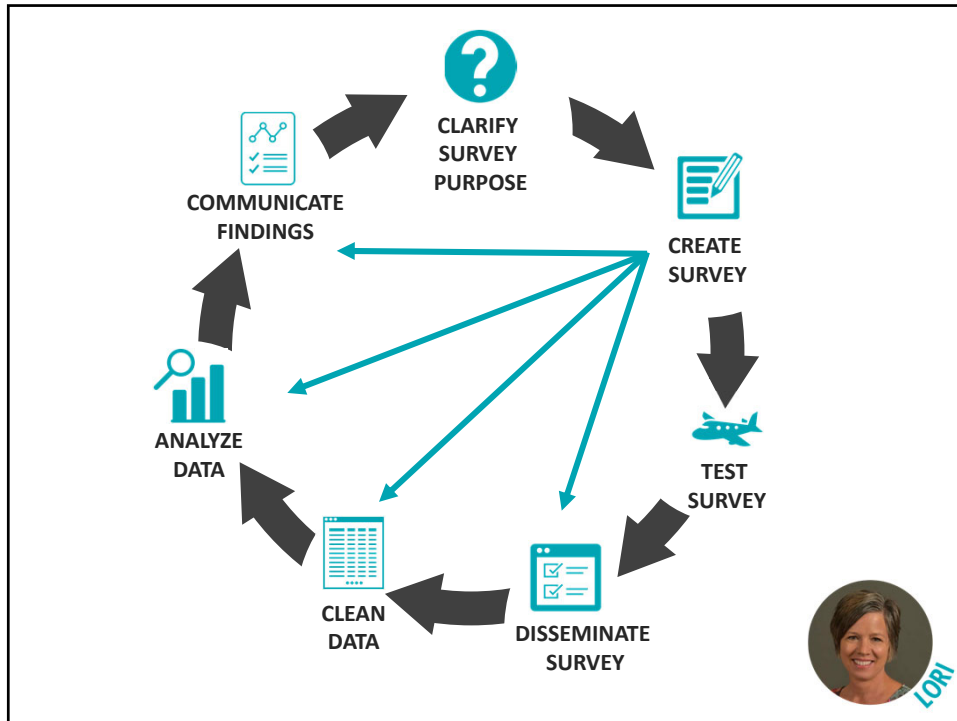Style Sheets EDITORIAL SERVICES

Luka Partners

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Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect the views of NSF.

SURVEY PROCESS

"There are no right answers to wrong questions."

- Ursula K. LeGuin
The Language of Night

Webinar Overview
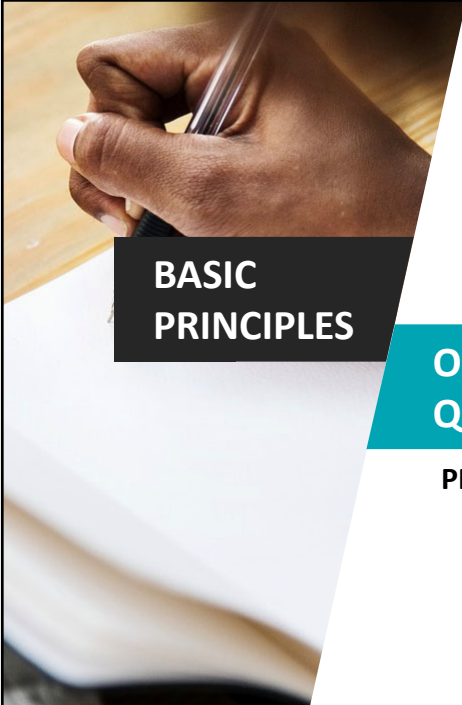
Principles 1-6

Question Break

Principles 7-12

Question Break

Feedback Survey

**BASIC
PRINCIPLES**

**OF GOOD SURVEY
QUESTIONS**

PRINCIPLES 1-6

1   What is your FTE? _____

Chat

→ **What does FTE mean?**

PRINCIPLE 1

Language is simple and direct; questions are free from jargon, acronyms, and ambiguous terms.

1   What is your FTE? _____

What does this mean?
Number of hours?
Percentage?
Percentage of 40 hours?

PRINCIPLE 1

Language is simple and direct; questions are free
from jargon, acronyms, and ambiguous terms.

LORI

---

1   What is your FTE? _____

How many hours per week
do you work in your job?

☐ hours

PRINCIPLE 1

Language is simple and direct; questions are free
from jargon, acronyms, and ambiguous terms.

LORI

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

2 How confident are you in your grant development and management skills?
- ○ Not at all confident
- ○ Somewhat confident
- ○ Very confident

PRINCIPLE 2

Each question asks about only one thing at a time.

2 How confident are you in your grant development and management skills?

- ○ Not at all confident
- ○ Somewhat confident
- ○ Very confident

Grant development
≠
Grant management

PRINCIPLE 2
Each question asks about only one thing at a time.

2 How confident are you in your grant development and management skills?

- ○ Not at all confident
- ○ Somewhat confident
- ○ Very confident

1 How confident are you in your **grant development** skills?

2 How confident are you in your **grant management** skills?

PRINCIPLE 2
Each question asks about only one thing at a time.

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

3 It will not be difficult to apply
what I learned in this webinar.
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

PRINCIPLE 3

No more than one negative term
is used in a question, including its
response options.

3 It will not be difficult to apply what I learned in this webinar.
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

"I disagree it will not be difficult to apply what I learned in this webinar."

PRINCIPLE 3

No more than one negative term is used in a question, including its response options.

3 It will not be difficult to apply what I learned in this webinar.
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

I will be able to apply what I learned in this webinar.
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly agree

PRINCIPLE 3

No more than one negative term is used in a question, including its response options.

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

4 What is your role in the
Advanced Technological
Education program?

○ Principal investigator (PI)
or co-PI
○ External evaluator
○ Project staff

PRINCIPLE 4

Response options are exhaustive;
all reasonable answers to a
question are included, with an
other option if needed.

4 What is your role in the
Advanced Technological
Education program?

○ Principal investigator (PI)
or co-PI
○ External evaluator
○ Project staff

PRINCIPLE 4
Response options are exhaustive; all reasonable answers to a
question are included, with an *other* option if needed.

LORI

---

4 What is your role in the
Advanced Technological
Education program?

○ Principal investigator (PI)
or co-PI
○ External evaluator
○ Project staff

→

What is your role in the
Advanced Technological
Education program?

○ Principal investigator (PI) or
co-PI
○ External evaluator
○ **Internal evaluator**
○ Project staff
○ **Grant specialist**
○ **Other: _____**
○ **Not applicable**

PRINCIPLE 4
Response options are exhaustive; all reasonable answers to a
question are included, with an *other* option if needed.

LORI

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

5   What is your age?

- ○ 20 or younger
- ○ 20-30
- ○ 30-40
- ○ 40-50
- ○ 50-60
- ○ 60 or older

PRINCIPLE 5

Response options are mutually exclusive; possible answers do not overlap.

---

5 What is your age?

- ○ 20 or younger
- ○ 20-30
- ○ 30-40
- ○ 40-50
- ○ 50-60
- ○ 60 or older

PRINCIPLE 5
Response options are mutually exclusive;
i.e., possible answers do not overlap.

5 What is your age?

- ○ 20 or younger
- ○ 20-30
- ○ 30-40
- ○ 40-50
- ○ 50-60
- ○ 60 or older

What is your age?

- ○ 20 or younger
- ○ 21-29
- ○ 30-39
- ○ 40-49
- ○ 50-59
- ○ 60 or older

PRINCIPLE 5
Response options are mutually exclusive;
i.e., possible answers do not overlap.

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Graduate students should be trained in research compliance.	○	○	○	○	○
I am very knowledgeable about research compliance.	○	○	○	○	○
I have received training about research compliance.	○	○	○	○	○

PRINCIPLE 6

Response options match question stem; all possible answers make sense with prompt.

6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Graduate students should be trained in research compliance.	**Agreement scales work well with opinion questions.**				
I am very knowledgeable about research compliance.	**Adverbs in question stem confound agreement scale**				
I have received training about research compliance.	**Action – *yes/no* or *frequency***				

PRINCIPLE 6

Response options match question stem; all possible answers make sense with prompt.

6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Graduate students should be trained in research compliance.	O	O	O	O	O
I am ~~very~~ knowledgeable about research compliance.	O	O	O	O	O
I have received training about research compliance.	O	O	O	O	O

PRINCIPLE 6

Response options match question stem; all possible answers make sense with prompt.

6

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Graduate students should be trained in research compliance.	○	○	○	○	○
I am knowledgeable about research compliance.	○	○	○	○	○

Have you completed a training session on research compliance in the past 12 months?   ○ Yes   ○ No

PRINCIPLE 6

Response options match question stem; all possible answers make sense with prompt.

LORI

BASIC PRINCIPLES

OF GOOD SURVEY QUESTIONS

PRINCIPLES 7-12

LYSSA

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

7 What is your opinion of the
overall quality of this webinar?

- ○ Met my expectations
- ○ Good
- ○ Very good
- ○ Exceeded my expectations

PRINCIPLE 7

Terms used in a response scale are consistent and balanced; they represent either a continuum of the same concept (unipolar) or of opposite concepts (bipolar).

7 What is your opinion of the overall quality of this webinar?

○ Met my expectations
○ Good
○ Very good
○ Exceeded my expectations

PRINCIPLE 7

Terms used in a response scale are consistent and balanced; they represent either a continuum of the same concept (unipolar) or of opposite concepts (bipolar).

LYSSA

---

7 What is your opinion of the overall quality of this webinar?

○ Met my expectations
○ Good
○ Very good
○ Exceeded my expectations

PRINCIPLE 7

Terms used in a response scale are consistent and balanced; they represent either a continuum of the same concept (unipolar) or of opposite concepts (bipolar).

LYSSA

7 What is your opinion of the
overall quality of this webinar?

- ○ Met my expectations
- ○ Good
- ○ Very good
- ○ Exceeded my expectations

→

- ○ **Very poor**
- ○ **Poor**
- ○ **Acceptable**
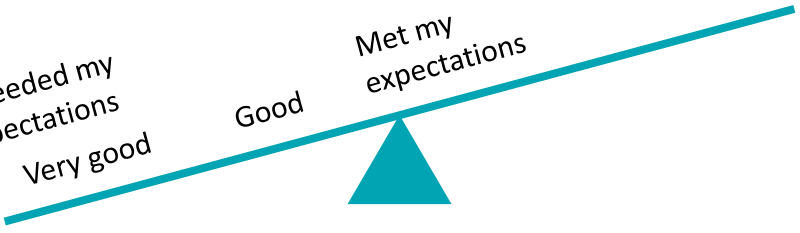- ○ **Good**
- ○ **Very good**

PRINCIPLE 7
Terms used in a response scale are consistent and
balanced; they represent either a continuum of the same
concept (unipolar) or of opposite concepts (bipolar).

LYSSA

Very good   Good   Acceptable   Poor   Very poor

PRINCIPLE 7
Terms used in a response scale are consistent and
balanced; they represent either a continuum of the same
concept (unipolar) or of opposite concepts (bipolar).

LYSSA

Exceeded my
expectations

Very good

Good

Met my
expectations

PRINCIPLE 7

Terms used in a response scale are consistent and
balanced; they represent either a continuum of the same
concept (unipolar) or of opposite concepts (bipolar).

LYSSA

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

8 How do you usually get to campus?

○ Bus
○ Car
○ Bike
○ Walk
○ Live on campus
○ Other _____
○ Don't know

LYSSA

PRINCIPLE 8

Don't know and *not applicable*
are included only when they are
reasonable responses.

---

8 How do you usually get to campus?

- ○ Bus
- ○ Car
- ○ Bike
- ○ Walk
- ○ Live on campus
- ○ Other _____
- ○ Don't know

PRINCIPLE 8

Don't know and *not applicable* are included only
when they are reasonable responses.

8 How do you usually get to campus?

- ○ Bus
- ○ Car
- ○ Bike
- ○ Walk
- ○ Live on campus
- ○ Other _____
- ○ ~~Don't know~~

PRINCIPLE 8

Don't know and *not applicable* are included only
when they are reasonable responses.

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

9a How welcome do underrepresented
students feel on your campus?

- ○ Not at all satisfied
- ○ Minimally satisfied
- ○ Moderately satisfied
- ○ Very satisfied

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

9b What do you think are the most important considerations when it comes to instructional design for adult learners?

LYSSA

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

9c How many ounces of water do you drink per day?

_____ oz

LYSSA

PRINCIPLE 9

Questions can be readily
answered by respondents.

9a How welcome do underrepresented
students feel on your campus? → **Requires sizable
inference**

9b What do you think are the most important
considerations when it comes to
instructional design for adult learners? → **Substantial
cognitive burden**

9c How many ounces of water do you
drink per day? → **Recall and
estimation challenge**

PRINCIPLE 9

Questions can be readily answered by respondents.

What problem(s) do you see in this question?
Use the chat to share your answer.

10 How long have you been an evaluator?

- ○ Less than 1 year
- ○ 1-5 years
- ○ 6-10 years
- ○ 11-15 years
- ○ 16 or more years

PRINCIPLE 10

All questions are appropriate for all respondents; branching is used when one or more questions are pertinent to only certain types of respondents.
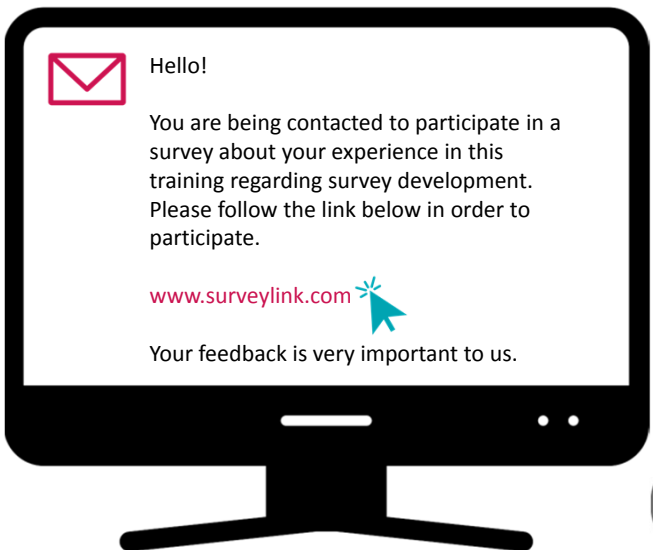
Are you an evaluator?
- No
- Yes

10

How long have you been an evaluator?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16 or more years

PRINCIPLE 10
All questions are appropriate for all respondents; branching is used when one or more questions are pertinent to only certain types of respondents.
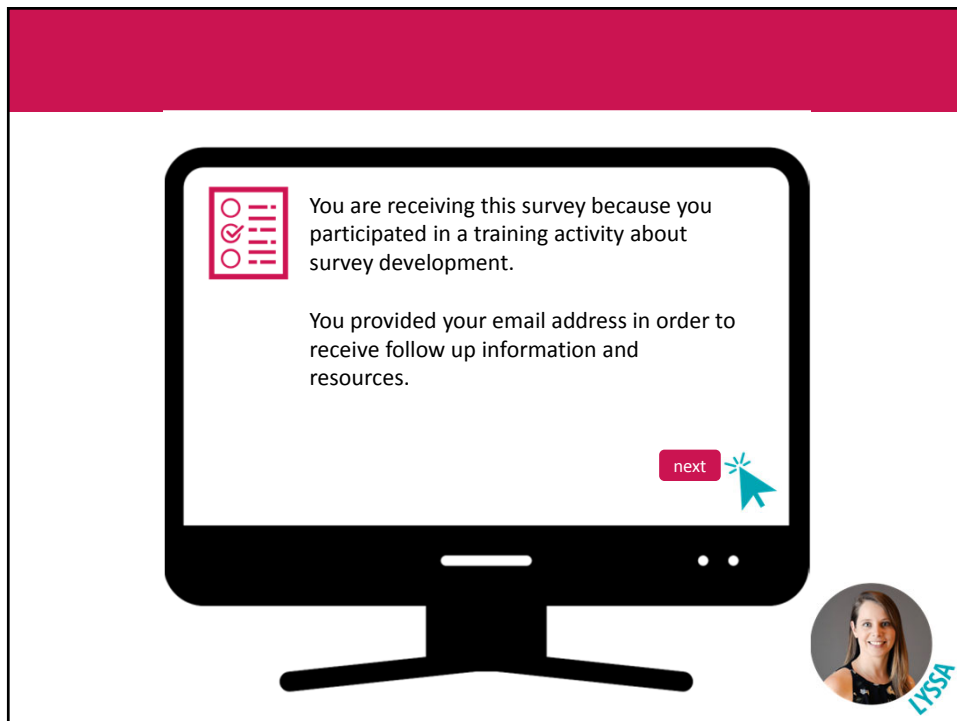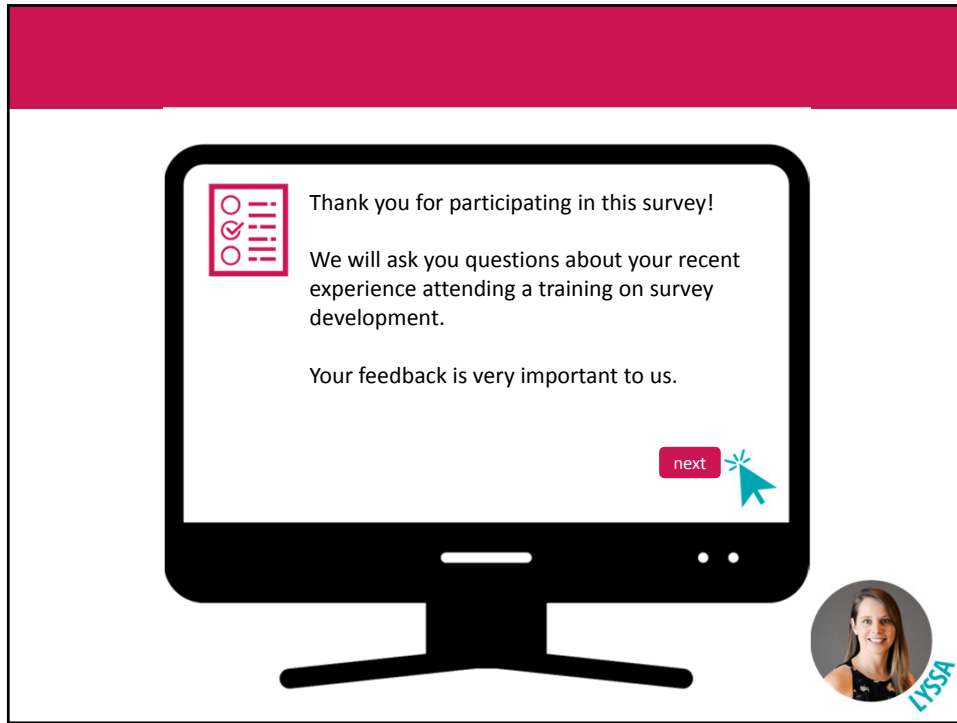
LYSSA

Hello!

You are being contacted to participate in a survey about your experience in this training regarding survey development. Please follow the link below in order to participate.

www.surveylink.com

Your feedback is very important to us.

LYSSA

Thank you for participating in this survey!

We will ask you questions about your recent experience attending a training on survey development.

Your feedback is very important to us.

next

You are receiving this survey because you participated in a training activity about survey development.

You provided your email address in order to receive follow up information and resources.

next

The next few questions will ask you about your experience, satisfaction, and learning during the training.

Please respond whether you agree or disagree with each statement using the following response options:
1 = Strongly agree (SA)
2 = Agree (A)
3 = Disagree (D)
4 = Strongly disagree (SD)

next

Question 1. This survey development training met my expectations.

1	2	3	4
SD	D	A	SA
○	○	○	○

Question 2. The instructor of the survey development training was engaging and knowledgeable.

1	2	3	4
SD	D	A	SA
○	○	○	○

next

PRINCIPLE 11

Entire questionnaire is as concise as possible; extraneous or duplicate information is omitted from questions, instructions, and communications.

Question 1. This survey development training met my expectations.

1 2 3 4
SD D A SA
○ ○ ○ ○

Question 2. The instructor of the survey development training was engaging and knowledgeable.

1 2 3 4
SD D A SA
○ ○ ○ ○

next

PRINCIPLE 11
Entire questionnaire is as concise as possible;
extraneous or duplicate information is omitted from
questions, instructions, and communications.

---

12 What is your racial/ethnic identity?
- African American / Black
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Pacific Islander / Alaska Native
- Multiracial
- White
- Prefer to self-identify: _____

What is your gender identity?
- Female
- Male
- Prefer to self-identify: _____

Am I planning to analyze survey results by racial or gender categories?

PRINCIPLE 12

All questions support the survey's purpose, which is aligned with a larger research or evaluation question.
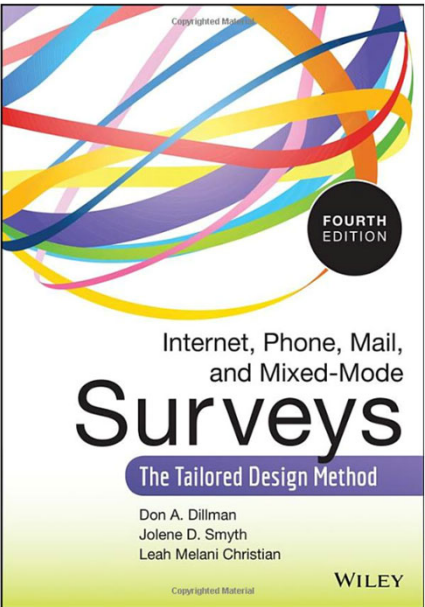
LYSSA

SURVEY PRESTING

SURVEY PRETESTING

Ways to pretest your survey:

- Checklists and assessment tools
- Expert review
- Think-aloud
- Focus group
- Pilot testing

OTHER RESOURCES

FOURTH EDITION

Internet, Phone, Mail, and Mixed-Mode
Surveys
The Tailored Design Method

Don A. Dillman
Jolene D. Smyth
Leah Melani Christian

WILEY

Internet, Phone, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design
Method by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014)

OTHER
RESOURCES

Designing Quality Survey Questions
by Robinson & Leonard (2018)