



Defining Survey Goals

The first step in utilizing the survey method is creating survey goals. In order to ask the right questions in the survey, having a clear definition of the survey goals is important.

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What Are Survey Goals?

Survey goals determine the “problem” of the survey or of the whole study itself. The goals of the survey [1] reflect the purpose of the study. The survey goals will help you administer the appropriate questions to the right target groups. They will guide you to include only the participants who can satisfy the criteria set in relation to the purpose of the survey.

Creating Survey Goals

In making appropriate and concise survey goals, the researcher should ask himself the following questions:

1. “What is the subject?”

(e.g. product, role, experience, method, etc)

2. “What do I want to know?”

(e.g. satisfaction with the product, effectiveness of the method, etc)

3. “Who should I ask?”

(e.g. customers, mothers, high school students, etc)

4. “To whom / what should I compare it?” (for comparative surveys)

(e.g. traditional method, existing product, etc)

Having a good survey goal is a favorable start in conducting a survey. Here are some examples of bad survey goals and techniques on how to transform them into good survey goals:

Example 1: To determine what customers think about the new product.

Since this kind of goal calls for the present attitudes of the participants towards the subject, conducting a series of one-on-one interviews is a more reliable data gathering method than doing surveys or other structured ways of collecting data.

Example 2: To learn about the effectiveness of the product.

Surveys that inquire about the effectiveness, value, competence, efficiency and other similar aspects concerning the subject can be better studied upon the inclusion of another variable to which the subject can be compared with. For instance, you may ask the participants to compare a new drug for cough and a popular herb used to treat the same condition. This way, the participants will be able to precisely determine the effectiveness of the product.

Example 3: To gather information on the satisfaction with the grading system.

This kind of survey goal can benefit from narrowing down the statement into details.

Connecting the Goal and the Method

After writing down several goals related to your study, ask yourself whether the goals can be fully satisfied through conducting a survey.

The goals may be achieved better through alternative data gathering methods. To do this, you should check your web analytics, CRM or other systems that might be storing information pointing to your goals, rather than conduct a new survey to acquire those data. If doing a literature or system review proves that no existing data can be found, then conducting survey is the best option to fulfill your research goals.

Source URL: <https://explorable.com/defining-survey-goals>

Links:

[1] <http://blog.vovici.com/blog/bid/18186/Good-Surveys-start-with-Good-Goals>, [2] <https://explorable.com/users/sarah>, [3] <https://explorable.com/defining-survey-goals>