



Increasing Survey Response Rates ^[1]

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There are many strategies and techniques that you can utilize in order to increase the survey response rates. These tactics vary from the way you create the questions to the manner by which you approach the respondents.

Boosting the survey response rates is necessary to complete the data gathering process in a survey or a research study. The higher the response rates, the more data can be analysed ^[3] and interpreted ^[4]. Towards the end of the survey, this eventually lead to the greater advancement of the object of the survey (e.g. a product, a controversial issue, etc.) based on the target population ^[5]'s perceptions, beliefs and behaviours.

The following are proven strategies that increase survey response rates:

1. Choose the Appropriate Type of Survey.

Each type of survey differs in terms of their characteristics, advantages and disadvantages ^[6]. For instance, the online survey method ^[7] is ideal if your target population includes people age 13 to 18 years old, but not if the survey requires elderly people since the latter don't usually have an access to the Internet. Selecting the right type of survey based on your survey goals is crucial in achieving your expected survey response rates.

2. Follow the Kiss Principle.

"KISS" stands for "Keep It Short and Simple". Create a questionnaire ^[8] that is brief and concise and does not contain complicated questions. Such complex questions ^[9] include lengthy or too many open-ended questions. In terms of conducting an interview survey ^[10], make the interview as structured as possible by means of asking thought-out questions and only a few probing ones. When it comes to the cover page, only include a brief greeting, information about you and your organization, the purpose of the survey ^[11] and the pledge of anonymity or confidentiality ^[12] (optional).

3. Add a Personal Touch to the Invitations.

Studies show that there is an increase of 5% or more in the survey response rates when the invitations in email, web-based, or interview surveys contain personal salutation pertaining to the potential respondent. Instead of "Dear Subscriber", respondents prefer to be addressed as "Dear Mr.Smith" by the researcher or interviewer.

4. Provide Incentives.

Nowadays, people are more likely to respond to surveys if there is a 'concrete' benefit from the survey for their participation and completion. The incentives, which raise response rates by 10% to 15 %, can be in cash or in-kind. In web surveys [7], participants are given a cash incentive that range from \$1 to \$50. Some give incentives lower than \$1 (e.g. 1-minute surveys) or higher than \$50 ('VIP' surveys or those answered by medical professionals, degree holders, etc.). In-kind incentives can be gift certificates, movie passes, small tokens, prizes, and others.

5. Follow Up and Remind the Respondents.

According to the study conducted by Quintessential, an increase in survey response rates may come from reminding non-participating recipients or non-completing respondents within 10 days after sending the first invitation.

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