Surveys

TELL US ABOUT YOUR VISIT WITHIN 72 HOURS ON OUR NEW SHORTER SURVEY:

User ID: [redacted]
Password: [redacted]

For a monthly chance to win:
One $25 TGT GiftCard national sweepstakes
Six $25 Instant TGT GiftCard winners/state

EN UN PLAZO DE 72 HORAS,
CUENTENOS SOBRE SU ULTIMA VISITA USANDO
NUESTRA NUEVA Y MAS CORTA ENCUESTA:
www.informtarget.com

[Image of construction survey equipment]

SURVEY WORK AHEAD

[Image of person looking through equipment]
Understanding Your Landscape
Definition of Surveys

- “systematic method for gathering information from a sample of entities…” (Groves et al., 2009, [p. 2])
- “system for collecting information” (Sue & Ritter, 2007, p. 1)
- Not just a questionnaire! (de Vaus, 2014; Sue & Ritter, 2007
  - Total Survey Design (Sue & Ritter, 2007: See Page 2)
  - Interviews, observations, content analysis (de Vaus, 2014)
To Survey or Not to Survey...

...why is this important?

- Validity and reliability
- Survey error
  - Response rates
  - Bias
    - Response and Nonresponse
Survey Errors

- Measurement
- Processing
- Coverage
- Sampling
- Nonresponse
- Adjustment

Figure adapted from Groves et al., 2009; Adams, 2010.
The Problem

- Over surveying
  AKA Survey Fatigue
- Lack of data use

- Meaningless survey questions
  - Wording by questionnaire designers
  - Interpretation by participants
  - Asking participants about routine behavior or actions they probably don’t track

Example A

Why did you come to School of Business Advising?

- Graduation
- Internships, study abroad, undergraduate research
- Registration
- Military
- Post Degree Plans
- Other ________________
Example B

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

- My advisor was knowledgeable of university policies, degree requirements, and campus resources.
- My advisor made me feel comfortable.
Example(s) C: Spring 2015

- 23 course evaluations
- 20 post-advising appointments
- Two campus safety surveys
- Three technology surveys
- Library, The Well, NSSE last year, Noel-Levitz this year, eServices polls
1. How many times have you had dairy products in the past week?
2. What is your major?
3. Who is your advisor?
Before You Create Your Survey Monkey Account...

- Understand the literature. What do previous studies find on similar topics?
- Understand your purpose. Why do you want a survey?
- Know your institution and/or context. What kind of information do they already have that could inform your purpose? Could your purpose be achieved without a survey?
Pros and Cons to Survey Research

- Interdisciplinary Field
- Amount of Data
- Many Choices
  - Platform Options
  - Administration Modes
  - Question Types
When is a survey appropriate?

- Addresses outcomes
- Lacking data
- Institutional or organizational does not already exist
  - Other surveys
- Seeking satisfaction or perception from a large population
- You have the capacity to share the information!
So now, what can I do?

Not Creating a Survey
- Use other peoples’ survey results
- Use institutional or organizational data
- Interviews and focus groups

Creating a Survey
- Tailored Design
- Aligning institutional Data to your survey
- Aligning questions to outcomes
- Multiple Readers and Reviewers… Pilot!
Tailored Design (Dillman)

- Use the survey design that works best for your population
- Can any methods be combined
  - Email links → Mailed surveys → Phone
  - Paper → Phone
Existing Data

- Organizational or institutional data warehouses - a wealth of information!
- Can be used in conjunction with other...
  - Research methodologies (e.g. (quasi) experimental designs; focus groups, etc.)
  - Archived Data; Previous assessment/evaluation results; Pre-Post Tests; Other surveys
- Data definitions might be problematic (Liebig, 2009).
You can use both!

Institutional and Organizational Data
- Informational System Data
- Card Swipes
- University ID

Survey Data
- Previous surveys
- Course/advising evaluations tied to student ID
- GPA, major, CH, etc.
Another Alternative…

Example: Farm to School Program Evaluation

- Farm to School (F2S)
- Richmond, VA Public Schools
- Program evaluation (USDA grant)
- Paper surveys to elementary students
- Virginia Tech Thesis Study (Qualitative, partners in the F2S program)
F2S (continued)

● Purpose of evaluation: To what extent is the program achieving its outcomes?

● Noticeable Gap
  ○ Middle and High School Students
  ○ Food Service Professionals

● VCU survey methodologist created surveys for Richmond Public Schools
Problem

- Survey fatigue (Over surveying)
- Existent Data
- Is someone else already doing it? Has someone already done it?
- Will the info be used?

Solution

- Know survey calendar
- Know your data holders
- Talk to people who conduct research with the same org. or population
- Connect questions to outcomes or objectives

Tailor your study design to your purpose, outcomes, and context.
Data Analysis and Results

Analysis

Results

Reporting

Decision-making

More Data Collection
Survey Results

The Well’s NCHA Spring 2014 NCHA data cross-sectional random campus data (n=1,081).

Questions? email thewell@vcu.edu

The last time you “partied”/socialized, how many hours did you drink alcohol?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 hours</td>
<td>92 (23%)</td>
<td>162 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 hours</td>
<td>61 (15%)</td>
<td>144 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 hours</td>
<td>138 (34%)</td>
<td>225 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 hours</td>
<td>91 (23%)</td>
<td>122 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8 hours</td>
<td>17 (4%)</td>
<td>20 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10 hours</td>
<td>4 (1%)</td>
<td>3 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WASTING TIME

Most respondents complain about the inconvenience the surveys caused.

- 21% Say they are too busy to take time-consuming surveys.
- 16% Say they are inconvenienced by surveys.
- 16% Say that surveys ask too many personal questions.
- 12% Say that surveys are too long.
Data Source: Spit for Science, Spring Survey, Second year 2011-2012 cohorts (n=2,410). Questions? email spit4science@vcu.edu

In the past 12 months, have you ever awoken after a night of drinking not able to remember things that you did or places that you went? ($4S$ drinkers + nondrinkers)

Yes 42%
No 58%
Survey Results

More than 50% of VCU students never have tried marijuana? Wow. Some students are skeptical when they learn this data. But both The Well’s study and S4S results mirror national findings. Food for thought: High non-use rates (pun intended) may reflect who gets into college and who remains in college.
To Survey or Not to Survey...

Depends on...

- Research methodology & approach
- The context & outcomes
- Your capability to handle the data, their analyses, and the results.
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Plan Ahead!

Be aware of your survey design and its implications from start to finish.

Goal: High Quality, Meaningful Data
- Usable Results
- Survey Design that minimizes the potential for error
Any questions?

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Thank you!
Keep in touch about your progress!