

## Top Tips – Developing a Survey or Questionnaire

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- Be clear about why you are conducting a survey or questionnaire, and what you want to learn from it
- Only collect information that you need, and that you do not have or will not be collecting through other avenues
- Be clear about how the survey or questionnaire is to be administered and analysed, and thereby the resources required
- Consider discussing the survey or questionnaire with the target group and relevant stakeholders to help get the focus right
- Pre-test / Pilot the survey or questionnaire with a small number of people who are likely to be representative of the target group to understand how they interpret the questions, how easy the survey or questionnaire is to complete and whether the length and style is appropriate.
- Refine survey or questionnaire based on feedback (and retest if appropriate) before administering it widely
- Remember to protect personal detail. Give each participant a unique ID number to be able to link surveys or questionnaires completed by the same person over time, and with other data held or collected by different avenues
- Include date of when survey or questionnaire is completed
- If you think you may want to go back to a respondent (e.g. to ask them for more detail or to be a case study) include a question asking for their permission to re-contact them, and provide space for them to give contact details

## Top Tips – Drafting Questions

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- Use clear and unambiguous language
- Do not use abbreviations, jargon or technical terms (if possible, otherwise explain them)
- Do not use leading questions – [see example](#)
- Do not include two or more questions within a single question – [see example](#)
- Do not use double negatives – [see example](#)
- Specify the time period or timeframe on which responses should be based (where appropriate)
- Start with questions that are easy to answer and non-intrusive
- Group together questions on the same topic (possibly using subheadings)
- Order questions to flow from the more general to the more specific, and if some questions do not apply clearly explain which question to answer next
- Interspace more difficult questions with straightforward ones
- Leave socio-demographic questions to the end – [see example](#)

## Examples – Question Types

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### **Leading question:**

*Example:* Would you say you feel more a part of the local community than before?

*Corrected:* Do you feel part of the local community? [Less Now; Same As Before; More Now]

### **Two or more questions within a single question:**

*Example:* Has your knowledge of the subject increased and your confidence improved?

*Corrected:* Has your knowledge of the subject increased? Has your confidence improved?

### **Double Negative Question:**

*Example:* I do not, not feel confident when meeting new people

*Corrected:* I do feel confident when meeting new people

## Further Information

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[Writing better questionnaires: getting better data](#) authored by the Charities Evaluation Services and published 2014

[The Ultimate Guide to Effective Data Collection](#) authored by Socialcops and published in 2016