

Practice Exercise: Revising an Entire Survey

This handout details numerous examples of how to improve survey questions and how to organize a cohesive survey. The table below presents a draft customer feedback survey (left-hand column) and suggestions for how to improve the questions/structure (right-hand column).

Survey Questions and Elements	Suggestions for Improvement
Feedback Survey We hope you enjoyed Outdoor Movie Night. Tell us about your experience.	*The introduction should help orient the respondent to the survey, including its purpose and how long it should take to complete. Additionally, it often is a good idea to include a statement about how their data will be protected/secured.*
1. What was the date of the most recent Outdoor Movie Night you attended? _____	*Because the special event was offered on four different dates, this question would be better presented as a multiple-choice question and does not need to be open-ended. This change will improve data quality.*
2. How many adults (including yourself) and children attended Outdoor Movie Night with your group? Please list their names. _____	*This question can be transformed into a list of numbers or number ranges. Unless names are needed for some specific purpose, they should not be requested to protect privacy. This question also asks two different questions — it asks how many people attended Outdoor Movie Night and their names.*
3. How would you rate your overall satisfaction and your satisfaction with the staff for the Curry Outdoor Movie Night? 5 – Extremely Satisfied, 4, 3, 2, 1 – Not at All Satisfied	*This question asks about two different things. It asks participants to rate satisfaction overall and with staff on one scale. To be more effective, only ask about one concept per question. If you want to ask about both overall satisfaction and satisfaction with the staff, ask a separate question for each.*
4. What were your primary reasons for attending Outdoor Movie Night? (Select one.) ☐ To have fun ☐ To see the specific movie being shown ☐ To do something with family/friends ☐ To do something free ☐ Other: _____	*This question asks for reasons (plural) why they attended the special event, but only allows for participants to choose one of the answers listed. Participants likely would have attended Outdoor Movie Night for more than just one of these reasons. In this case, a check box question would be more appropriate.*

Survey Questions and Elements	Suggestions for Improvement
5. How did you hear about the spectacle that was Outdoor Movie Night on July 2, July 7, August 4 and September 1? ☐ Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok) ☐ Email from Curry County Parks and Recreation ☐ Curry County Parks and Recreation Activity Guide ☐ Curry County Parks and Recreation website ☐ Word of mouth ☐ Other: _____	*This question is wordy and leading. Simply asking how participants heard about Outdoor Movie Night would eliminate both problems. Additionally, it is unclear how many of the responses they should select. This instruction should be clearly indicated in the question, if a limit is desired.*
6. How much would you be willing to pay per person to attend Outdoor Movie Night? ☐ \$20 ☐ \$30 ☐ \$40 ☐ \$50+	*This question assumes that participants would be willing to pay at least \$20 per person for Outdoor Movie Night and that responses will fall in \$10 intervals. These response selections are not inclusive. This question can be improved in a few ways. One option is to use an open-ended question that allows respondents to provide any dollar amount. Assuming the numbers are entered carefully, you could calculate average and median preferences. Another tip: if the options do not cover all possibilities, include a “not listed, please write in” option that will allow any dollar amount to be entered beyond available options. Converting the options to ranges rather than specific numbers will allow for responses that are not right at \$10 intervals, but the results may not be as specific. Choices will depend on the intended use of the data.*
7. On a scale from 1 to 5, how satisfied were you with the following elements of Outdoor Movie Night? • The movie selection • The viewing experience (audio/visuals) • Parking • Restroom availability • Restroom cleanliness • Food vendors • Safety • Accessibility • Pre-movie activities for kids • Helpfulness of CCPRD staff	*This survey question does not include the specifics of the scale participants are asked to use. It is unclear what 1 to 5 represent. Also, the scale should include a N/A option since not all participants will have engaged with each element of Outdoor Movie Night. Finally, the CCPRD acronym should be previously defined in the survey.*

Survey Questions and Elements	Suggestions for Improvement
8. Why didn't you stay until the end of the movie? _____	*This question assumes a participant did not stay until the end of the movie. Consider adding a question before this one where they indicate whether or not they stayed until the end of the movie. If they did not stay until the end of the movie, pose a follow-up question about why. As currently written, this follow-up question uses accusatory language and implies it is bad the respondent did not stay until the end of the movie. Soften the language a bit to eliminate misunderstanding. Some suggested options include: "What could we have changed to improve the chances you would have stayed until the end of the movie?" or "What factors led to you leaving the movie early?"*
9. What was your favorite and least-favorite part of the event? _____	*This question asks two things at once. If both pieces of information are desired, they should be asked as separate questions. This question might have been better designed as a multiple-choice question if the "parts" of the event were predetermined and obvious.*
10. What wouldn't you have changed about the event? _____	*Asking participants what they would not have changed about the event could be confusing like the previous "favorite part" question. Asking questions clearly is key for obtaining usable data. Choose language that asks a more positive question, such as "What did you like about the event?" or "What did you appreciate about the event?"*
11. How likely is it that you would recommend Outdoor Movie Night to a friend or colleague? 0-1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10	*The 0-10 scale should be clearly defined in the survey question and/or scale labeling.*
12. On average, how often do you attend similar Curry County Parks and Recreation <u>programs</u>? ☐ Once or more per week ☐ Once every six months ☐ Once every year ☐ I have never attended any other CCPRD event.	*This question offers limited options and does not cover all attendance options. Some participants may attend similar programs less than once per week or more than once every six months. Survey questions should include all possible intervals to represent the potential response options.*

Survey Questions and Elements	Suggestions for Improvement
13. On average, how often do you visit Curry County Parks and Recreation <u>park areas and recreation centers</u>? ☐ Once or more per week ☐ Once a month ☐ Once every three months ☐ Once every six months ☐ Once every year ☐ I have never visited a CCPRD park area.	*This question asks about both park areas and recreation centers. Survey participants' responses for each may be different. This question should be rewritten as two separate questions.*
14. Is there anything else you would like to share with Curry County Parks and Recreation about your Outdoor Movie Night experience or as general feedback? _____	*This question asks both about Outdoor Movie Night and general feedback about Curry County Parks and Recreation in the same question.*
15. What county do you live in? ☐ Curry ☐ Coos ☐ Douglas ☐ Josephine	*This question lacks a write-in option. Some visitors may be from a county other than the four listed, and the question should provide a way for those participants to answer the question. Include a "Not listed (please write in)" option.*
16. What is your income? ☐ Under \$40,000 ☐ \$40,000 - \$120,000 ☐ Over \$120,000	*The question doesn't specify a timeframe (i.e., annual), group (i.e., personal vs. household income). The \$40,000 to \$120,000 range is quite large, and it might be better to break down into smaller intervals, unless there is a specific reason only the three options shown are what are needed. Finally, personal or sensitive questions should include a "prefer not to answer" response option.*
17. What is your age? _____	* Questions about age are better asked using multiple-choice age ranges, including a "prefer not to answer" option. Doing so will allow for cleaner data and better privacy than when asking for a specific age.*

Possible ways to reorder the survey for improved effectiveness

*Overall, the survey is well organized. Two questions could benefit from reordering. Question #3 could be moved after Question #7 to group both *satisfaction-related* questions together. Question #6 could be moved after Question #11 to group the two questions focused on the perceived value of the experience.

These changes create sections of questions that flow from one to the next and are better organized into topics. The primary sections of the survey could be created as follows:

1. Event attended (#1)
2. Group composition (#2)
3. Motivations and marketing (#4, #5)
4. Satisfaction with the event (#3, #7)
5. Suggestions for improvement (#8, #9, #10)
6. Perceived value of the event (#6, #11)
7. Engagement with parks and programs (#12, #13, #14)
8. Demographics (#15, #16, #17)

The survey also needs a stronger introduction that includes a statement about how their data privacy will be protected. The survey also could benefit from transition or introduction statements from one group of questions to the next.

Overall, the survey is relatively short but could benefit from the removal of up to three open-ended questions (such as: #8, #10 and potentially #14), depending on the data needed to answer your key questions.