

Survey/Questionnaire Resources

www.surveymonkey.com

www.infopoll.com

www.busrelab.com

www.zoomerang.com

www.verticalresponse.com

Design & Conducting Survey Research, Rea & Parker 2004
Learning How to Ask, Briggs, 1986

For a copy of the PowerPoint deck presentation checkout

www.afdfacilityplanning.com or email me at alanafd@yahoo.com

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Alana served as a Director on the Board of Directors of IFMA and served as President of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter of IFMA.

She is an adjunct professor at Moore College of Art & Design in Philadelphia, and has guest lectured at numerous other colleges and universities. She is a proponent of FM education and serves on a number of FM academic advisory boards. Alana earned her B.S. in Environmental Psychology from Boston University and her M.S. in Facility Planning and Management from Cornell University.

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Session 2.09

Better Questions = Better Information

WorldWork Place, October 28, 2010

We ask questions all the time, we ask them of our clients, our customers and our staff. We write questions for customer surveys, for conducting space planning or programming interviews, for gaining feedback on work processes, and for evaluating our staff. But do the questions we ask and how we ask them really help us get good information?

Asking questions is both a science and an art. We ask questions to gather information. How we ask those questions can affect the quality of the information we receive.

Over the years as both a professional facility planner and as an academic, I have found the need to hone my own skills at asking the right questions. Whether it is asking a client to clearly define project goals parameters or collecting survey data to be utilized as a metric or KPI or asking a clear question on a student exam, the ability to ask a good question becomes paramount to how we work and communicate.

In the last few years I have been exploring how, as facility practitioners, we utilize the abundant data that we have at our fingertips. Data from the very expensive support systems that we implemented (such as CAFM, WIMS and BMS etc.) and now use only to generate a few regular reports. Data from the customer surveys we send out to monitor our progress or efficiency. Data we gather from employees to determine their satisfaction or to evaluate their job performance.

Bottom line, we collect a lot of data and often utilize only a small portion of the information we collect. My hypothesis has been that we can take this dormant data and make it work harder and smarter for us – turning that data into actionable knowledge; essentially synthesizing the data so that it helps us make better and smarter decisions.

I think the right questions are the building blocks for good data. This session explored how to build or rebuild your questions to ensure you obtain good, reliable and valid data.

Whether you are developing new questions or refreshing old ones keep these tips in mind as you craft and write your questions.

Getting Started

1. Know what decision you want to make
2. Have 2-3 well defined objectives
3. Focus on 'need to know'
4. Agree on possible actions before you start

Question Guidelines

- Limit your questions
- Make it relevant
- Simple words
- Relax grammar
- Logical & organized
- Short lists
- Make it easy to answer
- Assure common understanding
- Start with interesting questions
- Make it relevant
- Avoid difficult concepts
- Avoid difficult recall
- Pre-test survey
- Naming your survey
- Cover memo/instructions

Notes:

Keywords

What: Fact Oriented
How: People Oriented
Could/Can: Flexibility
Why: Provoking

Notes:

Effective Inquiries

1. Open inquiries
2. Closed inquiries
3. Multiple questions
4. Leading questions

Notes:

Top 5 benefits for utilizing an FM Customer

Survey Tool*:

1. Quality Improvement
2. Stay focused and in touch with customers
3. Identify issues and trends
4. Benchmarking, best practices, dashboards, KPI
5. Market research/polling

*Data from survey conducted by AFD Facility Planning, Oct 2010