

Checklist for Quality Question Design

Source: Robinson, S. B., & Leonard, K. F. (2018). *Designing Quality Survey Questions* (1st edition). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Checklist Item	Yes	No	N/A	Notes
Question type is appropriate				
Question type will result in the type of data needed given research question(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Research is prepared to analyze results from this type of question.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question design is centered around respondents.				
Question asks for information respondent is likely to know, or respondent will have access to the information needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question focuses on respondent and respondent experiences (and not what respondent thinks about others)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Researcher can anticipate how respondent might answer the question.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question is focused				
Question relates closely and clearly to one (or more) research question(s).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question is as specific and narrowly focused as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question asks about only one concept (i.e., is not double-barreled).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question is concise, using as few words as possible to convey meaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question phrasing is consistent with language used in other places in the survey.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question wording supports respondent understanding				
Question is written in semantically valid, plain, straightforward language.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question is syntactically correct, employing correct grammar and usage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question is specific enough for respondents to know exactly what information is being requested.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question requires as little inference or mental math as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question is phrased using active voice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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Question is phrased as neutrally as possible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Instructions and contextual cues are included as needed.				
Question itself includes any necessary instructions for answering.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Explanations are included for any terms that might require clarification.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For an open-ended question, question instructions note how long or detailed answers should be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reference periods correspond to the information needed (e.g., shorter time periods for more common occurrences).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Reference periods are clear and specific (e.g., <i>since last Tuesday</i> as opposed to <i>in the last week</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If question is sensitive (e.g., a demographic question), question instructions include information about why the question is being asked and/or how responses will be used/useful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Closed-ended questions feature appropriate instructions and response options.				
Question instructions make it clear how to answer (e.g., <i>check all that apply, select the top three</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Response options are exhaustive; that is, they fully cover the range of expected responses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Response options are mutually exclusive; that is, they do not overlap	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Response options are labeled (either numerically, pictorially, verbally, or a combination) where appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Closed-ended scale questions feature appropriate response options				
Response options are aligned with wording of question stem (i.e., direct labeling or item-specific response options are used).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bipolar response options are balanced with the same number of positive and negative options.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5-7 options are used for scaled responses (unless desired level of precision requires fewer or more options).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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<i>Don't know, neutral, N/A</i> or similar response options are used only as needed and have a clear purpose.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
A midpoint is used when a neutral option is needed or when forcing respondents to "choose a side" may result in measurement error.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
The order of scaled response options is consistent (e.g., left to right, least to greatest) with other questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Numeric scales are order least to greatest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Response options start with least desirable and move to most desirable (to mitigate possible primacy effect).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Demographic questions reflect deep understanding of and respect for respondents.				
Question uses appropriate terminology for the specific respondent population (check with members of respondent population whenever possible).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Response options reflect all desired respondents (i.e., respondent can see themselves in the options) and avoid use of the term <i>other</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Question includes a <i>prefer not to answer</i> or <i>prefer to describe</i> response option when question topic is sensitive or potentially threatening.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Response options reflect a balance of the need for accuracy, granularity, and respondent sensitivity (e.g., a question about age asks for year of birth or offers a series of age ranges depending on context).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	