Building Skills for Successful Program Delivery

**Week 1:** Creating Accessible Documents

**Week 2:** Developing Effective Surveys

**Week 3:** Using Data to Enhance Services

**Week 4:** Meeting the Needs of Your Community
Instructions for Zoom Webinar Participation

• All participants are muted.
• The session is being recorded. All materials including the recording will be put on the NADTC website.
• Closed captioning is available. You can turn captioning/subtitles on or off by clicking on the cc button.
• Please put your questions in the Q & A button.
• Chat is open and can be used for general comments, or technical assistance.
Developing Effective Surveys

April 2022

nadtc
National Aging and Disability Transportation Center
Learning Objectives

• Understand the importance of honest and reliable community input.
• Learn how to write effective survey questions.
• Discover ways to organize a survey to get truthful responses.
• Find out how to finalize the survey.
• Collect survey questions that can be used for upcoming surveys.
Surveys are a Useful Tool

- Fulfill requirement to get public input for Transportation Plan
- Relatively easy and inexpensive way to engage the community
- Can reach a large and varied audience
- Well-developed surveys result in honest and accurate feedback
- Constructive input informs successful transportation programs
Steps to Develop an Effective Survey

• Define the purpose
• Formulate good questions
• Organize the survey
• Finalize the survey
Define the Purpose

Contemplate these questions:

• Why are you doing a survey?
• What do you hope to learn?
• How will you use the information?
• Who do you want to hear from?
Formulate Good Questions
Writing Good Questions

• Know why you’re asking each question and how you will use the information

• Write with clarity and simplicity

• Avoid biased questions and responses
Write with Clarity

- Survey respondents may:
  - Have cognitive or learning disabilities
  - Have varying levels of education
  - Be learning English as a second language
- Questions should be easy to understand and easy to answer
- Write at a 5th Grade reading level
Write with Simple, Clear Language – Example 1

Scrutinize for unneeded complexity:

Do you have health complications that restrict your ability to utilize the fixed route transit located near your place of residence?

- Yes
- No
Try simpler wording instead:

Do you have health problems that keep you from using the bus near your home?

☐ Yes

☐ No
Avoid Jargon and Acronyms – Example 1

**Scrutinize for acronyms and jargon:**

Have you ever used ADA paratransit services through the AAA's 5310 program?

- Yes
- No
Avoid Jargon and Acronyms – Example 2

Try this instead:

Have you ever gotten a ride from a van with a wheelchair lift by calling the ABC Agency?

- Yes
- No
Don’t Make Assumptions – Example 1

Scrutinize for terms that might be unfamiliar:

If a microtransit program were available near you, do you think you would use it?

- Yes
- No
Don’t Make Assumptions – Example 2

Try this instead:

A microtransit program provides an app or a phone number to request a ride to designated area, and then you are picked up within 15 minutes of your call.

If a microtransit program were available near you, do you think you would use it?

- Yes
- No
One Topic Per Question – Example 1

*Scrutinize to be sure you’re asking only one question at a time:*

Is public transportation affordable and convenient for you?

- Yes
- No
Try this instead:

Is public transportation affordable for you?
- Yes
- No

Is public transportation convenient for you?
- Yes
- No
Include All Reasonable Responses – Example 1

Scrutinize for major missing options:

What modes of transportation do you use?

- Car
- Taxi
- Bus
- Walk
Include All Reasonable Responses – Example 2

Try this instead:

What modes of transportation do you use? (check all that apply)

- Personal Vehicle
- Train
- Bus
- Taxi
- Rides from family/friends
- Uber/Lyft
- Bicycle
- Walk
- Other ______________
Narrow the Focus – Example 1

Scrutinize for absurdly broad questions:

Please describe your challenges with transportation.
Narrow the Focus – Example 2

Try this instead:

Please share a challenge that you have experienced in the past month using the volunteer driver program.
Avoid Creating Bias

- Leading questions are worded in a way that point to the preferred response.
- Respondents may feel compelled to “make you happy.”
- Questions with a bias will not elicit an honest answer.
- Be neutral in phrasing to prevent leading the respondent to the desired answer.
- Use a balanced rating scale to allow for a range of choices.
Avoid Bias – Example 1

*Scrutinize for wording that asks for agreement:*

Do you agree with this statement? Transit programs for older adults and people with disabilities should be a top funding priority for ABC Agency.

- Yes
- No
Avoid Bias – Example 2

*Try this instead:*

Which of the following do you think should be the top funding priority for ABC Agency?

- Transit programs for older adults and people with disabilities
- Walking and biking paths
- City bus upgrades
Be Neutral in Phrasing – Example 1

*Scrutinize for wording that signals your hopes:*

I feel comfortable using the new mobile app.

- Yes
- No
Try this instead:

On a scale from 1 to 10, rate how comfortable or uncomfortable you are using the new mobile app.

(uncomfortable) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (comfortable)
Use a Balanced Scale – Example 1

Scrutinize for unbalanced response options:

Rate your satisfaction with the city bus.

- Extremely satisfied
- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Not satisfied
Use a Balanced Scale – Example 2

Try this instead:

Rate your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the city bus.

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
Consequences of Poorly-Written Questions

• Response errors
• Questions left unanswered
• Feedback is unreliable
• Quit the survey early or throw it away
• Data difficult to analyze
• Lower response rate
• Frustrated customers
Organize the Survey
Survey Introduction

- Purpose of survey and what the information will be used for
- Anonymity/privacy of personal information
- How many questions there are – approximate time to complete
- Instructions for completion
Order of Questions

- Group survey questions by topic, then follow logical order
- Begin with easy-to-answer questions to engage respondents
- Avoid asking too many difficult questions in a row
- Place demographic questions at the end
Other Things to Consider

• Length of survey should be less than 5 minutes
• Use open-ended (short answer) questions sparingly
• Early questions give context to following questions and may influence responses
  o Ask open-ended question before closed-ended
• Most important questions towards the beginning
Finalize the Survey
Test the Survey

• Test survey questions with colleagues or partners.

• Next, test with small pilot of target group.
  o What did they think the question was asking?
  o How confident are they of their answer?
  o Did you feel led to respond a certain way?

• Refine questions or question order based on feedback.
Distribute the Survey

- Consider best ways to reach your **target audience**.

- Offer various ways to take the survey
  - Printed – deliver to target locations, hand out at events, put in mail
  - Online – links on website, social media, e-newsletters
  - Interviews – good for reaching target groups who may not participate

- Utilize your partner agencies.
Final Assignment
Module Two Assignment

Write one or two survey questions that could be used to obtain input for coordinated transportation planning.

• Find your assignment in the Moodle course:
  1. Go to the “Developing Effective Surveys” Module.
  2. Under the description, click, “Assignment: Practice Writing Questions.”
  3. Click the file to download and then re-upload it once competed

• **Due April 27.** Questions will be compiled and shared with course participants at the conclusion of the course.

• Questions? Contact Chelcie Beadnell at cbeadnell@easterseals.com
Presenters’ Contact Information

Jane Mahoney, Training & Technical Assistance Specialist
National Aging & Disability Transportation Center
jmahoney@easterseals.com

Cindy Ofstead, Director
State Office on Aging
Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Cynthia.Ofstead@dhs.wisconsin.gov