

# Writing Effective Survey Questions

Jane Mahoney

*Learn how to create a quality survey.*

How to...

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TRANSPORTATION CENTER

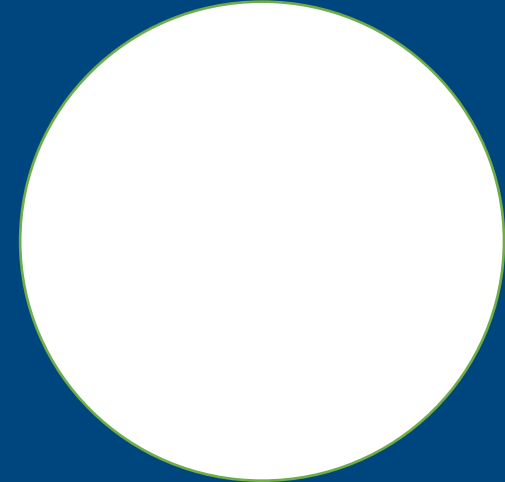
# Importance of Effective Questions

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Well-written questions:

- Produce quality surveys
- Yield accurate, reliable answers
- Provide data that is easy to compile and analyze

*Collect community input for coordination plans.*



# Tips for Writing Effective Questions

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- Use simple language
- Avoid jargon and acronyms
- Include full range of responses
- Narrow the focus
- Avoid leading questions

*Follow these tips to develop a quality survey.*

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# Use Simple Language

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

- Yes
- No

*Complex words make questions hard to understand.*

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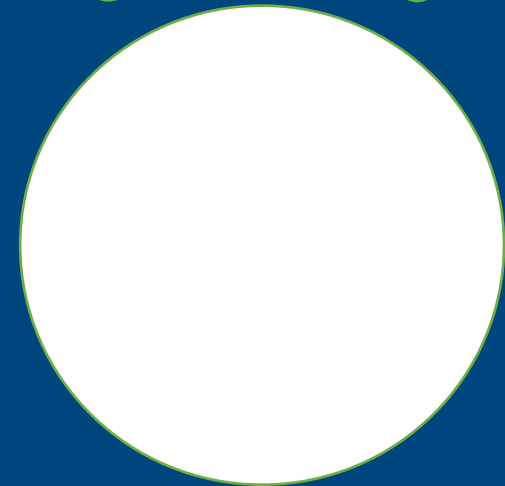
# Try This Instead...

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

- Yes
- No

*Use simple language so it is easier to understand.*



# Avoid Jargon and Acronyms

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

- Yes
- No

*People in the community don't know these acronyms.*

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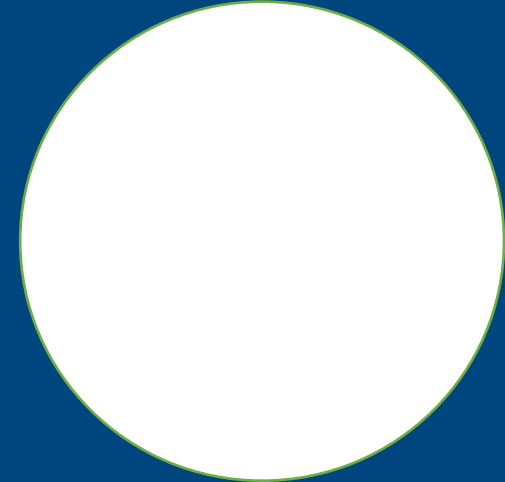
# Try This Instead...

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

- Yes
- No

*Use words familiar to those who will take the survey.*



# Include Full Range of Responses

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How often do you depend on family or friends for transportation?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

*Not enough response choices to respond accurately.*

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# Try This Instead...

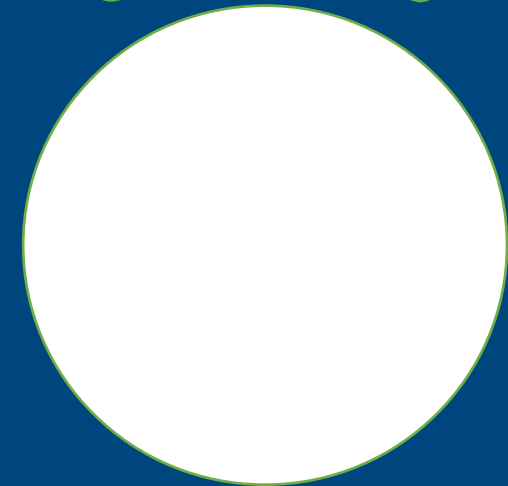
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How often do you depend on family or friends for transportation?

- None of my trips
- Less than half of my trips
- About half of my trips
- More than half of my trips
- All of my trips

*Provide enough choices to get accurate responses.*

How to...



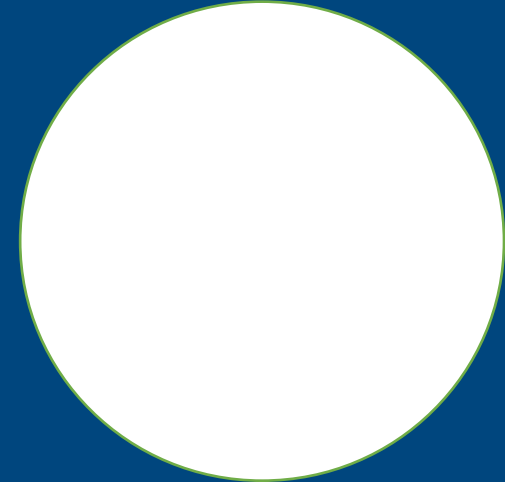
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# Narrow the Focus

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Please describe a challenge with transportation.

*What type of information is being sought?*

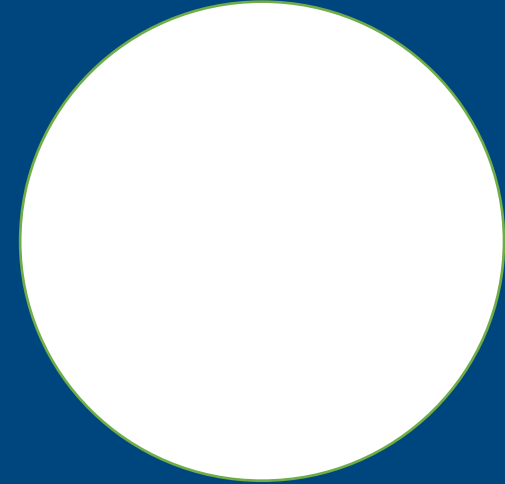


# Try This Instead...

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Please share a challenge that you have experienced in the past 6 months using the city bus.

*Focus on exactly what you want to evaluate.*



# Avoid Leading Questions

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I am comfortable using the new mobile app.

Yes

No

*They might feel embarrassed to say no.*

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# Try This Instead...

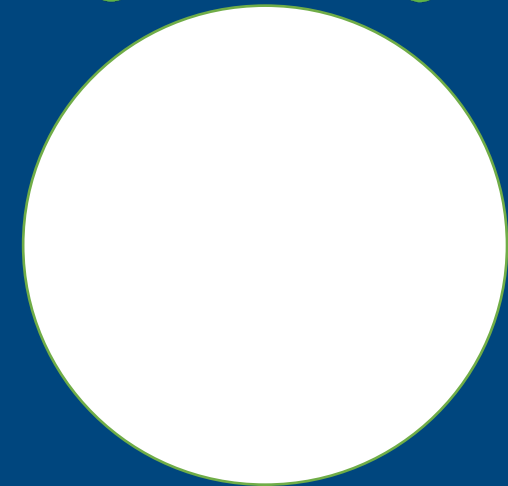
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On a scale from 1 to 10, rate how comfortable or uncomfortable you are using the new mobile app.

*(uncomfortable)* 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *(comfortable)*

*The range of responses yields honest feedback.*

How to...



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# Another Leading Question

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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

*It is clear what the hopeful response will be.*

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# Try This Instead...

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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

*More answer choices bring about accurate responses.*

How to...

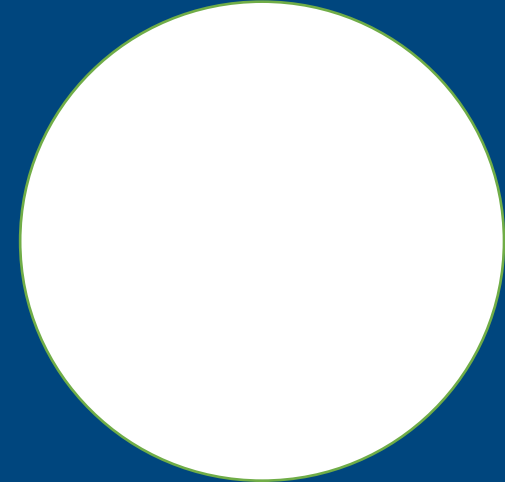
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# Consequence of Poorly-Written Questions

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- Response errors
- Questions left unanswered
- Feedback is unreliable
- Quit the survey early
- Throw the survey away

*Poorly-written questions lead to unreliable results.*





# In Conclusion...

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Asking good survey questions results in:

- Feedback that is representative of the community
- Better response rate
- Results that are easier to analyze
- Connection with community members

*Quality surveys lead to better program evaluation.*

