WORKBOOK G:

CONDUCTING IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

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OVERVIEW OF IN-PERSON INTERVIEWING

STEPS INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

In-person interviews are just what the name suggests: **interviews conducted in person on a one-on-one basis**. In-person interviews can take place in a variety of settings, and they can be pre-arranged or take place on an *intercept* basis. **Intercept interviews** are a type of in-person interview, usually involving "intercepting" someone at a public location, such as a shopping mall, and conducting a brief survey with them.

An in-person interview is not a self-administered survey—the interviewer does not hand the survey to the potential respondent and ask them to fill it out on their own. The interviewer asks the questions and records the respondent's answers, thereby ensuring higher-quality data.

Steps Involved in In-Person Interviewing

1. Developing an interviewing strategy
(Whose attitudes and beliefs matter to your research; where is the best place to find these people?)

↓

2. Selecting a time and place
(When and where will you conduct interviews?)

↓

3. Creating a questionnaire
(This will include the questions you want to ask of your targeted population, arranged in a logical order.)

↓

4. Providing training
(This will include training on the questionnaire specifically, and possibly on how to interview.)

↓

5. Conducting the interviews
(This will include scheduling and supervising interviewers, making sure you have all the necessary materials, arranging transportation to the site, and other details.)

↓

6. Analyzing the data
(Making sense of the findings.)

Advantages and Disadvantages of In-Person Interviews

Advantages

1. **Length**: For pre-arranged in-person interviews, there is the potential of conducting longer interviews than when using other research methodologies, especially if you are offering an incentive to complete the interview.
2. **Visual aids**: Questions can be more complex and involve the use of visual aids. For example, you can show the respondent a copy of a poster or flyer and get respondents' feedback on it.
3. **Access**: Conducting interviews in person can be an effective way of reaching people that you would not be able to reach via other methods, such as telephone or mail.
4. **Persuasion**: The interviewer is able to use their appearance, body language, smile, etc. to persuade potential respondents to complete the interview.

Disadvantages

1. **Cost**: In-person surveys have higher interviewing costs than telephone surveys, and may include costs for travel time.
2. **Access**: There can be difficulty getting permission to interview in schools or other facilities, and in arranging times to talk to potential respondents.
3. **Resistance**: Potential respondents may be reluctant to participate in the survey, depending on time constraints, the setting, etc.
4. **Length**: When conducting intercept interviews, the length of the survey needs to be kept short for the comfort of the respondent—ideally, under eight minutes. Respondents are more likely to terminate part-way through longer interviews.
5. **Bias**: In-person interviews are more subject to interview bias due to personal appearance or other interviewer effects.

Conducting in-person interviews is a convenience or **nonprobability sampling method**, which means that members of the target population are not randomly selected. People are chosen for the research because they are **readily available** or have **specific characteristics**.

Example of a Convenience Sampling Methodology

For the *Learning in Communities* project in Rhode Island, we conducted in-person interviews with middle school students.

- First, we conducted a demographic analysis of the community we planned to research, in order to understand the characteristics of area residents.
- We selected six schools that were likely to be representative of the community, as the demographics of students in these schools were similar to the demographics of the larger community.
- We next identified ways to get the best cross-section of students within these schools. We determined that students' lunch period was the best opportunity to reach a good cross-section of students.

During the lunch period, a researcher went around to each table to encourage students to participate in the survey. This was necessary to ensure that we were not interviewing students who volunteered to complete a survey exclusively—we can expect that students who would volunteer for a survey may have different attitudes and experiences, compared with the general student body.

Before participating in the study, students were informed that the survey was voluntary and were offered a $5 gift certificate to either Subway or Providence Place Mall in appreciation for their participation.

Deciding Whether or Not to Outsource In-Person Interviews

In-person interviews can be a good choice for organizations who have the internal resources. Usually, you would consider this methodology for a large-scale survey for which you will interview hundreds of respondents. This will involve a considerable time and resource commitment for an organization to conduct internally. You may want to consider outsourcing in-person interviews if you do not have interviewers who can each commit at least 15 to 20 hours per week to the project for the duration of the study.

- **When to outsource in-person interviews**: if you have the financial resources; if you want to conduct a large number of interviews in a short period of time; and if internal staff is too familiar with the potential respondents to collect unbiased data.

- **When to conduct in-person interviews using internal resources**: if you are short on financial resources; if you have sufficient personnel available to complete the number of interviews you want within a reasonable period of time; and if internal staff members do not personally know the potential respondents.

In the next sections, we will present more detailed information regarding outsourcing in-person interviews and conducting in-person interviews using internal resources. For communities conducting in-person interviews using internal resources, we will present information about each step in the process.

Including Area Schools in Your Research Planning Process

No matter what research method you plan to use to inform your community's OST planning process, if you plan to use students as research subjects, it is a good idea to **include area schools in your research planning process**. For example, one effective method of finding out what parents and students are looking for in OST programs and activities is to conduct interviews with students (either self-administered or intercept interviews), ask students for their parents' telephone number, and contact parents for a telephone survey or to participate in a focus group. Before you enter the school to conduct the student interviews, you will need to obtain approval from the school superintendent.

It is helpful if someone on the project planning team has connections with the school department and can contact superintendents to get their buy-in and approval to use the school in the research. Ideally, the superintendent can assist you in contacting school principals to get their buy-in. It is critical to **obtain the approval of school principals**, as they generally have complete decision-making power regarding what occurs in their schools. Principals are also highly likely to want to notify parents before any research is conducted. **Remember to build time into your research schedule for schools to send notices to parents**. In addition, school systems have formal systems for reviewing research materials; there could either be a review board or an individual who will review and approve your research materials. Talk to the school superintendent to identify what the review process is and who you should contact. **Build this review process into your research timeline as well**. In addition, there may be other organizations involved in the initiative, each with its own internal review processes.

Two good strategies for obtaining buy-in are to **emphasize the value of the research**, and **make it easy for schools to participate**. For example, make sure school superintendents and principals understand the importance of your research project and the direct benefit this research will have on your community's children. Try to arrange your research project so that it uses as few school resources as possible. For example, rather than relying on the school system to mail or transport surveys, arrange to transport surveys yourself if needed.

What Communities Have Learned

Enhance the value of participation. "The challenge is convincing the principal to administer the survey in his or her school, and helping them find a way to get it done. Schools always have special projects, and fitting in a survey is often not the principal's first priority. What we tried to do after the first year was to feed back the principal's own school information, so that they got a direct benefit from participating. They were the only ones that received their own school's information—everything else we did was by the entire region. Principals had control over their own school's specific information."

You must get buy-in from principals even if you have conducted research at the school previously. "This third year [that we've done the research], we didn't market to principals well enough. We thought maybe that they would have been more on board the third year. I think the big lesson is that every year you do research, you've got to treat it like it's the first year, and really sell it to the people who control whether or not your research is going to be successful. For example, just because you gave incentives the first year, you shouldn't think that incentives won't be necessary the second year. You can't let up on the marketing aspect of your research. You've got to constantly assume that people aren't necessarily on board."

--Bob Goerge, Chapin Hall Center for Children. Conducted a multi-phase research project, including self-administered surveys of high school students in Chicago, in-depth interviews with students, and an inventory of OST programs in Chicago. The objective of this research was to better understand participation in OST programs and other activities among Chicago youth, as well as the effects of established programs.

Passive Consent

What is Passive Consent? *Passive consent* is the process whereby consent is given by not returning an "opt-out" or "withdrawal" form. In other words, parents are given the opportunity to withdraw their child from the research. If they do not withdraw their child, then the researchers can include the child in the research. This differs from *active consent*, which requires that parents confirm in writing their permission for their child to participate in research. Many CBOs and school districts now use passive consent rather than active consent in order to secure the participation of students in important research. A sample withdrawal form is included on the CD of prototype materials included with this guide.

Why Use Passive Consent?

- Active consent has been criticized as an overly rigid process that severely limits access to students for survey research. Proponents of passive consent note that survey research such as that proposed herein already has minimal risks, is anonymous or confidential, and is voluntary.
- Research suggests that passive consent results in a more representative sample. Students who would have been excluded by active consent because they or their parents simply forgot to sign and return an active consent form can now be included in the research.
- Passive consent generally involves less cost and labor for researchers.

Passive Consent Recommendations

- Most importantly, specific schools, districts, or organizations may have their own consent policies. Always check with the schools or organizations you are working with to be sure that passive consent is permitted.
- Allow more than one way for parents to refuse their child's participation. For example, they could return the form, call a telephone number on the form, or reply by email.
- Make sure all materials are language-appropriate. For example, if you anticipate a population with limited English-reading ability, be sure to provide forms in the appropriate primary language.
- Parents should be given sufficient time to refuse their child's participation. We recommend that you hand out forms about one week prior to research. This provides adequate time for refusal, but is not so far in advance that the form is forgotten or deemed irrelevant.
- Be sure to include the following information on the withdrawal form:
  - Topic of research.
  - Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate will not negatively affect the student.
  - No identifying information is recorded (the survey is anonymous) or if recorded, every effort is made to keep the information confidential.
  - The dates of the research, and how long the research will take (e.g., "the survey will take approximately ten minutes to complete").
  - Any potential risks (for this type of survey research, risks are minimal. Be sure the student knows that if at any time they feel uncomfortable participating in the survey, they can stop.
  - Any direct benefit to the student for participating (for example, better after-school programs).
  - All relevant contact information (e.g., the school or organization conducting the research).

OUTSOURCING IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS:
A Guide to Hiring Vendors

Who to hire:	▶ A data collection firm specializing in in-person or intercept interviewing
What to look for:	▶ A data collection firm in a location that is close to the targeted area for the survey ▶ Experience conducting research with youth and adolescents a plus
Where to find vendors:	▶ Internet searches for *market research*, *intercept interviewing,* etc. ▶ **The Blue Book Research Services Directory,** a Publication of the Marketing Research Association. Look for vendors offering the following types of research services: *data collection, on-site interviewing, intercept interviewing, door-to-door interviewing,* etc. ▶ Ask trusted associates for recommendations
What they will do:	▶ Work with you to establish a schedule of times and places to conduct the interviews ▶ Provide interviewing staff and train them on your study ▶ *Upon request*: Provide the number of paper copies of the survey needed to complete the study ▶ Coordinate the data collection process ▶ Provide you with the finished surveys ▶ *Upon request:* Data-enter the finished surveys
What you will do:	▶ Provide vendor with a clear understanding of your research objectives and timeline needs ▶ Provide vendor with a finalized questionnaire ▶ If interviewing in schools: provide vendor with appropriate contacts to arrange interviewing times
What you should expect to pay:	▶ Will vary widely, depending on vendor and scope of project ▶ From $20 per hour to $35 per hour for interviewing time

CONDUCTING IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS USING INTERNAL RESOURCES: 1. Developing An Interviewing Strategy

The six steps involved in conducting in-person interviews are: (1) developing an interviewing strategy; (2) selecting a time and place; (3) creating a questionnaire; (4) providing training; (5) conducting the interviews; and (6) analyzing the data. We will discuss each of these steps in turn.

The first step in conducting in-person interviews is developing an interviewing strategy, beginning with determining **who you should be interviewing**. Whose beliefs, feelings, and attitudes matter to your OST planning? You need to have the right people participating in order to gather useful and valuable information. Use your research goals to help you determine who you should be interviewing. Then, you will need to determine **how to find these people** and develop an interviewing staff.

<table>
<tr>
<td>WHO
should you interview?</td>
<td>Begin with a clear understanding of the types of people you plan to contact for your research. This will be determined by your research objectives. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

Why are you conducting this study?
What do you want to learn from this research?
What decisions will you need to make once the research is completed?
Whose feelings, beliefs, attitudes and preferences will help your community make the decisions it needs to make for your OST planning?
Who will be most affected by the decisions you will make?
</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOW
will you find them?</td>
<td>Once you have determined the types of people you want to interview, the next step is to figure out how you will find these types of people. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

How large is this population? How common are the characteristics you are looking for? For example, “middle school students in the greater metropolitan area” will be easier to find than “Asian-American middle school students living in poverty.”
What populations are you able to access?
Do you have a way of reaching a large number of these types of people at once? For example, would you find large numbers of these people at schools, clubs, parks, recreational centers, area businesses, etc.?
</td>
</tr>
</table>

Knowing How Many People to Survey

Once you have determined who you want to survey and how you are going to find them, you will need to set goals in terms of **how many** people you want to interview. When determining how many people you should include in your survey, remember that your ultimate goal is to obtain meaningful and usable findings through the analysis of the data. The more respondents included in your survey, the lower your margin of error, and the greater your ability to find meaningful differences among subpopulations. Larger surveys generally mean greater costs, however, so you will need to keep your survey size in line with your budget. In addition, you may be limited by the size of the population you are targeting.

There are some basic guidelines that will allow for accurate statistical analysis:

- **Major groups of the target population**, such as those living in specific areas, should include a minimum of 100 respondents. For example, if you are surveying parents in two discrete areas such as school districts, and you want to analyze any differences between the parents in these districts, you should survey a minimum of 100 people in each district.
- **To compare smaller subgroups** in your analysis, such as parents of students in specific age groups, you will need to have a minimum of 20 respondents of each type. In other words, if you want to understand the point of view of parents of sixth-grade students vs. parents of eighth-grade students, you will first need to have enough people in those categories. Again, your ability to identify meaningful differences among groups of people with specific characteristics will increase with the number of people in those groups.
- **You will not be able to meaningfully compare groups with less than 10 respondents in your analysis**—it is generally recognized that groups consisting of less than 10 respondents cannot be analyzed statistically.

Developing an Interviewing Staff

First, you will need to evaluate based on your budgetary constrictions, whether you are going to recruit **paid interviewers or volunteers**. Using paid interviewers is highly preferable, as this option is more likely to result in high-quality interviews. Volunteers are likely to be highly invested in the subject matter, which may affect their objectivity while interviewing. In addition, if you decide to recruit volunteers, you will have less discretion as to the quality of your interviewing staff, and they may be less reliable in terms of scheduling.

Regardless of whether you decide to use paid or volunteer interviewers, potential interviewers should be informed that this **style of interviewing is highly controlled** and does not allow for flexibility or chatting with respondents casually while conducting the survey. Providing potential interviewers with this type of information should help them to determine on their own if they are suitable for this type of work. For example, you could **inform potential interviewers that**:

- The questionnaire should be read exactly as written for every interview.
- There is an estimated average duration for the survey, and interviewers will need to achieve a certain number of completed surveys per hour.
- Interviewers have no choice in the people that they interview, apart from not interviewing people they know, and terminating interviews with respondents who they believe are not giving genuine answers, or who are abusive to the interviewer.

Hiring Paid Interviewers

- If you decide to recruit paid interviewers, offer a **competitive hourly wage**. Between $10 and $11 per hour (in 2006) should enable you to attract high-quality interviewers at what would still be a significant cost savings from outsourcing data collection.
- Keep in mind that you are hiring people for a **temporary position** that may only last two to four weeks. Interviewers will not have a chance to develop their skills over a long period of time. It will be more important to use interviewers who have a high level of competence from the beginning.

POINTER

If possible, hire interviewers with surveying experience, as these interviewers will require less extensive training.

Recruiting Interviewers

In terms of generating interest in the position, your approach will probably depend on whether you decide to recruit paid interviewers or volunteers.

- For paid interviewers, use ads in local newspapers and possibly flyers to advertise the position.
- Volunteers for interviewing are more likely to be recruited through networking.

Apart from a basic job description, include in advertisements for the position:

- That it is a temporary, part-time job, and what times of day interviewers will be expected to work.
- That the position requires punctuality and the ability to remain focused on task and think on your feet.
- Interviewers should be able to read aloud in a natural manner, write clearly, and have a pleasant, yet professional demeanor.

Depending on the scope of your study and your overall timeline, you may need to recruit several interviewers to work on the project. To **determine the number of interviewers** you may need to recruit, you will need to consider several factors, including:

- The **total number of interviews** you plan to complete.
- Your **overall timeline** for the project.
- The number of **shifts per week** you will be able to schedule, and the length of those shifts.
- The **number of interviewers** you want to schedule per shift.

An example of determining the number of interviewers needed for a study is provided on the following page.

Example of Calculating the Number of Interviewers to Recruit

- You plan to conduct 300 interviews with parents of ninth graders in your school district.
- The average duration of the survey is 8 minutes.
- You expect there will be an ample number of people available to complete the survey during each shift, and that people will be interested in the topic and cooperative.
- Given the duration of the survey and the level of expected cooperation, estimate that interviewers will be able to achieve an average of three **completions per hour** (CPH).
- Set a **target time frame** for completing data collection, such as within two weeks.
- Determine the **number of hours per week** that you can reasonably expect to have productive interviewing. For example, if there are three hours of the day that are optimal for interviewing, you could plan to conduct five three-hour shifts per week, resulting in a maximum of 15 interviewing hours per week per person.
- Multiply the total number of interviewing hours (30) by the CPH (3) to determine the maximum **number of interviews** you can expect one person to complete over two weeks (90). Divide the target number of interviews for the project (300) by the expected number of interviews per person (90) to calculate how many interviewers you will need per shift. In this example, to complete 300 interviews in two weeks, you will need to have an average of 3.3 interviewers working per shift. This can be achieved by scheduling three interviewers for three shifts and four interviewers for two shifts each week.
- It is likely that you will need to have more than four interviewers working on the project, however, based on individual availability. In recruiting interviewers, establish a **minimum number of shifts per week** they will be required to work, such as three.
- Multiply the number of shifts per week (5) by the number of interviewers per shift (3.3) to get 16.5 total shifts per week.
- In order to determine how many interviewers to recruit, divide the total shifts per week (16.5) by the minimum number of required shifts per interviewer (3) to get 5.5.
- Based on these calculations, five to six interviewers should be sufficient to complete the study within your timeline.

2. Selecting a Time and Place

Determining where and when you conduct the in-person interviews depends on the population you are trying to reach. Most likely, you will need to use a **community-based approach** to reach the people you want to interview. For example, if you decide to conduct a small number of in-person interviews with education and community-based organization leaders, you may be able to make initial contact with them through **networking** and arrange an appointment with them first by phone or email.

Try to conduct interviews in a location where you will have some privacy and are unlikely to be interrupted. If you want to conduct a large number of interviews with a targeted population, such as seventh and eighth graders, consider where you are likely to find large numbers of this population. You might want to try to arrange a time and place to interview them at school, or, if you are unable to get permission to conduct interviews in the schools, consider other places where large numbers are likely to congregate, such as the mall, after-school programs, public recreation areas, etc.

POINTER

> Contact community groups, workplaces, churches, or schools that may be able to grant you access to the types of people who you are trying to interview.

The key with community-based strategies is to identify where you can find large numbers of the people you are trying to recruit. What are the common gathering places? For example, Asian residents are likely to spend time in different places in the community compared with African-American residents and Caucasian residents. Within immigrant communities, people who are more acculturated are likely to spend time in different places in the community than people who are less acculturated. Your goal is to identify the places where you are able to find the largest numbers of your potential participants, and the best cross-section of this population.

In terms of selecting the best time of day to conduct interviews, this will again be largely determined by the population you are trying to reach. In order to reach a good cross-section of people, you may need to **interview at different times of day**. You may also find that the population you are targeting is only available at a specific time of day. For example, if you are conducting interviews with high school students and you have obtained permission to do the interviews within the school system, you may be confined to the lunch period, or you may be able to interview students throughout the day during study periods.

3. Creating A Questionnaire

Your community needs reliable research findings to guide your OST planning process, and in order to obtain it, you need to have a well-designed instrument: bad questions will result in bad data. In this section, we will discuss strategies for developing effective questionnaires for in-person interviews. In addition, a sample questionnaire that is formatted for in-person interviewing is included at the end of this workbook.

Developing a Questionnaire

What is a Questionnaire?

- A structured way of organizing an interview
- A structured way of asking questions, not forgetting important topics
- Consistency in the way questions are asked from person to person
- A way to organize people's thoughts to help them respond

Your questionnaire will be made up of the following components:

- **Introduction**. The interviewer introduces him- or herself, explains the reason the research that is being conducted, and asks the respondent to complete the survey.
- **Screener**. A series of questions designed to eliminate, or "screen out," respondents who are ineligible to complete the survey. For example, if you are conducting a survey of parents of school-age children, you would want to screen out anyone who did not have school-age children.
- **Survey questions**. There are two main types of questions you can use in questionnaires, depending on the type of information you are trying to get:
  - **Closed-ended questions.** The respondent is asked to answer on a scale (e.g., *excellent, good, fair, poor*) or select a response from a list of possible responses. Closed-ended questions will generally make up most of the questions in your survey.
  - **Open-ended questions**. The respondent is asked to respond to the question in his or her own words. Due to their length and complexity, open-ended questions are usually kept to a minimum in surveys.
- **Demographic questions**. At the end of your survey, you may ask respondents questions about their demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age, race or ethnicity, primary language, income, etc.), in order to identify how different types of people feel about different OST issues.
- **Conclusion**. Thank the respondent for completing the survey and end the interview.

Steps Involved in Questionnaire Design

Begin by Identifying Goals for the Survey

- Start with goals, rather than specific questions.
- What issues are important to cover?
- What decisions do you need to make?
- What information do you need in order to make those decisions?
- What information is critical for decision-making, and what is just interesting?
- Are there other sources that could be used to get this information?

Organize and Set Priorities

- Weed out interesting points that are not tied to decisions.
- Focus on the most important, key goals.
- Organize goals in an order that seems logical and reasonable.

For Each Goal, Write Questions

- What specifically do you need to know regarding this goal?
- Should you ask one question or several to address each goal?
- It is easier to measure behavior, and harder to measure attitudes.

Pilot-Test the Questionnaire

- Pick a small group and interview them as a pilot-test.
- Time the interview. Is it too long, or too short given the topic? (Short is better)
- Listen or watch for words or questions that confuse people or don’t make sense.
- Listen or watch for questions that don’t get the information you want.
- Listen or watch for questions that seem to bias people; that is, questions that encourage people to answer in a certain way.
- Listen or watch for questions that cause long discussions or arguments.
- Is the interview boring, silly, or does it provoke emotions inappropriately?
- Is anything missing from the interview, given how people responded?

Revise the Questionnaire and Conduct the Interviews

Writing Good Questions

Use Plain, Simple, Understandable Language

- Write as though you were speaking: use oral language.
- Use complete sentences.
- Avoid fancy or clever sentence structure.
- Avoid slang, jargon and lingo.
- Avoid abbreviations unless you are sure they are commonly understood.
- Short questions are easier for people to answer than long ones.
- If you do not understand the question, no one else will.

Ask Purposeful Questions

- Questions should be logically related to your research objectives.

Ask Concrete Questions

- Questions should be precise and unambiguous, so that two different respondents can be expected to interpret them and respond in a consistent manner.
- More specific questions lead to more reliable responses.
- For questions about behavior, include a time frame (e.g., how often have you done this in the past three months).

Behavior Versus Attitudes

- Behavior = what people do.
- Attitudes = what people think about what they do.
- Attitudes are not always a good predictor of future behavior.
- If you can measure both behavior and attitudes, do so.
- Do not be afraid to ask about unpopular behavior.

One Issue Per Question

- If you are covering two issues, ask two questions.
- Make sure the categories you give for responses match the question.

It is Unethical to Waste People's Time in a Survey

- Ask the questions you need to help you make decisions; do not ask unnecessary questions just because the answers might be interesting.
- People will usually tolerate spending up to ten minutes filling out a survey; beyond that, you risk them not finishing the survey.

Possibility of Bias

- If you are trying to express an opinion in the question, you are creating a bias.
- If you are afraid your question will get the wrong response, you are creating a bias.

Question Review Process

In order to ensure that your questionnaire is in good shape, review each question by asking yourself the following:

- Does this question make sense? Do I understand it?
- Can the question be answered? Could I answer it?
- Is this the right question?
- How would I react if someone asked me this question?
- Am I asking only one question, or do I need two questions?
- Does the question include jargon? Complex language? Could I ask it differently without using those terms? (If not, provide a clear explanation of the terms so respondents know what you are talking about.)
- Would someone who is not like me and who does not think like I do understand and be able to answer this question? For example, someone who:
  - Belongs to a different race, ethnicity, or culture
  - Lives in another part of the country or world
  - Is less educated, or more educated than I am
  - Is from a different generation
  - Has a different political or religious orientation than my own
  - Grew up in or is part of a different socioeconomic class
  - Is part of a group whose views I do not agree with or who I dislike

Strategies for Common Types of Questions

The following section provides examples of successful question wording and response scales for the types of questions your community may want to include in a survey. You can use these examples as a guide for developing questions to add to the prototype survey included at the end of this workbook. The prototype survey provided is formatted to aid in interviewing in-person; for example, there are large boxes provided for writing down the number of the respondent's response, and skips are indicated in large bold print.

SCREENERS

In this example, the population we are trying to survey is parents of middle school-age boys and girls in Providence. The screener is designed to eliminate potential respondents who do not meet these criteria.

1. First, do you have any children that are in middle school in Providence?

☐ --Yes
☐ --No--TERMINATE

2. What grade is your middle school child in?
[IF MORE THAN ONE, SAY YOU'D LIKE THEM TO THINK ABOUT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CHILD WHO HAD THE MOST RECENT BIRTHDAY]

☐ --Sixth grade
☐ --Seventh grade
☐ --Eighth grade
☐ --Won't say-refused [DON'T READ]--THANK AND TERMINATE

Asking about the child with the most recent birthday is a method for reaching a more representative sample of the targeted population.

3. Is your middle school child:

☐ --Male
☐ --Female
☐ --Won't say-refused [DON'T READ]--THANK AND TERMINATE

MEASURING AWARENESS

Unaided Awareness:

This scale includes all the OST program the researcher knows about in the area, and includes an option for respondents to name additional programs the researcher may not be aware of, as well as an option for the respondent to say he or she is not aware of any, or doesn't know the names of the programs.

When you think of after-school programs in your area, which first come to mind? [DO NOT READ LIST]

☐ None
☐ Hillside Afterschool
☐ Valley Boys and Girls
☐ Green River Program
☐ Don't know
☐ SPECIFY OTHER

It is important that the interviewer not read the list to respondents to get a more accurate sense of the OST programs that people think of on a "top of mind" basis.

→ **Single-level or multi-level**

You can structure these questions so they are **single-level** (the respondent can give one answer only) or **multi-level** (the respondent can name as many programs as he or she is aware of, and the interviewer checks all programs named).

Aided Awareness: **How familiar are you with Hillside Afterschool?**

☐ Very familiar
☐ Somewhat familiar
☐ Not familiar or don't know

> This is a good scale to use to assess the extent to which respondents feel familiar with a particular organization or program.

Knowledge: **Before this interview, were you aware that Hillside Afterschool has two competitive sports leagues for students in grades six through eight?**

☐ Yes, aware
☐ No, not aware, or don't know

INTEREST OR DESIRE

How interested are you in having your middle school child learn new skills like carpentry, clothing design, or architecture?

☐--Very interested
☐--Somewhat interested
☐--Somewhat uninterested
☐--Very uninterested
☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

> This scale is balanced: there is an equal number of responses for "interest" and "lack of interest."

How interested are you in having your child help others through community service activities, like helping the elderly, mentoring younger children, or cleaning up local parks?

☐--Very interested
☐--Somewhat interested
☐--Somewhat uninterested
☐--Very uninterested
☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

Which of the following arts and culture programs are you most interested in for your child?

☐--Photography
☐--Theater
☐--Dance
☐--Art
☐--Video or radio production
☐--Music
☐--Writing or poetry
☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]
☐--SPECIFY OTHER

> This type of question is good for understanding what the highest priorities are. You may find that many respondents will say they are *very interested* in numerous activities, and this type of question will help you identify the one or two activities that are of greatest interest. You can include an option for respondents to mention additional activities if you choose.

IMPORTANCE

How important are each of the following things to you in choosing an after-school activity for your middle school child?

That it teaches your child new skills?
- ☐--Very important
- ☐--Somewhat important
- ☐--Not important
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

Three-point scales like this are good for assessing familiarity (see above) and perceived importance. For these types of measures, you generally will not need an option for *somewhat unimportant* or *somewhat unfamiliar*—people are likely to be familiar with something, or not at all, and find things important to some extent, or not at all.

That the activity is fun?
- ☐--Very important
- ☐--Somewhat important
- ☐--Not important
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

That it makes your child feel safe?
- ☐--Very important
- ☐--Somewhat important
- ☐--Not important
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

Which of the following would be MOST important to you in choosing an after-school activity for your middle school child?
- ☐--That it teaches your child new skills
- ☐-- That the activity is fun
- ☐-- That it makes your child feel safe
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

This type of scale can be used in conjunction with or instead of a three point scale. Respondents may consider all of these factors *very important*, but forcing them to choose which factor is MOST important to them provides a measure of respondents' priorities in choosing after-school activities.

PAST AND LIKELY FUTURE BEHAVIOR

When your middle school child is at home after school, how often does [he or she] have responsibility for watching younger brothers and sisters?

- ☐--Almost always
- ☐--Frequently
- ☐--Sometimes
- ☐--Seldom
- ☐--Never
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

This is a good scale for measuring the frequency with which something occurs. If you are measuring something that could realistically happen *always,* you could include this option on the scale.

Out of five weekdays, how many days does your child spend at someone else's home after school, where there is an adult present?

- ☐--None
- ☐--One
- ☐--Two
- ☐--Three
- ☐--Four
- ☐--Five
- ☐--Varies [PROBE FOR A TYPICAL WEEK OR ON AVERAGE] [DON'T READ]
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

This scale accounts for each weekday and includes options for *none, varies, and don't know.* You can use this type of question to find out the average number of weekdays respondents are engaged in a particular activity.

If a program offered after-school activities you were interested in, how many weekdays would your child go there?

- ☐--None
- ☐--One day a week
- ☐--Two days a week
- ☐--Three days a week
- ☐--Four days a week
- ☐--Five days a week
- ☐--Varies [DON'T READ]
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

How likely would your middle school child be to attend these programs if you had to pay $10 a day for them to attend?

- ☐--Very likely—SKIP THE NEXT QUESTION
- ☐ --Somewhat likely
- ☐--Not likely
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

How likely would your middle school child be to attend these programs if you had to pay $5 a day for them to attend?

- ☐--Very likely
- ☐--Somewhat likely
- ☐--Not likely
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

To understand parents' cost tolerance for programs, ask questions on a two- or three-tiered basis, beginning with the highest possible cost option, and going down from there. If someone is very likely to pay $10 for a program, there is no need to ask them if they would be very likely to pay $5—you can assume they are just as likely to pay less!

SATISFACTION

Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of Hillside Afterschool's sports activities?

- ☐ Very satisfied—ASK "A" BELOW
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied— ASK "A" BELOW
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied— ASK "B" BELOW
- ☐ Very dissatisfied— ASK "B" BELOW
- ☐ Don't know

> Open-ended questions like those below are a good way of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of existing OST opportunities.

A. In what ways are you satisfied? What do you like most about the Green River Program? [RESPONDENT ANSWERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS]

B. What do you like least about the Green River Program, or what would you change? [RESPONDENT ANSWERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS]

How much do you like how your child spends his or her time after school?

- ☐--A lot—SKIP THE FOLLOW-UP QUESTION
- ☐--Some
- ☐--A little
- ☐--Not at all
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

What do you dislike about how your child spends his or her time after school, or what would make it better? [RESPONDENT ANSWERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS]

PREFERENCES

Imagine that we are creating an after-school program. The program could be in one building with a variety of different activities or there could be activities at different locations. For example, your child might go play basketball at one location and go to another location for music lessons.

Which of these two do you prefer?

- ☐--All activities located at a single location
- ☐--Different activities located in different locations
- ☐--No preference [DON'T READ]
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

> This type of question forces respondents to choose between two options.

On weekdays, would you prefer that your middle school child participates in activities:

- ☐--Right after school, beginning around 2:30 or 3:00
- ☐--In the late afternoon, beginning around 4:00 or 5:00
- ☐--In the early evening, beginning around 6:00 or 7:00
- ☐--No preference [DON'T READ]
- ☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

BARRIERS

Next, I'm going to list some reasons your middle school child might not participate in activities.

How much of a problem is transportation, or not having a good way to get to and from activities?

☐--A big problem
☐--A small problem
☐--Not a problem
☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

How much of a problem is having other kids in the program who have bad attitudes, or seem threatening to your child?

☐--A big problem
☐--A small problem
☐--Not a problem
☐--Don't know [DON'T READ]

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

My final questions are for statistical purposes only.

What is the language that is spoken most at your home?

☐---An Asian language (e.g. Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian)
☐---English
☐---Spanish
☐---Won't say-refused [DON'T READ]
☐---SPECIFY OTHER

Which of the following best describes the grades your middle school child is getting this year?

☐---Mostly As
☐---Mostly As and Bs
☐---Mostly Bs
☐---Mostly Bs and Cs
☐---Mostly Cs
☐---Mostly Cs and Ds
☐---Mostly Ds and below
☐---Don't know [DON'T READ]

> Demographic questions like these will help you understand the characteristics of the people you have included in your research, and will enable you to break down responses and attitudes by these characteristics. For example, if you ask about ethnicity, you can understand what types of activities are preferred by Caucasian students, what activities are preferred by African-American students, and what are preferred by Hispanic students.

Which of the following broad categories best describes your total household income for the past year before taxes:

☐---Under $20,000
☐---$20,000 to $35,000
☐---$35,000 to $50,000
☐---Over $50,000
☐---Won't say-refused [DON'T READ]

INTERVIEWER: RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER

☐---Male
☐---Female

4. Training Interviewers

Training interviewers: Interviewers will need to be trained on the specific requirements of this project as well as on the general requirements of in-person interviewing. This section will provide training information for interviewing in general, including tips on collecting high-quality closed- and open-ended responses, as well as information that is specific to intercept interviewing.

How to Collect High-Quality Data

- Do not comment on responses; go directly to reading the next question.
- Never skip a question unless the survey tells you to.
- Do not make jokes or conversation, and do not encourage your respondent to do so either. Establishing a personal connection with a respondent will bias their responses.
- If the respondent does not answer on the scale, repeat the whole scale back to them. They must pick from the scale before you record a response. Say “I’m sorry, the only choices I have are ‘excellent, good, fair, or poor’ (or whatever the scale is); which would you like me to record?” For most questions, ‘don’t know’ will be a valid response, and if need be, you can present respondents with this option.
- Do not record a response until the respondent picks one of the options on the scale. Do not anticipate a response.

Conducting Intercept Interviews

Intercept interviews are a common type of in-person interview, where interviewers are in a public place or in a location where large groups of the population targeted for the survey are, and interviewers approach people to ask them to do a survey. This section provides several tips and steps to follow when conducting intercept interviews.

- Consider setting up a protocol for determining who to approach to conduct an interview, such as approaching every 4th person.
- If you are noticing a pattern in your respondent type, actively try to get a mix of people. For example, approach a mix of people who are standing or walking among a group vs. those who are alone, as well as a mix of men and women, people in different age groups, and people of different races or ethnicities.
- Discontinue an interview if someone is having difficulty speaking English, or you are having a lot of difficulty understanding them.

- Look at the person, not the survey, as much as possible.
- Act really interested in what you are doing, use your voice, your smile, be convincing!
- Do not let the respondent, or anyone with them look at the questionnaire over your shoulder.
- If someone is in a hurry, you can offer to walk with them.
- If you are surveying someone in a group of people, accept answers from only one person, and if others try to comment, explain that you cannot accept the responses.
- Write legibly and in pencil.
- Clean up your questionnaire quickly and immediately after each interview; make sure there are no skipped questions, make sure there are no double-circled responses, and make sure your answers to open-ended questions are reasonably legible.
- If you have a list or introduction in the survey that feels long and boring to you, remember that the respondent has not heard it a million times, so make it sound interesting—they will follow your lead.
- If the respondent hesitates to answer, read the list of responses to them; you can say, for example, "Would you say 'excellent, good, fair, or poor?'" This will help to speed up the interview.
- Be 100% sure not to skip any questions. Be familiar with your paper copy.
- Do not survey anyone who is intoxicated.
- Bring water with you.
- Bring a back pack or other bag to carry materials in.
- Establish a procedure for returning surveys and other materials to a central location after each shift of interviewing.

Collecting High-Quality Open-Ended Responses

Open-ended questions are questions in a survey that allow a respondent to give a verbatim response. Open-ended responses should always be recorded as close to verbatim—that is, in the respondent's own words—as possible. Try to get at least two or three detailed ideas for each open-ended question.

You will need to **probe to get the best and clearest responses** to open-ended questions. Open-ended responses should always contain lots of detail, and no general or vague responses. We get detail from respondents by probing. Every probe used by an interviewer must be general, and not bias the response. Acceptable probes do not lead a respondent into any particular answer, only into saying more. Examples are provided on the following pages.

PROBE ON VAGUE WORDS OR CONCEPTS	
IF THEY SAY:	**YOU COULD SAY:**
“It’s good.”	“What makes it good?”
“It’s bad.”	“What makes it bad?”
“It’s better.”	“What is it better than?”
“It’s worse.”	“What specifically makes it worse?”
“It’s in/convenient.”	“What about it is in/convenient?”
“It’s high/low quality.”	“In what ways is it high/low quality?”
“Its reputation.”	“What have you heard about its reputation?”
“The cost.”	“What about the cost?”
“It’s close.”	“Close to what?”

It is very important not to make any assumptions about what the respondent will say, or in other words, to lead them into a particular response. Using more general probes will allow the possibility for a wider range of responses, and possibly more responses as well. In addition, avoid asking respondents “why” they gave a particular response. This could put them on the defensive. Instead ask, “What are the major reasons you feel that way?”

PROBE IN A NON-LEADING, UNBIASED WAY	
SAY THIS:	**INSTEAD OF THIS:**
“What is better about it?”	“Is it better because it’s less expensive?”
“What is it close to?”	“Is it close to home?”
“What about the cost?”	“Is it too expensive?”

Probing for additional thoughts

Once you have probed for and recorded detail about your respondent’s first idea, the next step is to **probe for additional ideas**. Try to get at least one or two more. It is important not to use a probe like “anything else?” or “nothing else?” This type of probe gives the respondent the impression that you want to move on to the next question and encourages them to respond by saying “no.” The proper probe for getting additional comments is to ask:

“WHAT ELSE?”

“What else” assumes the respondent has more to say and encourages them to make another comment. Continue to ask “what else?” and probe for details until your respondent has nothing else to say.

Example of Probing

Interviewer:	*"What do you like most about the Maple Hill After-school Arts Program?"*
Respondent:	*"It's good."*
Interviewer:	*"What makes it good?"*
Respondent:	*"The staff is nice."*
Interviewer:	*"What's nice about them?"*
Respondent:	*"They really seem to care about my son, and they're always friendly to me when I pick him up."*
Interviewer:	*"What else do you like most about the program?"*
Respondent:	*"Well, it's close."*
Interviewer:	*"Close to what?"*
Respondent:	*"Close to my house—it's right around the corner."*
Interviewer:	*"What else?"*
Respondent:	*"Its reputation."*
Interviewer:	*"What about its reputation?"*
Respondent:	*"I've heard a lot of really good things about the program from other moms. Everyone says you can trust them and that kids have a good time there."*

5. Conducting Interviews

In order to conduct in-person interviews, interviewers will need to have the appropriate **materials** and follow appropriate **protocol.** This section provides several steps and tips for conducting in-person interviews.

Materials for In-Person Interviews

- Photocopy the appropriate number of paper surveys, check surveys to ensure no pages are missing, and then number each sequentially.
- If asking a financial question, print it on a separate piece of card stock. Assign each response a letter or number so respondents can choose their income category without reading it out loud.
- Obtain a clipboard for each interviewer. Attached to the clipboard should be two sharpened pencils with erasers.
- Interviewers should be provided with a contact name and phone number for someone at the organization that is sponsoring the survey.
    - The names and numbers should be in an easily accessible place, for example, taped to the clipboard itself.
    - Interviewers should be prepared to reassure potential respondents of the legitimacy of the survey and provide names and/or phone numbers where they can call to check for themselves.
    - If interviewing at another organization or business—for example, at a health center or supermarket—interviewers may also be questioned by staff who are unfamiliar with the survey, in which case they will need to provide the name of an administrator who can confirm that they have permission to conduct the interviews there.
- Have name tags for each interviewer.
- If providing financial incentives for completing the survey, make sure interviewers have a sufficient number so they will not run out during their scheduled shift.
    - Incentives should be separated into individual envelopes.

Protocol for In-Person Interviews

- Advise interviewers to **wear appropriate dress**—you may need to be specific with them in terms of exactly what they should or should not wear.
- Interviewers should **review the questionnaire ahead of time** with a trainer who can answer any questions they might have. Make sure interviewers are very familiar with any "skips" in the questionnaire; that is, instances where particular responses to a question mean that one or several subsequent questions will be skipped.
- In order to aid in making corrections, interviewers should be instructed to **use only pencil** and to **mark their answers clearly**, i.e. when circling a response, make sure that the circle does not overlap onto any other response.
- Open-ended responses should be specific and complete, **written legibly**, with all mistakes completely erased.
- Make sure all interviewers understand the need for having a **professional demeanor**, reading all scales and making the respondent pick one of the choices, nondirectional probing, and objectivity.
- Interviewers should always **survey people verbally**; they should **never hand out the survey for a respondent to fill out themselves**. Interviewers should not allow respondents to read over their shoulder. Interviewers should stand facing the person, with the clipboard held in a comfortable position that does not allow the respondent to read along with the interviewer. This allows the interviewer to be in control of the survey.
- For **financial questions**, interviewers should hold up the scale provided to them beforehand and ask the respondent to choose the letter or number that their income category falls into. If a respondent refuses to answer this question, or any other, interviewers should be instructed to reassure them that this is fine and then to proceed to the next question.
- After completing a survey, interviewers should **check the paper copy** over to make sure that all answers are circled clearly, opens are complete and legible, and all questions have been asked.

Supervising In-Person Interviews: Every shift will require a **supervisor** to manage it. For the purposes of this manual, we are assuming that the supervisor will be a staff member of the organization that is sponsoring the research who is heavily involved in the project. If this is a full-time (40 hours per week) staff person, expect that recruiting interviewers and then managing the actual interviewing process will consume at least one-half of his or her working hours for about four weeks or more.

A supervisor's primary responsibilities during a shift include:

- Providing interviewers with the **materials they will need** for their shift, including several copies of the questionnaire, clipboards, name tags, writing implements, and so on.
- **Reviewing completed surveys**. The supervisor should review completed surveys after each shift and provide feedback to interviewers as needed before their next shift. Check to make sure that all questions are answered and that open-ended responses are legible. If there is a problem, such as a response that is unclear or skipped, check with the interviewer to see if they can provide additional information.
- Providing **training and feedback** for interviewers as needed. Feedback should be provided privately, and in a constructive manner.
- **Being available for questions**.
- **Motivating interviewers,** such as through friendly competition and rewards. Some suggestions for motivating interviewers include:
    - Making sure to provide plenty of encouragement and positive feedback.
    - Trying to keep the atmosphere pleasant and supportive, yet professional.
    - Making sure interviewers know what the expected number of completions per hour (CPH) is for the project. Emphasize that only surveys that are filled out correctly with no skipped responses can be used.
    - Providing bonuses every shift to the interviewer who performs best in some respect. The bonus could go to the interviewer with the highest CPH, or to the interviewer with the best open-ended responses, for example. The bonus could be $10 in cash or a gift certificate.
    - Interviewers can also work toward winning a bonus for the interviewer who performs best on some measure of quality and/or productivity, such as CPH, for the project as a whole. Keep track of interviewer's cumulative performance over the course of the project, and keep interviewers informed as to where they are in the standings.
    - Keeping track of the CPH for the project as a whole, so interviewers can compare their performance to the average.

6. Analyzing The Data

There are several steps involved in analyzing quantitative data, including (1) coding any open-ended responses; (2) organizing the information for analysis; (3) frequency analysis; (4) crosstabulations, (5) determining significant differences; and (6) calculating error rates. These steps are summarized below, and described in detail in Workbook I.

Coding Open-Ended Data: There is no way to quantitatively analyze raw open-ended data—first, you must quantify it. The first step in this process is called *coding*. When coding, you break down open-ended responses into categories, such as "wants more sports programs" or "wants programs available on the weekends," and count how often that category of response was given. Workbook I will present instruction in detail on developing code categories and creating codebooks to be used in analysis.

Organizing Your Data for Analysis: Before beginning your analysis, you should organize the information for your study. Workbook I discusses strategies for organizing your data by general topic.

Frequency Analysis: A description of the number of times a particular response is given to a question throughout the entire survey is called a frequency distribution. Using gender as an example, you are reporting a frequency distribution when you report that 40% of respondents are men and 60% are women.

Crosstabulations: Crosstabulations, often called crosstabs or banners, are a way of presenting the data you've collected for assistance in analysis. Crosstabs are organized by rows and columns—you can choose the questions you would like to use as column variables, and then run all of the questions asked in your survey as row variables. Crosstabulations are effective at giving researchers an overview of the data.

Significant Differences: The only way to know if differences between categories (e.g., boys and girls) are important is to run a statistical test that will tell you if the difference is *statistically significant*. Statistical significance is the measurement of likelihood that this difference would occur in the "real world," and is not simply a function of sampling error or chance. There are **three statistical tests** commonly used to test for statistical significance when analyzing crosstabs: the difference of proportion test, the t-test, and Chi square. These are discussed in detail in Workbook I.

Error Rates: An estimate from a survey is unlikely to equal the exact proportion of people who think or feel a certain way. This is because data for surveys are collected from a *sample* of the population being studied, not the entire population. Therefore, sample surveys involve a *margin of error*. Calculating error rates and factors affecting them are described in detail in Workbook I.

For more detailed information about data analysis | **SEE WORKBOOK I**