

TIPS: Things to think about when developing your survey

- Does the survey
 - Have a 3-letter level Sponsor or appropriate level of Functional Authority?
 - Cross Functional Authority (FA) lines?
- Provide significant contribution to relevant Service/DoD policies and programs?
- Duplicate efforts of another survey?
- Does the survey require an IRB? (32 CFR 219 and AFI 40-402)
- Does the survey protect the respondent's confidentiality and anonymity? Is survey voluntary?
- Do the benefits to the Service/DoD outweigh potential costs (e.g., negative publicity, damage to morale or readiness, time burden on respondents)
- Is the survey's purpose to meet an academic requirement or a springboard for future research?
- Are the survey questions of appropriate length to avoid survey fatigue?
- Are survey questions essential to the goal of the survey?
- Are questions logical and sequential in placement on the survey?
- Are the grammar, spelling, and punctuation correct? Do questions consist of common wording?
- Does the survey use double-barreled questions (use of two separate questions in same question; e.g., "How satisfied are you with your salary and your title?")
- Does the survey use leading questions (e.g., "Don't you agree that pilots should earn more money than they currently earn?")
- Does the survey use built-in assumptions (e.g., "This is an improvement over the last report" assumes they know what the last report was)
- Does the survey avoid double negatives or framing in the negative? (e.g., "Would you say that your manager is not inattentive?")
- Are response categories exhaustive? (e.g., age - all respondents can select one that fits)
- Is response rating scale consistent, balanced and complete? (e.g., 5=high, 1=low; equal number of positive /negative responses, not applicable, neutral or choose not to respond options available)
- Does survey contain prohibited or inappropriate topics (e.g., political views, person-specific statements or questions)?
- Are response scales mutually exclusive? Categories are mutually exclusive when there is no overlap – (e.g., 10 or less, 11-20, 21-30, versus NOT mutually exclusive, 10 or less, 10–20, 20-30)
- Does the survey avoid or minimize use of open/closed questions?
- When open/closed questions are used, are the questions followed by the following advisory statement?

"We cannot provide confidentiality to a participant regarding comments involving criminal activity/behavior, or statements that pose a threat to yourself or others".