ITIL® Poster Series #57
Customer Satisfaction Survey Techniques

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Introduction

Surveys are a complex and specialized area, requiring a good understanding of statistics and survey techniques.

The following provides an overview of some of the most commonly used techniques and tools

2 - THE APPLICATION PORTFOLIO

TECHNIQUE/TOOL	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
AFTER-CALL SURVEY Callers are asked to remain on the phone after the call and then asked to rate the service they were provided	High response rate because the caller is already on the phone Caller is surveyed immediately after the call so their experience is recent	People may feel pressured into taking the survey, resulting in a negative service experience The surveyor is seen as part of the service desk being surveyed, which may discourage open answers
OUTBOUND TELEPHONE SURVEY Customers and users who have previously used the service desk are contacted some time after their experience with the service desk	Higher response rate because the caller is interviewed directly Specific categories of user or customer can be targeted for feedback (e.g. people who requested a specific service, or people who experienced a disruption to a particular service)	This method could be seen as intrusive, if the call disrupts the user or customer from their work The survey is conducted some time after the user or customer used the service desk, so their perception may have changed
PERSONAL INTERVIEWS Customers and users are interviewed personally by the person doing the survey. This is especially effective for customers or users who use the service desk extensively or who have had a very negative experience	The interviewer is able to observe non-verbal signals as well as listening to what the user or customer is saying Users and customers feel a greater degree of personal attention and a sense that their answers are being taken seriously	Interviews are time-consuming for both the interviewer and the respondent Users and customers could turn the interviews into complaint sessions
GROUP INTERVIEWS Customers and users are interviewed in small groups. This is good for gathering general impressions and for determining whether there is a need to change certain aspects of the service desk, e.g. service hours or location	A larger number of users and customers can be interviewed Questions are more generic and therefore more consistent between interviews	People may not express themselves freely in front of their peers or managers People's opinions can easily be changed by others in the group during the interview
POSTAL/EMAIL SURVEYS Survey questionnaires are mailed to a target set of customers and users. They are asked to return their responses by email or post	Specific or all customers or users can be targeted Postal surveys can be anonymous, allowing people to express themselves more freely Email surveys are not anonymous, but can be created using automated forms that make it convenient and easy for the user to reply and increase the likelihood it will be completed	Postal surveys are labour-intensive to process The percentage of people responding to postal surveys tends to be small Misinterpretation of a question could affect the result
ONLINE SURVEYS Questionnaires are posted on a website and users and customers encouraged via email or links from a popular site to participate in the survey	The potential audience of these surveys is fairly large Respondents can complete the questionnaire in their own time The links on popular websites are good reminders without being intrusive	The type and percentage of respondents cannot be predicted

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