**Guidelines for Questionnaire**

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A questionnaire is a powerful tool for collecting data in which a respondent provides answers to a series of questions. A good questionnaire should be short, and the language of the question should be simple and easily understood. A quality questionnaire is a time-consuming process but by following a simple guideline the final output will be worthy of collection quality data for analysis. A few key guidelines to keep in mind

**Identify the goal of the research:**Clearly defined goals lay a strong platform for a quality questionnaire. It helps understand the relevant information that needs to be collected and serves as the focal point of your questionnaire.

Develop one or several hypotheses that you want to test. The questions that you include in your questionnaire should be aimed at systematically testing these hypotheses.

**Determine the question language, structure or types-** Depending on the information you wish to gather, there are several possible types of questions to include on your questionnaire, each with unique pros and cons. Poorly designed questions will confuse the respondents leading to incorrect/biased answers. Thus, the words of the question should be carefully chosen. The questions that you develop for your questionnaire should be clear, concise, and direct, avoiding implicit assumptions, generalizations and implicit alternatives This will ensure that you get the best possible answers from your respondents.

**Overcome the respondents’ inability and unwillingness to answer-** Determine if you will include an option such as “I don’t know” or “Not applicable.” Such questions serve a dual function; give your respondents a way of not answering certain questions and identifying missing data, which can thus be filtered during data analysis. Ambiguous quantifiers such as ‘frequently’, ‘usually’ and ‘regularly’ should be avoided. Instead, pre-tested response options should specify the number of times per appropriate period (e.g. day, week, month, year) of an event or behavior.

**Restrict the length of your questionnaire-** A questionnaire should be short as possible. More people will be likely to answer a shorter questionnaire.

**Understand target demographic especially their cultural makeup-** The culture of the respondents can affect their perception of questions and therefore their answers.Demographic variables like age, sex should be included in the questions. Age ranges help collect data from a wider audience and understand the boundaries of market segmentation. For example, a young adult age can be 18-29 years old, adults can be 30-54 years old, and mature adults can be 55+

**Protect the respondent’s privacy-**Privacy should be prioritized over information. Anonymous questionnaires are great choices. However, many times it is easy to deduce a respondent’s identity using other demographic information (such as age, physical features, or zip code).

**Test the questionnaire-** The questionnaire should be tested on a small number of respondents to identify the potential issues and eliminate them. Every dimension of the questionnaire should be pre-tested. The sample respondents should be similar to the target respondents of the survey.

**Finalize the questionnaire-** Check the final draft questionnaire. Ask yourself how much the information will be obtained from each question. Obtain feedback from the respondents on the questionnaire.