

not, thus increasing their participation and therefore the amount of nonresponse bias in the estimates related to support for the organization.

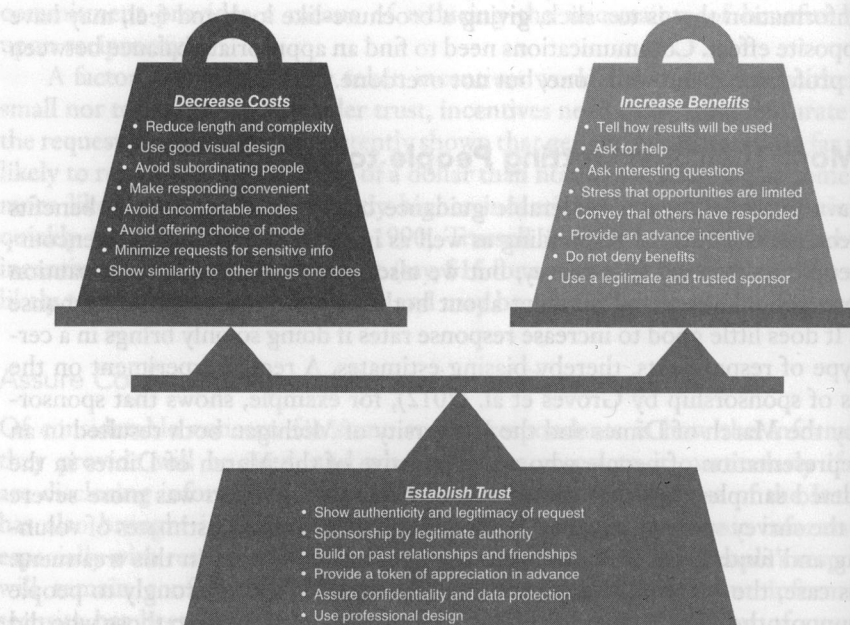
As this example illustrates, it is important to ensure that any steps taken to increase benefits, decrease costs, or build trust do not have differential appeal (or lack of appeal) across different types of sample members in ways that are related to outcomes of interest in the survey. For example, while it might make perfect sense to emphasize March of Dimes sponsorship of a survey focused on how the March of Dimes can better interact with supporters, it would be advisable to deemphasize March of Dimes sponsorship of a survey focused on estimating volunteerism or barriers to volunteerism because in the latter case responses are needed from both those who volunteer and those who do not.

Figure 2.3 provides a summary of the ways we have described here of increasing benefits, decreasing costs, and building trust. As this image suggests, we view trust as the base upon which the decision to respond depends. Obtaining a response will be most likely if sample members can trust that the promised benefits will come to fruition and if the perceived costs have been minimized such that the benefits outweigh the costs.

PUTTING THE PARTS TOGETHER: SOME GUIDELINES FOR APPLYING SOCIAL EXCHANGE

It is one thing to provide a list of actions one might take to offer rewards, reduce costs, and engender trust that responding to a survey request will contribute to a positive outcome, as we have done in the last section. It is quite another to decide which of these to use for a particular survey, and when to use them. A number of considerations need to guide the process of going from these various disparate parts into a meaningful and effective whole survey design.

FIGURE 2.3 Summary of ways to increase benefits, reduce costs, and establish trust.



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