

# Survey Design 101

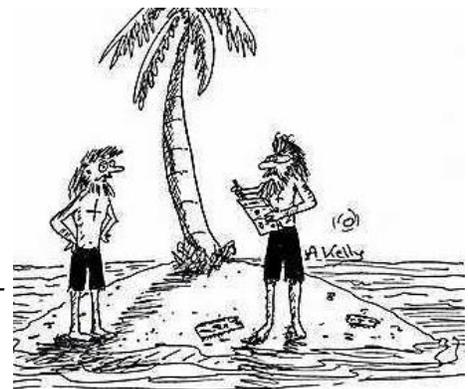
## Survey Question Types

- Open-ended
  - Allows survey takers to write-in response in their own words
  - Provides more detailed information than most closed questions, but can also be more difficult to analyze
  - *Example: What do you like most about your school?*
- Multiple choice
  - Can allow respondent to choose multiple answers from a list or require a single answer
  - *Example: Of the following types of food, which have you eaten in the past week? (Check all that apply)*
    - Pizza    Hamburgers    Hotdogs    Ice cream    None
  - *Example: What grade are you in at school? (Select one)*
    - 6th    7th    8th    9th    10th    11th
- Rank order questions
  - Respondents asked to rank a range of items from a list (e.g. in order of importance)
  - *Example: Which of the major sports in the United States do you most enjoy watching? (please rank the choices from first (1) to last (5):*
    - \_\_\_Basketball   \_\_\_Football   \_\_\_Soccer   \_\_\_Baseball   \_\_\_Hockey
- Scale questions
  - Most commonly used question type on surveys
  - Scales often ask about agreement strength, likelihood or satisfaction (Likert scale)
  - *Example: Please select how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: In order to achieve my goals, I must graduate from high school.*
    - Strongly Agree    Agree    Neutral    Disagree    Strongly Disagree

## Survey Question Pitfalls

### Question Types to Avoid

- Leading questions (use biased words or phrases or attempt to guide the respondent's answer)
  - Example: Given that students in many other countries attend school a full month longer than American students, would you support extending the school year in United States? (\*\*Added background information suggests that survey takers should support extending the school year)*
- Ambiguous or vague questions
  - Example: Do you consider yourself to be a good student? (\*\*Survey takers may have widely different views on what constitutes a 'good student')*
- Double-barrel questions (two or more issues into one)
  - Example: Do you agree or disagree that graduating high school and getting a good job should be a top priority for high school students? (\*\*A survey taker might agree that graduating high school should be a top priority, but not agree that getting a job right after high school is a top goal)*
- Questions with slang, jargon, or abbreviations
  - Example: Do you attend a vo-tech high school? (\*\*Survey takers may or may not be familiar with the shortened abbreviation for vocational-technical school)*



"For the thousandth time, I don't want to take part in a survey!"