

Survey Design Tips

Consider the following points when designing your survey -

1. What are you going to ask? Consider:

Before deciding what you are going to ask you will need to work out what you want to know. This will help you develop the most useful questions. For example, if you want to know what percentage of people at your school want to address school food waste, simply asking "Do you want something done about food waste generated at school?" and getting a YES/NO answer is a good way. Then you can add up all the people who do or don't.

However, if you want to know what other ideas they have for food waste, you might need to ask your question in a different way. You could ask; "What would you like to see happen to food waste generated at school?" and then give a range of options that people could choose from, such as a). Composting, b). Taken home, c). Fed to animals, or d). I don't know. Alternatively, you could just let people give their own answers without giving them any options to choose from.

2. How many questions are you going to ask? You should consider:

- Many people are very busy and don't have time for a lot of questions.
- Keep the questions brief and clear and short.
- Understand why you are asking the questions: if they ask you something in return you need to be able to answer.

3. How many people will you try and talk to? You should consider:

You should decide on a number before you head out, but between five and twenty people should be fine, depending on the method that you choose for asking questions: if you're asking people to answer YES/NO questions, then the more people the better. But if you're asking them to talk about their opinions, then aim for fewer people.

4. Who are you going to interview? You should consider:

- Some people might want to remain anonymous.
- If you want to ask more lengthy questions, you will be asking for more time of people.
- People you already know will probably be more willing to help you out.

5. How are you going to record this information?

- Will you get people to write down their answers? Or:
- Will you get people to fill out a survey form? Or:
- Will you write down what they are saying? Or:
- Will you record them by video or audio? (You will need to ask their permission before you do.)