

Good survey questions are essential to collecting good data. The basic principles below are intended to guide the review or creation of high-quality survey questions.

- 1** Language is simple and direct; questions are free from jargon, acronyms, and ambiguous terms.
- 2** Each question asks about only one thing at a time.
- 3** No more than one negative term is used in a question, including its response options.
- 4** Response options are exhaustive; all reasonable answers to a question are included, with an *other* option if needed.
- 5** Response options are mutually exclusive, i.e., possible answers do not overlap.
- 6** Response options match question stem; all possible answers make sense with prompt.
- 7** Terms used in a response scale are consistent and balanced; they either represent a continuum of the same concept (unipolar) or of opposite concepts (bipolar).
- 8** *Don't know* and *not applicable* are included only when they are reasonable responses.
- 9** Questions can be readily answered by respondents.
- 10** Entire questionnaire is as concise as possible; extraneous or duplicate information is omitted from questions, instructions, and communications.
- 11** All questions are appropriate for all respondents; branching used is when one or more questions are pertinent to only certain types of respondents.
- 12** All questions support the survey's purpose, which is aligned with a larger research or evaluation question.