



Office for Disability

Satisfaction Surveys in Relation to People with a Disability

Most organisations aim to equitably meet the needs of everyone requiring and using their services. Poor service, or service that does not meet a customer's needs, may not be deliberate. The organisation may just not be aware they are not hitting the mark. For people with a disability however, there may be many barriers to using programs, services and facilities. For example, the design of venue, shops or offices can affect access for people with a mobility impairment. Other people may have difficulty communicating, including asking questions about products or services.

It is helpful to understand if people with a disability are reasonably satisfied with the organisation's accessibility and responsiveness to them. For example if the organisation is a club, they may want to find out if people with a disability find the club welcoming and inclusive. The best way to determine if customers, members, clients or patients are satisfied is to ask them. This can be undertaken through a satisfaction survey. Once provided with answers, appropriate action may be taken, including updating current practices and processes.

Member and customer data

For some organisations, a survey such as a satisfaction survey may be an opportunity to gather information about their member or customer base. A survey can be used to contribute to demographic profile data. For example, a club may be aware they are attracting people with a disability to their programs or activities, but could use a survey to inform them of differing satisfaction levels from users who are Deaf, people who use a wheelchair, or members with an intellectual disability. A survey could reveal that the majority of members are highly satisfied with access improvements to the facility, but that some respondents report difficulties with communication across the club. This information can be used to inform future strategies.

Things to think about

Four key things to think about when designing satisfaction research targeted towards people with a disability are the:

- service dimensions
- data collection methods
- sampling methods
- preparation and format of the questionnaire.

Service dimensions

While an overall rating of satisfaction may be interesting, it is fairly limited unless it can be broken down further into ratings for a number of meaningful service dimensions. Therefore customer satisfaction research needs to consider the range of dimensions that contribute to overall satisfaction.

Examples of dimensions that may apply to all organisations include:

- ease of access to premises and wayfinding (navigating from place to place)
- access to information
- staff behaviour and attitude
- ability to make complaints.

Organisations are likely to have further dimensions specific to their function, for example retail, sporting clubs, service-oriented businesses or computer-based environments.

Data collection method

A face-to-face interview, conducted by trained interviewers, is the most inclusive method of collecting data from people with a disability. Alternatives for collecting quantitative customer satisfaction data include:

- written, postal questionnaires
- telephone surveys
- online surveys
- direct observations.

Sampling methods

Sampling refers to the process of finding a representative group of the target audience to include in the research. A random sample of consumers is likely to under-represent people with a disability. Targeting only people with a disability can be more time consuming, but the questions and therefore the results will be more specific and informative.

Alternatively, the benefit in using a random sample is that the survey can be inclusive of other members of the public or targeted group who may be having difficulty using the organisation's services. For example, elderly citizens could be having difficulty with access, print size or technology, and parents could be having difficulty with pram access or facilities that are not child friendly. A random sample would include this broad spectrum. If the chosen method is a random survey of consumers, it is worthwhile to include questions that establish whether the respondent has a disability and the nature of their functional barriers.

When sampling is tailored to people with a disability, a personal approach in survey collection will generally be most effective. Organisations can boost the number of people with a disability in a sample, or exclusively target people with a disability, by contacting disability organisations (advocacy or peak bodies) to request assistance in including people with a disability.

Respondents should be told what the survey is about and what it aims to achieve. They should be assured that their opinions are valued but that their responses will remain confidential and cannot be traced back to them. This encourages people to participate and be honest and open in their responses without fear of retribution.

Questionnaire

Preparing the right questions is important, and expertise in survey design will ensure the questionnaire is valid throughout. For example, an expert can construct questions in such a way so that invalid responses, such as a person responding 'yes' to all questions, can be identified and disregarded.

Satisfaction questions are generally linked to a rating scale. Below are some examples of typical satisfaction questions.

Q. How would you rate the staff for their willingness to help you with your enquiry?	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>O1</u>
	<u>Good</u>	<u>O2</u>
	<u>Average</u>	<u>O3</u>
	<u>Poor</u>	<u>O4</u>
	<u>Terrible</u>	<u>O5</u>
	<u>Non response</u>	<u>O6</u>

Q. How satisfied were you overall with the service provided?	<u>Completely satisfied</u>	<u>O1</u>
	<u>Somewhat satisfied</u>	<u>O2</u>
	<u>Neither satisfied or dissatisfied</u>	<u>O3</u>
	<u>Somewhat dissatisfied</u>	<u>O4</u>
	<u>Completely dissatisfied</u>	<u>O5</u>
	<u>Non response</u>	<u>O6</u>

While a face-to-face interview is one collection method, different versions should be made available to suit people with a disability if a questionnaire is to be distributed. Accessible formats include the use of accessible online survey software, large print, audio and Easy English. Easy English will assist people with an intellectual impairment or communication difficulty. This version of the survey could be phrased in terms of how the respondent feels about various aspects of their experience using the organisation's products or services. For example, 'Do you feel happy about the way the people spoke to you?'

If you would like to receive this document in an accessible format, contact the Office for Disability: **Telephone:** (03) 9208 3015 **Email:** OFD@dpcd.vic.gov.au

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