



7 Tips For A Great Screener

Getting the best insights out of your survey starts with ensuring that the right people are taking it. The primary tool to help ensure this is to employ a screener. The screener is the part of the questionnaire where you are trying to identify that you are getting to your target audience. Just as design problems with the survey can lead to poor result, a bad screener can do the same.

To help ensure you are getting the right people in your survey, we have put together some tips so you can create a great screener.



1. Make Sure Your Survey Introduction Isn't Leading

▲ The first thing you want to make sure of when creating a great screener is that the introduction to your survey doesn't lead the respondents to answer the questions a specific way or give a clue to the target audience you are trying to reach.

Here is an example of an introduction that is leading and one that is not.

✗ *Welcome to our online survey. The purpose of the survey is to gain your opinions about treating cancer in dogs and to understand pet owners' future needs for treatment.*

✓ *Thank you for participating in our brief survey.*

Please be assured, your responses will remain confidential and will only be considered in aggregate with all other respondents. This survey takes approximately 15 - 20 minutes to complete and once started, you cannot suspend it. By clicking on the "arrow" button below, you will begin our online survey.

2. Avoid Leading Questions

✔ Along the same lines as the introduction, you don't want any of your screener questions to be leading or give clues to what your target audience is. Asking leading question or providing clues to your target audience can cause two main problems. The first is that you make it easier for fraudsters to answer the way you want, allowing them into your survey and providing you with poor data. The second is that you may allow other respondents, who are not fraudsters, but also not your target audience into your survey.

Here is an example of a leading question and one that is not.

✗ *Have you owned a dog that was suspected or diagnosed as having cancer by a veterinarian?*

Yes

No [TERMINATE]

✔ *Which of the following pets do you own?*

Dog

Cat [TERMINATE]

Fish [TERMINATE]

Something else [TERMINATE]

None of these [TERMINATE]

3. Skip The Yes/No



YES


NO

▲ Yes/No questions have their place in a survey, but the screener is not one of them. Fraudsters have a 50/50 chance of answering the correct way and getting into the core portion of your survey. You should look to use multiple choice questions instead of yes/no questions as they keep your target audience vague and can make it more difficult for people outside your target audience from getting into your study.

4. Avoid Double-Barreled Questions

- ✓ Double-barreled questions (questions that ask 2 things in a single question) are generally a no-no in a survey – and the screener is no exception. Double-barreled questions can lead to inaccurate data since the question is not clear on what it is asking of the respondents. If you have a double-barreled question in your screener, don't be afraid to turn it into 2 questions.

5. Imagine There Is No Targeting



One of the best ways to build a great screener and ensure you get your target audience is to build out the screener like there is not targeting built into the sample sending to your study. This will ensure that you make it hard for fraudsters to get past the screener.



6. Ensure There Is An Answer Option For Everyone

📌 When it comes to the multiple-choice questions in your screener, you want to make sure that there is an answer option for everyone, even if that option is “Other” or “None of the Above.” Ensuring that there are options for all respondents will help you weed out people not in your target audience. It also can help you avoid any clues or making your questions leading.

7. Move Term Points And Quota Associated Questions To The Front of The Line

📌 Many studies have quotas built into their sample plans to ensure they meet certain criteria, whether it is to balance them based on certain criteria like gender or census, or to ensure specific regions are equally represented, and more. Termination points are also built in to remove people who do not fit the criteria of the target audience.

When you are building your screener, you want to try and put any questions that are tied to a quota, or include a termination point, as close to the beginning as possible. This really revolved around respondent experience. No one wants to take a 20-minute survey, only to be screened out at the end. It is a waste of the respondents' time and hurts the relationship that a panel has with that respondent.

In general, the better experience a respondent has taking surveys, the better-quality insights they will provide.

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