

10 ways to improve your survey response rates



1. Contacting your audience

You need to use different approaches including, email, blog posts of the forthcoming survey. You will also need to think about the different outlet channels your particular audience has access to. Letting your potential audience know in advance can raise interest and the arrival of the survey does not come as a surprise.

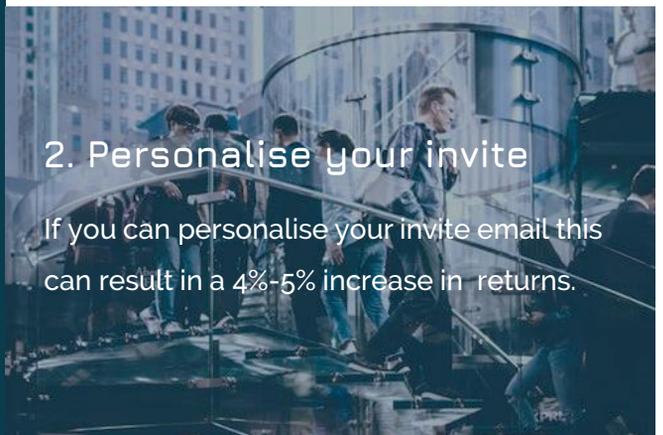
Introduction

A low response rate is always a problem for survey practitioners. However, there are a number of things you can do to improve response rates to your online survey.

This eGuide outlines 10 proven things you can do in the design of your questionnaire that will result in increased response rates.

2. Personalise your invite

If you can personalise your invite email this can result in a 4%-5% increase in returns.



3. Keep email invitation short

First the email must look professional and you will need to provide some information about the survey, how the person was selected, what are the benefits of the survey including, benefits for the respondent, approximate time to complete, confidentiality and a contact name if the respondent wants to check anything out. This should be followed by a simple link to the survey and a Thank you.

4. Use a motivating welcome screen

The welcome screen needs to emphasise the ease of responding, and shows respondents how to move to the next page. The page should also include details about how the information will be used, whether it's confidential or will be shared or anonymised.

5. Ensure the first question is easy to understand

The first question on the screen can have a significant impact on whether the respondent continues to complete the questionnaire. So make it's easy to answer and does not ask for sensitive or embarrassing information.

6. Avoid multi question screens

Keep to one question a screen as this enables the respondent to focus on one thing and avoids the respondent having to scroll.

7. Avoid the over use of graphics

Graphics and internet features can distract from the content and purpose of the survey. Keep things simple.

8. little things really do matter

Pay close attention to physical layout and what might appear to be trivial issues, e.g. the placement of skip or filtered questions, overly-crowded design, visual and graphic images, and the misalignment of response boxes.

9. Send email reminders

Some respondents respond by return and hopefully, your survey returns will rise as time passes however, if your returns are flat lining this is the time you will need to send a reminder email. The email should include a summary of the first email, including benefits and confidentiality.

10. Promise to publish your survey results

With the increasing amount of online surveys, potential respondents are more reluctant to participate, unless they see some value in the survey. So send a thank you combined with a summary of the study findings.



About Health Outcomes Insights

Health Outcomes Insights is an independent research consultancy serving academia, life science researchers, healthcare agencies and the pharmaceutical industry, get targeted answers to patient behaviour, experience and health outcomes across a range of conditions and diseases – with particular expertise in diabetes.

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