



6 Common Survey Mistakes

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:

[How to create the perfect patient survey](#)

You already know you need to send out a patient satisfaction survey, and if you read through the article then you know what you need to do to increase the response rate and impact of your survey.

However, there are still many mistakes a practice (or any business, really) can make when creating and distributing a survey. From poor engagement to useless information, it may feel like the survey was more work than what it was worth. But trust us, it's worth it! Just be sure to avoid the common mistakes below.

1. Too many questions

People don't want to spend a significant portion of their precious time filling out a survey. The ones who do are likely only the patients who have an issue to complain about, and although this insight is important, you want a broader scope of patient feedback. That's why you need to keep surveys short (less than five minutes and under 10 questions).

2. Complex questions

It's hard for patients to give their honest and thorough opinions if they can't understand the question. Make sure you are clear in what you are asking and the type of answer you are seeking.

3. Not taking the time to think about the questions

Even if you have the right amount of simple questions, you won't retrieve the information you crave if you don't take the time to think critically about what you're asking. Consider the areas of your practice where you want input or affirmations and ask questions pertaining to those areas.

4. Failing to structure the questions properly

You know the questions you want to ask and you keep them short and to the point—but are you using the right method for each question? Some may require multiple choice answers, others a scale rating, or another an open-ended comment box. Mix it up!

5. Not delivering the survey properly

Asking your patient to stop in the waiting room after their appointment to fill out a survey? Not going to happen. Asking them to post a review on their own time? Probably not going to happen, unless they had an exceedingly positive or negative experience. Electronically sending

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them a survey post-appointment is a great way to garner feedback while not interfering with the patient's day, putting them on the spot, or soliciting only extreme opinions. (We can help with this, just ask!)

6. Not using your results

Regardless of how many of your patients fill out your survey, it's important to be open to the feedback. It's one thing to show that you care by asking for opinions, and another thing to act on them. Is your technology not up to snuff? Front office staff lacking in personality? Do your patients feel that you aren't spending enough time with them one-on-one? Whatever it may be, try not to be defensive and instead listen to what your patients are saying and how you may be able to make adjustments. Chances are if one or two patients feel this way, then many others are as well.

Avoiding these six common mistakes will help make your survey as valuable as possible, thus allowing your practice to improve!