



Increasing Response to Surveys

Frustrated by the lack of response to surveys from a particular target audience? Here is one suggestion adopted from research on focus groups and social marketing.

- Assemble a group of persons from the target audience, preferably in small groups of 8-12.
- Conduct at least three focus group discussions.
- Make certain the participants are representative of the target audience. Consider using a systematic way of choosing them to avoid building in any bias in your selection. Don't rely on your friends or acquaintances; you can get their ideas over a cup of coffee. You want ideas from members of the target audience *you don't usually hear from*.
- Try to place people in the focus group where they know the fewest people.
- Present the problem openly and honestly to the focus groups. Say,

*In our last survey to people like yourselves, our response rate was 10%. If **you** wanted to survey this group, how would **you** proceed?*

Participants will reveal excellent techniques for you to consider. Be ready for surprises.

Take any suggestions that surface in the first focus group and test them out in the second (and third) focus group. This strategy is a way to gain further insights into the positive and negative suggestions from the *perspective of the respondents*.

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