

## Pilot test your questionnaire

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### **I. Points to check**

1. Does each question measure what it is supposed to measure?
2. Are all the words understood?
3. Do all respondents interpret the question in the same way?
4. Are all response choices appropriate?
5. Is the range of response choices actually used?
6. Do respondents correctly follow directions?
7. Does it create a positive impression that motivates people to respond?
8. If a telephone survey, do the questions flow in a conversational manner?
9. How long does it take to complete?
10. Does it collect the information you want?

### **II. Who will participate?**

Prepare a “mock-up” questionnaire and cover letter/advance letter and submit it for review to:

1. Professional colleagues
2. Potential users of the data
3. A small cross section of the population to be surveyed

### **III. Ways to conduct a pilot test**

1. Watch people complete the questionnaire. Give people the cover letter and questionnaire and ask them to fill it out in your presence. Watch for hesitation, erasures, or skipped questions. Seek verbal feedback.
2. Ask a small number to complete the questionnaire; seek individual feedback or a joint “debriefing.”
3. Have individuals read the question and then “parrot back” the question using different words.
4. Read the questions to your “testing” participants and observe their reaction. Questions should read smoothly and be easily understood. If the respondent appears confused or hesitant to answer, find out why.

### **IV. Core steps**

1. Who will participate in the “test”?
2. How will the “test” be carried out? When? Where?
3. How will you collect/record the feedback?
4. What preparations are needed, if any?
5. What resources might be needed?