Designing surveys: Using Qualtrics and asking good questions

Summer Internship Program in Psychological Science (SIPPS)

Review of asynchronous material

Different types of questions

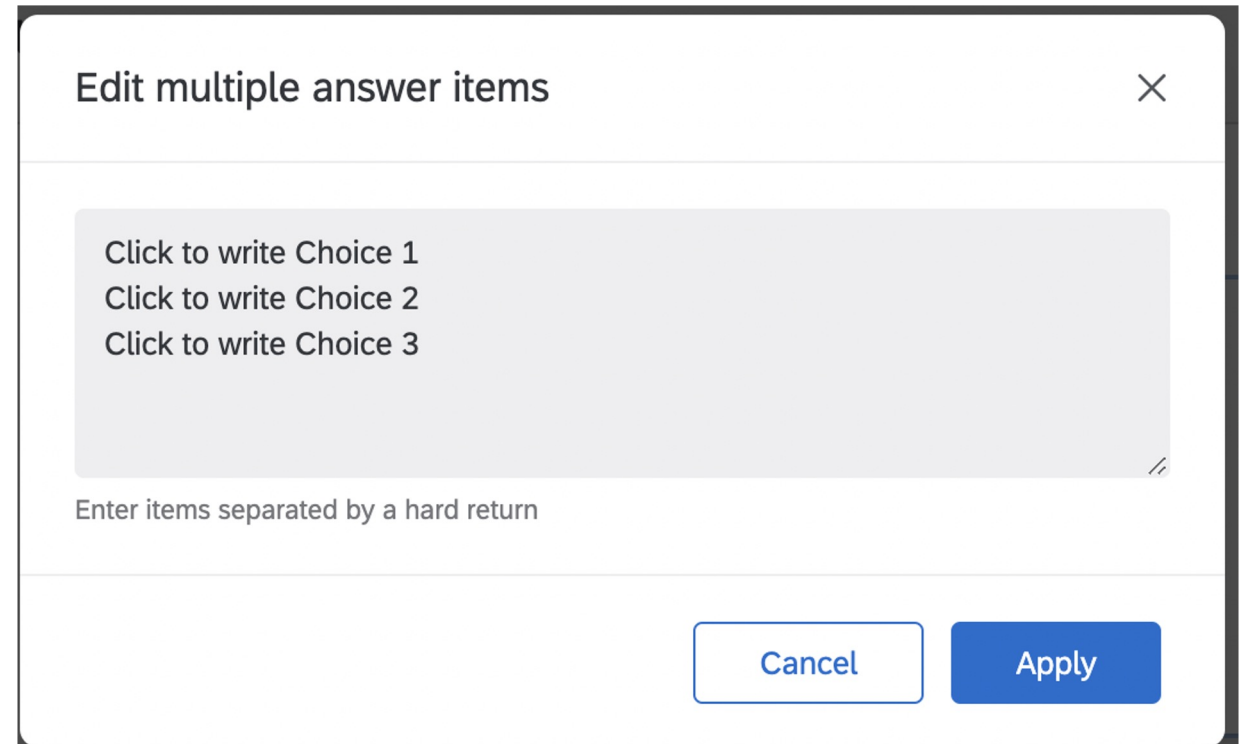Many different options to choose from, but the most common are:

1. Multiple choice (allow one answer or multiple answers)
2. Text entry
3. Text/graphic
4. Matrix table
5. Form field

Edit multiple function

If working off a document that has all your questions/answers typed out ...

Copy and paste those into the "edit multiple" function so you don't have to re-type everything!

Caveat: Qualtrics doesn't always show this option ....

Repeat headers for long matrix questionnaires

Please rate the extent to which you are feeling or experiencing these feelings or emotions **_RIGHT NOW, IN THE EVENING_**.

	Not at all	.	A little	.	Moderately	.	Quite a bit	.	Extremely
Cheerful	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
On-edge	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Discouraged	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Lively	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Uneasy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Blue	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
	Not at all	.	A little	.	Moderately	.	Quite a bit	.	Extremely
Fatigued	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Annoyed	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Resentful	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Vigorous	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Angry	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Worn out	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

▾ Format

Standard likert ⌄

Add labels ⬤○

Add statement group

Mobile friendly ○⬤

Transpose table ⬤○

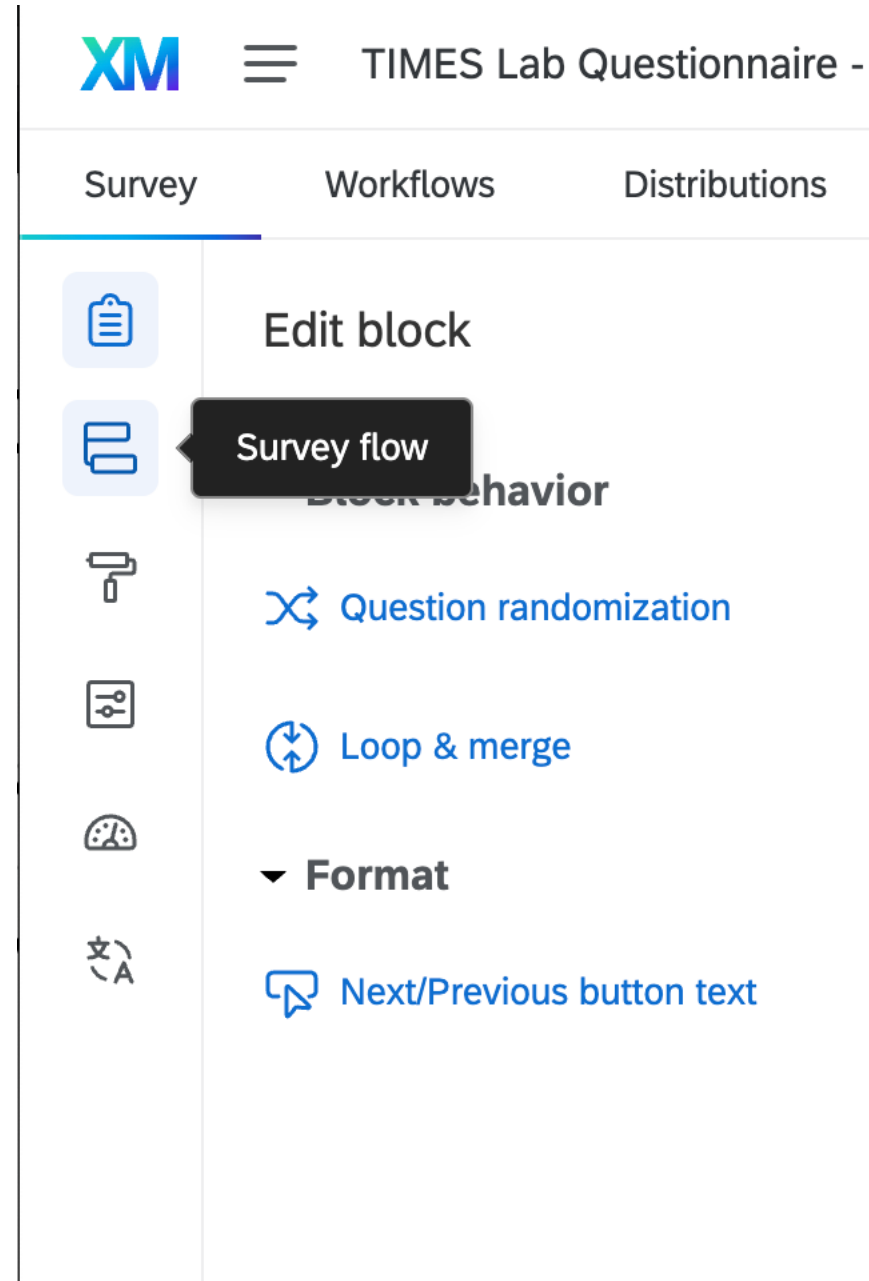Position text above ⬤○

Repeat headers ○⬤

Middle ⌄

Skip/Display logic

- Makes it so that participants do not see questions that do not apply to them

  - Can even skip participants to the end of the survey
    (especially helpful in eligibility surveys)

- If you ask about relationship status (e.g., single or in a relationship), you probably don't want single participants to then rate questions regarding their romantic relationship satisfaction!

  - Can use display logic to make sure relationship satisfaction questionnaire is only shown to Ps in a relationship

Survey flow

- Sometimes the sort of logic you want to apply can only be done in survey flow

- Can use "branching" and follow same type of "If, then" statements

Piped text

- Helps you carry forward participants' responses from previous questions into future questions

- Only works if there is a page break between the questions

Things to do before you launch the survey

- Change the variable names so that they make sense/correspond to your scales (don't have questions be labeled be Q1 - Q100)

- Make sure answer values will be exported properly (e.g., scale responses should be on a 1 - 5 likert scale)

- "Request response" to all questions

- Make use of page breaks

- Make use of progress bar

- Pilot your survey for errors!!!

Small tips to keep in mind about writing good questions

Consider your sample

- Age?
- Education?
- Cultural background?
- Language?
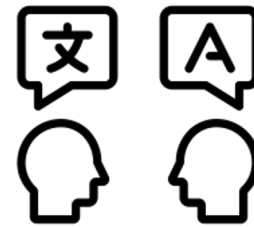
Question wording

- Questions shouldn't have too much or too little information

- Avoid leading questions (e.g., questions that sway participants)

- Use simple language that your sample will understand and avoid jargon

- Don't use double negatives

Open vs. close ended

- Open-ended vs. closed/force-choice questions sometimes result in different answers

- Open-ended questions can be especially helpful for more exploratory work or research conducted in the early stages

When is select all that apply good?

- Gender identity, race, and other demographic variables

- This allows flexibility for respondents but sometimes can yield inaccurate responses or responses that are hard to clean/code

Importance of validated scales

- Use measures that have been psychometrically validated to make sure they are measuring what we think they are reliable

- Sometimes creating face-valid items is acceptable if there isn't a better previously validated measure

The PHQ-8 as a measure of current depression in the general population[☆]

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[c] Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University, and New York State Psychiatric Institute, New York, NY, United States
[d] Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, DC, United States

Ask one question at a time

- Don't imbed two questions within one   double-barreled question

Are you a hard-working employee who is never late? *

| YES | NO |

← PREVIOUS   NEXT
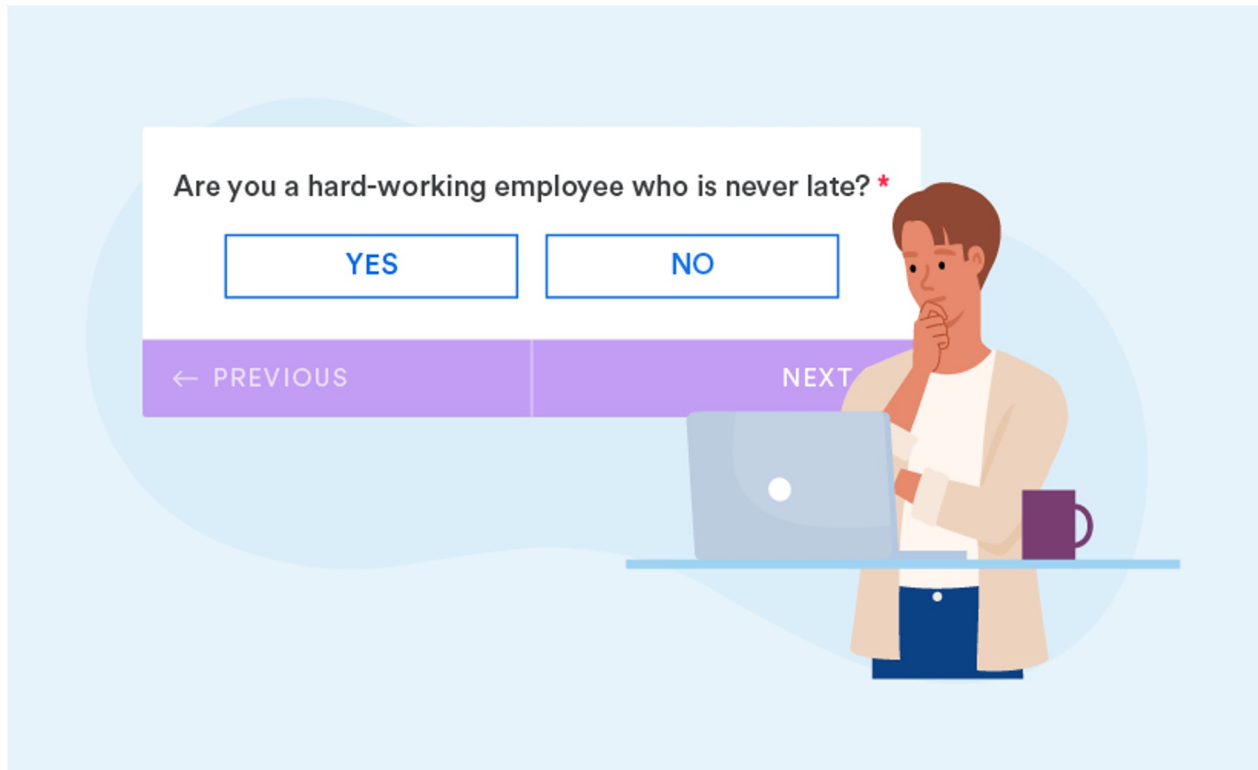
How would we fix this?

Question ordering

- Open-ended questions are better at the beginning of surveys

- Demographics are better at the end of the survey
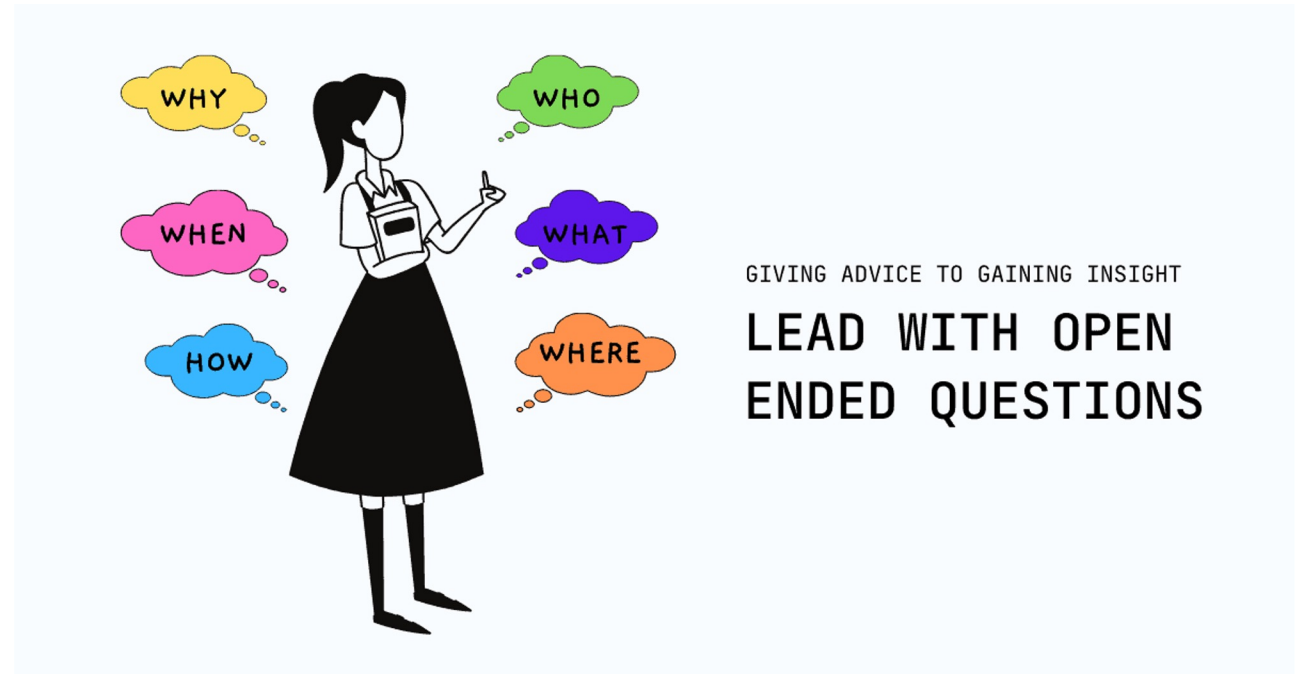
Tips to remember!

- The same question can be asked in multiple ways and that influences the responses we get!

- Important to ALWAYS pilot your surveys before you launch
  - Sometimes things that you THINK make sense are actually confusing
  - Ideally have other researchers as well as non-researchers test your questions

Tips to remember!

- Your survey should be as short, clear, and to the point as possible

- Your questions should be directly related to your hypothesis, be theory-driven, and help answer your research question
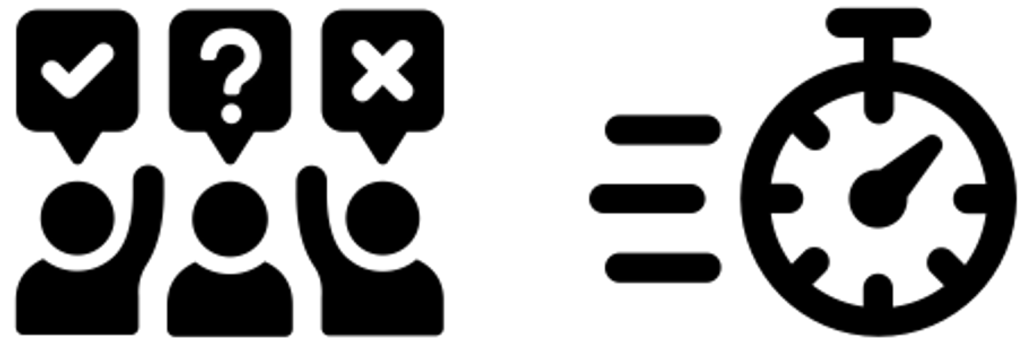
In groups…

- Open up the Qualtrics document ("SIPPS_Qualtrics) to create a new survey that assesses students' preferences for different coffee shops/cafes around Columbia

- Although you are working in groups, each person should create their OWN survey so that you each get practice using Qualtrics