

Capture Elusive Level 3 Data: The Secrets of Survey Design

Presented by:
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Agenda

- 1. Discover** Level 3 evaluation facts
- 2. Analyze** the common survey creation errors made when creating Level 3 evaluations
- 3. Examine** 12 tips for creating valid, scientifically sound Level 3 evaluations that measure on the job behavior change



Level 3 Evaluation Facts

59%

Organizations view
of tech based
of live classroom
evaluate selected
programs being
programs being
as programs high
may evaluated
evaluated
or very high value

The Five-Level Evaluation Model

Level 1: Reaction	Degree to which participants find the training favorable, engaging, and relevant to their jobs
Level 2: Learning	Degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in the training
Level 3: Behavior	Degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job
Level 4: Results	Degree to which targeted outcomes improve as a result of the training, and the support and accountability package
Level 5: ROI	Degree to which monetary program benefits exceed program costs



Data Collection Methods

	EVALUATION LEVELS			
METHODS	1 Reaction	2 Learning	3 Behavior	4 Results
Survey/Questionnaires	●	●	●	●
Interviews	●	●	●	●
Focus Groups	●	●	●	●
Knowledge Testing		●		
Work Review		●	●	
Structured Observation		●	●	
Action Planning			●	●
HR/Business Unit Reports				●
Key Performance Indicators				●

Source: Donald & James Kirkpatrick, "Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels," 2006.



2

Reasons why surveys are the most popular:

1. They are the least costly
2. They are the least disruptive



Possible Survey Respondents

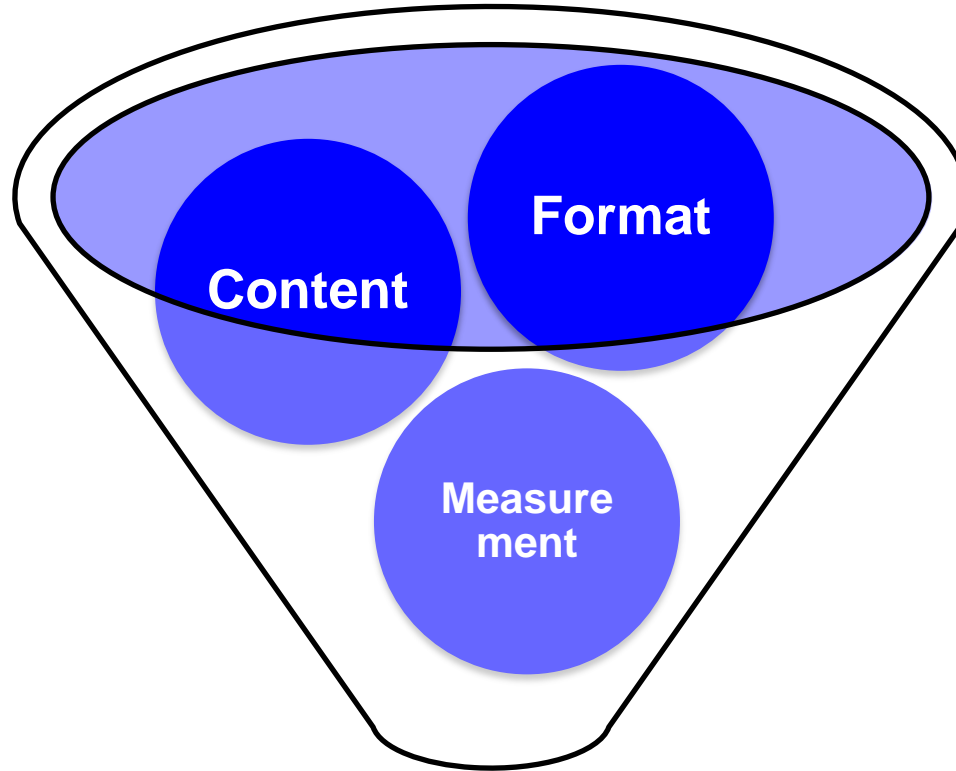


How to Decide

Who has first-hand knowledge of learners' behavior?

How credible do results need to be?





**Scientifically Sound
Survey Design**



About the survey:

Topic: Giving interpersonal feedback

Respondents: Direct reports of managers & supervisors



Sample Level 3 Evaluation

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Building Trust						
1.	My manager establishes a degree of trust with each of his or her employees before offering them feedback about their job performance.	4	3	2	1	
2.	My manager doesn't get to know his or her employees as individuals before providing them with feedback about their job performance.	4	3	2	1	
3.	When giving feedback to employees, my manager conveys that he or she is genuinely trying to provide them with useful information about their job performance, not merely judge them.	4	3	2	1	
4.	When offering employees constructive feedback to improve a performance deficiency, my manager also makes it known that he or she is available to help with the improvement.	4	3	2	1	
Accuracy						
5.	Before giving employees feedback about their job performance, my manager makes sure that he or she is familiar with their actual job performance.	4	3	2	1	
6.	Before giving employees second-hand feedback, my manager checks with multiple sources to be sure that he or she has an accurate understanding of what actually happened.	4	3	2	1	
7.	When giving employees feedback about their job performance, my manager doesn't distinguish between patterns of behavior and random one-time events.	4	3	2	1	
8.	Before providing employees with feedback about their job performance, my manager considers whether or not he or she is knowledgeable about their job(s).	4	3	2	1	

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Feedback Sign						
9.	My manager gives employees positive feedback after they complete a challenging task to help them feel a sense of accomplishment and competence.	4	3	2	1	
10.	My manager fails to provide employees with positive feedback to help them see that there is a connection between their job performance and the rewards they receive.	4	3	2	1	
11.	When employees undertake a difficult task, my manager gives them positive feedback to strengthen their beliefs that they can accomplish the task if they spend time working on it.	4	3	2	1	
12.	When giving feedback to employees, my manager doesn't maintain a balance between constructive and positive feedback.	4	3	2	1	
Feedback Timing						
13.	When there is a time gap between an event and providing an employee with feedback, my manager makes sure that the employee clearly recalls the event before giving any feedback.	4	3	2	1	
14.	My manager gives his or her employees feedback just as soon as possible after an event has happened and avoids getting emotional or evaluative.	4	3	2	1	
15.	When providing employees with feedback, my manager neglects to ensure that the message is clear so that the employee does not have to guess at or interpret what the feedback means.	4	3	2	1	
16.	When an event happens that my manager feels deserves constructive feedback, he or she provides the feedback just as soon as he or she gets the employee alone.	4	3	2	1	

Content

What's Wrong With These?

8. *Before providing employees with feedback about their job performance, my manager considers whether or not he or she is knowledgeable about their job.*

25. *When giving feedback to an employee my manager considers whether it should be done privately or in the presence of others.*



Tip 1: Content

A grayscale background image of a hand holding a ribbon. The hand is positioned with the index finger pointing upwards, and the ribbon is wrapped around the middle finger. The lighting is soft, creating a gentle shadow on the palm.

Focus on observable behavior
not thoughts or motives.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, "Getting the Truth into Workplace Surveys",
Harvard Business Review, 2002.

What's Wrong With These?

- 14.** *My manager gives his or her employees feedback just as soon as possible after an event has happened and avoids getting emotional or evaluative.*
- 18.** *My manager provides employees with regular ongoing feedback about their job performance and speaks in a normal conversational tone or manner when delivering the feedback.*



Tip 2: Content



Limit each item to a
single description of behavior.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

Example

My manager gives his or her employees feedback just as soon as possible after an event has happened.

My manager avoids getting emotional or evaluative when giving feedback to his or her employees.



What's Wrong With These?

- 2. My manager **doesn't** get to know his or her employees as individuals before providing them with feedback about their job performance.*
- 7. When giving employees feedback about their job performance, my manager **doesn't** distinguish between patterns of behavior and random one-time events.*



Tip 3: Content

Word about 1/3 of the survey items so that the desired answer is negative.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

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4.	When offering employees constructive feedback to improve a performance deficiency, my manager also makes it known that he or she is available to help with the improvement.	4	3	2	1	
Credibility						
5.	Before giving employees feedback about their job performance, my manager makes sure that he or she is familiar with their actual job performance.	4	3	2	1	
6.	Before giving employees second-hand feedback, my manager checks with multiple sources to be sure that he or she has an accurate understanding of what actually happened.	4	3	2	1	
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Format

Tip 4: Format

Keep sections of the survey unlabeled.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

Tip 5: Format

Design sections to contain a similar number of items and questions to contain a similar number of words.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

Tip 6: Format

Place questions regarding respondent demographics (e.g. name, title, department, etc.) at end of survey, make completion optional and keep questions to a minimum.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

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16.	When an event happens that my manager feels deserves constructive feedback, he or she provides the feedback just as soon as he or she gets the employee alone.	4	3	2	1	

Measurement

Tip 7: Measurement



Collect data from multiple observers
or a single observer multiple times.

Source: Ken Phillips, "Capturing Elusive Level 3 Data: The Secrets of Survey Design",
Unpublished Article, 2013.

What's Wrong With This?

**Strongly
Agree**

4

Agree

3

Disagree

2

**Strongly
Disagree**

1

N/A



Tip 8: Measurement

Create a response scale
with numbers at regularly spaced intervals
and words only at each end.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

Instructions

Specify a number between 0 & 100 that best indicates the value (%) conveyed by each word or phrase

Always (0 to 100%)

Agree (0 to 100%)

Never (0 to 100%)

Sometimes (0 to 100%)

Somewhat ineffective (0 to 100%)

Strongly disagree (0 to 100%)

Very effective (0 to 100%)



Examples

This:

Not at all
True

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Completely
True

Not This:

Not at all
True

1

Rarely
True

2

Occasionally
True

3

Somewhat
True

4

Mostly
True

5

Frequently
True

6

Completely
True

7

Or This:

Not at all
True

Rarely
True

Occasionally
True

Somewhat
True

Mostly
True

Frequently
True

Completely
True

Tip 9: Measurement

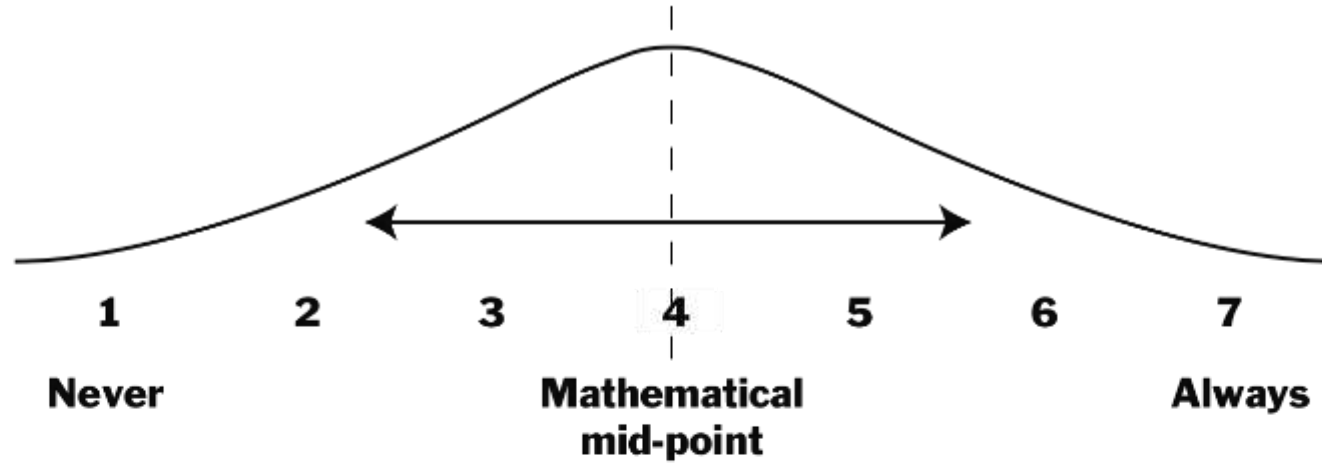
A grayscale background image of a hand holding a ribbon. The hand is positioned with the index finger pointing upwards, and the ribbon is looped around the middle finger and thumb. The background is a soft, out-of-focus gradient.

Use only one response scale
with an odd number of points
(7, 9 & 11 point scales are best)

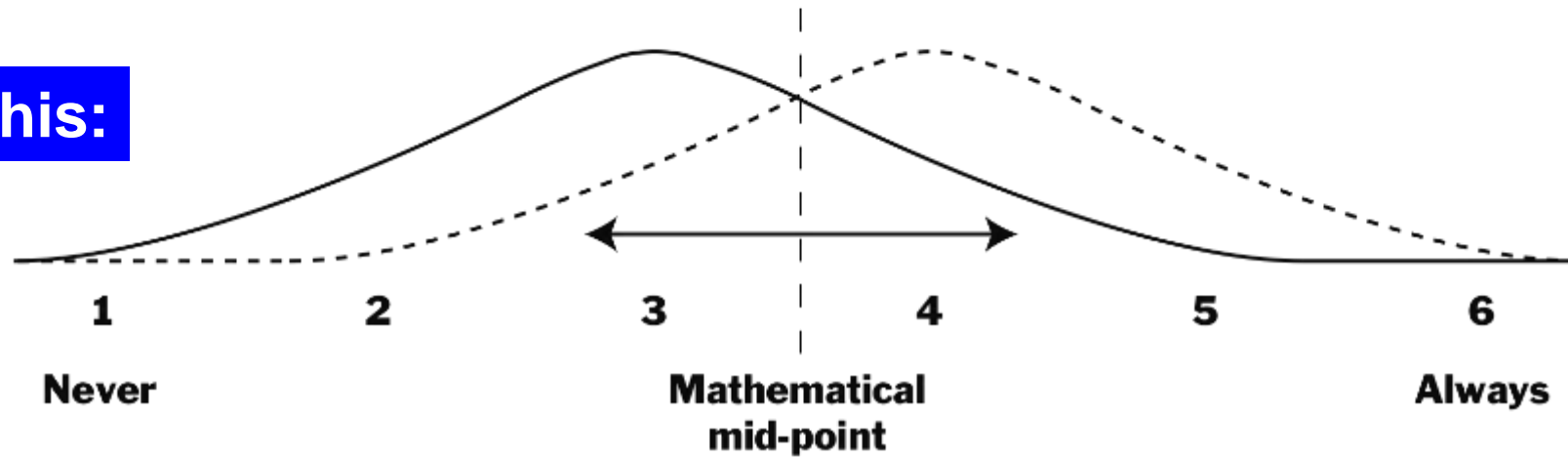
Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

Odd vs. Even Scale

This:



Not This:



Tip 10: Measurement

Use a response scale
that measures frequency
not agreement or effectiveness.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

Examples

This:

Never

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Always

Or this:

Not at all
True

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Completely
True



Tip 11: Measurement

Place small numbers
at left or low end of scale
and large numbers at right
or high end of scale.

Source: Ken Phillips, 2013

Examples

This:

Not at all
True

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

Completely
True

Not This:

Completely
True

7

6

5

4

3

2

1

Not at all
True



Tip 12: Measurement

A grayscale image of a hand with the index finger pointing upwards. A ribbon is tied around the index finger, forming a loop. The background is a light, neutral color.

Include a
“Did Not Observe” response choice
and make it different.

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002

Example

Not at all
True

1

2

3

4

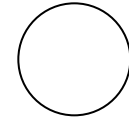
5

6

7

Completely
True

Did Not
Observe



“

*The difference between a good survey
and a bad one... quite simply, is careful
and informed design.*

”

Source: Palmer Morrel-Samuels, 2002





Free Articles

Phillips, Ken, “Eight Tips on Developing Valid Level 1 Evaluation Forms”, *Training Today*, Fall 2007, pps. 8 & 14.

Phillips, Ken, “Developing Valid Level 2 Evaluations”, *Training Today*, Fall 2009, pps. 6-8.

Phillips, Ken, “Capturing Elusive Level 3 Data: The Secrets of Survey Design”, Unpublished article, 2013.

Phillips, Ken, “Level 1 Evaluations: Do They Have a Role in Organizational Learning Strategy?”, Unpublished article, 2013.

Phillips, Ken, “Business Results Made Visible: Designing Proof Positive Level 4 Evaluations”, Unpublished article, 2013.



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