

Ten Ways to Gain Value from Satisfaction Surveys

What is the top problem with customer satisfaction surveys? Too often they sit on a shelf, collecting dust rather than being used to improve products, services or sales. Unused surveys don't really return any value to their company. Surveys are only used if managers consider the findings "actionable", so here is our list of ten ways you can make your surveys actionable and valued.

1. **Link to corporate goals and initiatives.** Track metrics that relate to comments about customers in the annual report, on the walls at headquarters, and in your CEO's speeches.
2. **Involve the right people.** Map customer touchpoints onto your organization chart. Then see what survey questions are wanted by managers in the identified departments.
3. **Understand how your product or service is used.** On each questionnaire, identify what problem(s) customers are solving when they buy and use your product.
4. **Ask the right questions.** Learn what about your product is important to customers, and see how satisfied they are with each important element.
5. **Use effective questionnaires.** Pretest questionnaires to be sure they are clear, properly understood, of the right length, flow logically and customers actually complete them.
6. **Take representative random samples.** Use statistical sampling techniques to assure that the survey data allows you to make generalizations about your customer populations.
7. **Create effective reports.** Summarize findings clearly and make recommendations as to what business process improvements will pay off best in your customers' view.
8. **Implement projects.** Be sure a process is in place to use the findings of your survey.
9. **Monitor progress.** Track satisfaction and loyalty program projects and report results to the entire business unit or company.
10. **Reward managers.** Get your CEO on the bandwagon and install a reward system for managers who achieve customer satisfaction results, as measured by your surveys.