**Preparing for Survey Design**

EPSY 5224: Survey Design, Sampling, & Implementation

Survey design is an iterative process that requires extensive planning and thorough consideration of the intended survey audience. Perhaps *knowing your audience* is the greatest strength in meeting the goals of the survey project, the heart of the Tailored Design Method. The one task in survey design that is neglected the most is the planning stage, taking the time before item writing to consider important issues related purpose, population, and potential rewards, costs, and trust (elements of Social Exchange Theory). The hypothesis is that the success of the survey is largely a function of the planning and preparation conducted prior to instrument development. To support this planning, the following questions are offered as a tool to inspire thoughtful consideration of the context of the survey – prior to item writing. Responses to these questions can be used to maximize the effectiveness of item writing.

***Purpose & Mode***

1. What is the purpose for the survey? What are the essential requirements or information needs?
2. What is the intended mode of administration? Is this appropriate given the nature of the information needed?

***Population Considerations***

1. Who is the intended population?
2. Are there special characteristics of the population that are relevant to survey design or mode?
3. Are there communities in the population that require unique attention or special considerations?
4. What characteristics need to be considered when thinking about writing questions, including language, reading level, length of survey, type of question formats?

***Rewards, Costs, & Trust***

1. Are there considerations for appropriate incentives or motivational approaches? How can you incentivize or motivate your population in appropriate respectful ways?
2. What are the potential costs incurred by taking the survey? What barriers might be present to make survey response difficult for respondents?
3. Are there potential sponsors or other social-exchange relationships that can be utilized to support the survey purpose?
4. What personal or background information is essential to achieve the purpose of the survey? How will such information be used to meet the survey purpose?