So, You Want to Design a Customer Satisfaction Survey?

The customer satisfaction survey – we all know we need them to gain insight into our customers' needs, but how do we design one that captures information we can actually use?

Here are some survey design guidelines to keep in mind:

- Begin with a descriptive title. It has been proven that a powerful title improves response percentages.
- Include clear instructions for completing the survey.
- Avoid using any threatening questions.
- Place the most important questions first. It's inevitable that you will get some incomplete responses.
- Be specific. Limit the number of questions in your survey.
- Keep it simple. Questionnaires that request lengthy responses have lower response percentages.
- Before you begin the process, identify how you will use the results to improve your service.
- Make sure the information you need is not already available somewhere else.
- Analyze your customer base. Can you realistically gather the information by using a survey?
- Is the scope of the survey within your time and money limits?
- Perform a pilot of the survey with a small set of customers. Solicit feedback and revise the survey before sending it out to the large group.

The most important step in any survey you design and use is to communicate to your customers your action plan for using the information as well as the steps and time line for the plan. Failure to take any action with the survey results may damage the perception of the support center, its management, and its commitment to improving the quality of services.