

Creating Your Own Questionnaire

Tools of the Trade · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

You have devised a questionnaire to send out. You want to take an opinion poll. Why? This does not happen in the real world of real journalism. Opinion poll companies such as Morgans, Nielsens or Newspoll are experts in taking polls. Journalists are not. They stick to acting as journalists and let the pollsters take opinions from people in their scientific way. In the real world of journalism, you simply phone up a few relevant people and ask their opinions and you quote them using their language. People write quite differently to how they speak. Your response rate to a questionnaire, if you're lucky, will be 0.00001% because people don't care. But they will respond to a smart, informed journalist asking a few intelligent questions over the phone. No one wants to fill out a form and then be responsible for returning it. Sorry, but though your questionnaire was good, the idea was not good. Phone instead, please.

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