EXAMPLES OF BAD QUESTIONS & SUGGESTIONS OF HOW TO FIX THEM!

Double-Barreled question:
Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the childcare program.

Incorrect:
I feel welcomed by staff and other youth at the center

Correction:
I feel welcomed by staff at the center
I feel welcomed by other youth at the center

Biased/leading question
Incorrect:
Community organizing is hard. Do leadership trainings help you feel prepared for community organizing?

Much more prepared  Somewhat more prepared
Slightly more prepared  Not more prepared

Correct:
The leadership trainings prepare me for community organizing.

Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

Double-Negative
Incorrect
Does it seem impossible to you that the moon landing never happened?

Very possible  Possible
Impossible  Very impossible

Correct
Does it seem possible to you that the moon landing never happened?

Very possible  Possible
Impossible  Very impossible
The following are examples of bad survey questions. Identify one error in each question (e.g., double-barreled) and think of a way to fix the errors. (Answers are given on the next page.)

1. More people have attended the movie, *Gone with the Wind*, than any other motion picture produced this century. Have you seen this movie?

   Yes  No

2. In your opinion, how would you rate the speed and accuracy of your work?

   Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor

3. Did you first hear about the bombing:

   _____ from a friend or relative  _____ from your spouse
   _____ from a newspaper  _____ at work
   _____ from the television or radio or other electronic media

4. How do you feel about the following statement? We should not reduce military spending.

   Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly disagree

5. People grow up in all different types of families. What type of family did you grow up in?

   _____Mom as single parent  _____Dad as a single parent
   _____ Both Mom and Dad

6. Where do you get most or all of your information about current events in the nation and the world?

   ___radio  ___Newspapers  ___Magazines  ___internet

7. Higher than single-family density is acceptable in order to make housing affordable.

   Strongly Agree  Undecided  Disagree  Strongly Agree  Disagree

   1  2  3  4  5
CORRECTING SURVEYS

The following are some suggestions of how to fix the problems of the survey questions found on the prior page.

1. **Problem**: Biased/Leading
   **Solution**: Have you seen the movie *Gone with the Wind*?
   
   Yes  No

2. **Problem**: Double Barreled
   **Solution**: In your opinion, how would you rate the speed of your work?
   
   Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor
   
   In your opinion, how would you rate the accuracy of your work?
   
   Excellent  Good  Fair  Poor

3. **Problem**: Categories are not Mutually exclusive
   **Solution**: Did you first hear about the bombing:
   
   _____ from a friend
   _____ from a relative
   _____ from a media source

4. **Problem**: Double Negative
   **Solution**: How do you feel about the following statement? We should reduce military spending.
   
   Strongly agree  Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree

5. **Problem**: Categories are not Exhaustive
   **Solution**: People grow up in all types of families. What type of family did you grow up in?
   
   _____ two biological parents
   _____ one biological parent & a step parent
   _____ mom as a single parent
   _____ dad as a single parent
   _____ with a relative other than my biological parents
   _____ in foster care
   _____ with adoptive parent(s)
6. **Problem**: Double Barreled  
**Solution**:  
Which media source do you rely on most to get information about current events involving the nation?

___radio ___ Newspapers ___Magazines ___ Internet

Which media source do you rely on most to get information about current events involving the world?

___radio ___ Newspapers ___Magazines ___ Internet

7. **Problem**: Ambiguous  
**Solution**:  
In order to make housing affordable, is it acceptable to build housing whose buildings hold more than one family?

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree