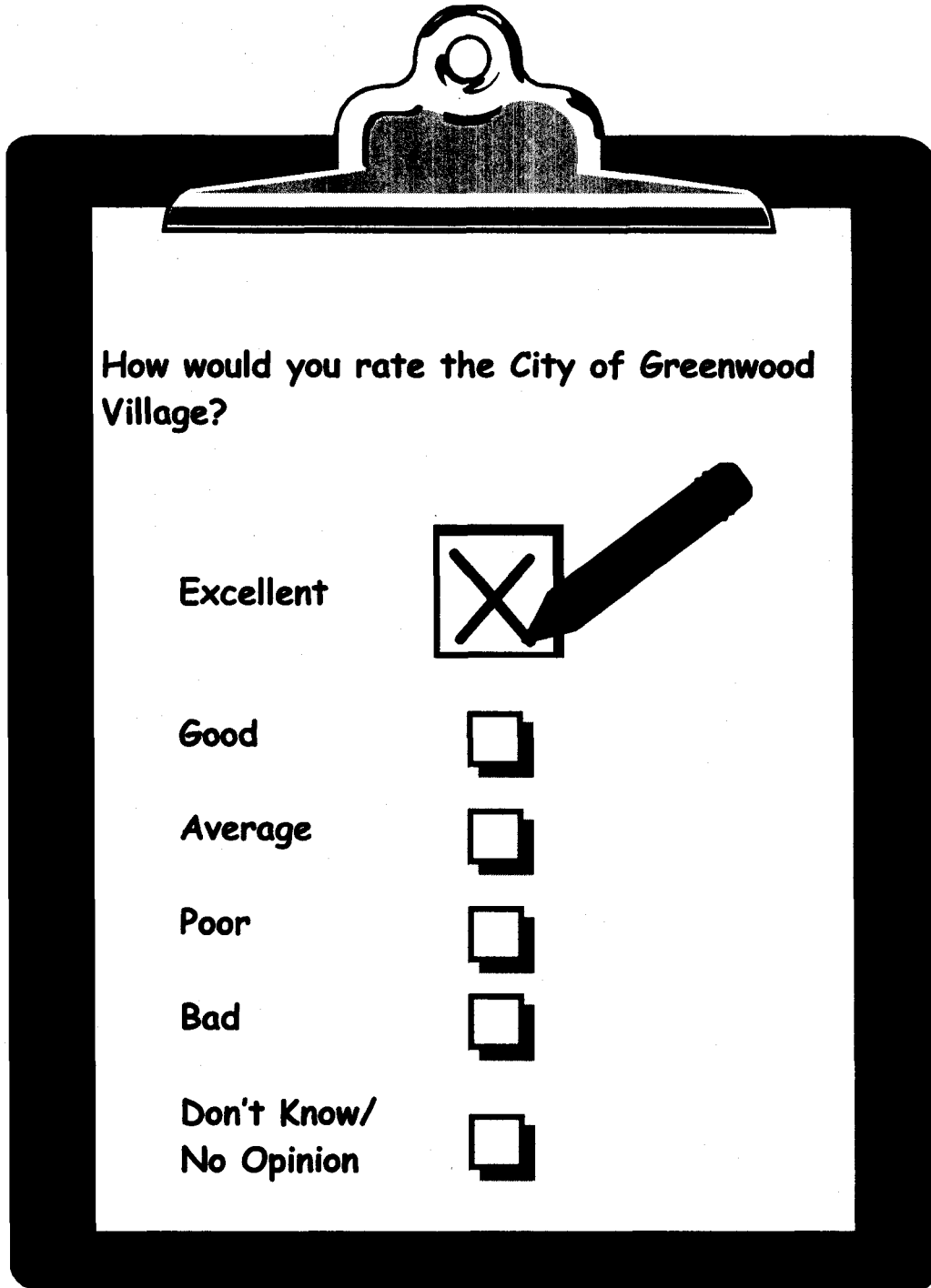


# City of Greenwood Village, CO



How would you rate the City of Greenwood Village?

Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Average	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bad	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't Know/ No Opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Survey Guidebook

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## **Introduction**

All departments within the City of Greenwood Village conduct surveys in order to measure resident and customer satisfaction with the level of service provided by the Village. This document serves to provide a standardized process for conducting and analyzing Village surveys. The need for such standardization is twofold. First, the standardization of the procedures used to conduct and analyze Village surveys is important to the budget process. Many departments rely on survey results for their performance measurements in their budgets therefore, it is essential that the results produced are valid and significant. Second, it is hoped that the standardization of all Village surveys will assist our clients and customers to recognize and become familiar with our survey process.

This guidebook and its following attachments are provided as a tool for departments to use when designing and conducting departmental customer satisfaction surveys. The goal is to establish consistency among all departments in the format, implementation, and analysis of Village surveys.

Below you will find the preferred formats and procedures to be used for all Village surveys.

## **Survey Format and Layout**

The format and layout of a survey can affect both the likelihood of people responding to your survey and the quality of their responses. Survey format should be simple and organized. Respondents are generally more willing to take the time to complete a survey if it appears to be easy to complete and follow.

- All surveys should have an introductory paragraph or attached letter explaining why the survey is being conducted and its importance to the Village and the community. The introduction should also reinforce to the potential respondent that all information will remain confidential. This letter or paragraph should come from someone in an authoritative position (such as a department director) who can take action on, or respond to any survey comments. The purpose is to validate the use of the respondent's time and to promote a sense of civic duty.
- For surveys measuring general customer satisfaction with quality of service, front-counter survey forms or comment cards should be used and made available to all customers. These cards should be no larger than eight inches long and five inches wide, utilizing reasonably large font (no smaller than 11 point) and providing enough room for respondents to write comments. These surveys may also be mailed to customers who contact the Village via phone, email, or letter.
- Surveys measuring satisfaction with a specific project, service, or program (such as CIP projects, audits, etc.) should be mailed to the customer, as generally these are longer surveys. These surveys should be no longer than six pages in length using reasonably large font. Comment cards may also be mailed to customers if the use of a longer survey is not desirable or unnecessary.

- Programs or events including a large number of participants such as sports programs, classes, or special events should make surveys available at the event. These surveys should be no longer than one full page in order to ensure that respondents do not get bored with the survey or rushed filling it out before they leave.
  - Make the survey process as convenient as possible for event and program participants. Consider using comment cards or surveys printed on heavier stock paper for outdoor programs or for events where tables are not available to write on.
  - It is also acceptable to mail surveys or comment cards to event/program participants if a register list or list of attendees is available.
- Every Village survey should include a section for the respondent to write any additional comments they may have. Also, surveys should provide an area for the responding person to list their name, address, and telephone number if they so chose, for follow-up contact.
- All mailed surveys should include a postage paid business reply envelope for returning the survey to the Village. Don't expect respondents to provide their own stamp and envelope to return a survey.

### **Survey Scale and Ratings**

The issue of consistency in Village survey administration is raised with the rating scales used in department surveys. It is important that the rating scales used in all Village surveys are standard for the purpose of providing our customers with consistent survey instruments and to compare surveys across departments.

- Many surveys ask respondents to evaluate services or programs on a four-point scale: excellent, good, fair, poor. Although this is standard practice, according to Miller and Miller, this scale provides more positive options (excellent, good, and fair) than negative options (poor). The result is that the number of respondents who do not give bad ratings probably is inflated compared with the number who would give bad ratings on a symmetrical scale (very good, good, bad, very bad).
- Keeping the above in mind, the following scales should be used:
  - Questions rating satisfaction –
    - Excellent, Good, Average, Poor, Bad, Don't Know/No Opinion
  - Questions rating importance –
    - Very Important, Important, Neutral, Unimportant, Very Unimportant, Don't Know/No Opinion
  - Questions rating usefulness –
    - Very Useful, Somewhat Useful, Neutral, Not Too Useful, Not At All Useful, Don't Use As A Source
  - Other questions –
    - Make sure the scale is balanced/symmetrical, having the same number of good options as bad. Also remember to be consistent across surveys within your own department and the Village as a whole.

- The opinion on "No Opinion" –
  - According to Miller and Miller:

The "don't know" choice is important to mention in the category of complete options. Without the explicit choice of "don't know," residents who genuinely have no opinion will comply by recording a favorable or unfavorable response. Omitting "don't know" will force respondents to make a decision – theoretically in the direction they may be leaning – but the danger is that residents without formed opinions will record pro or con responses at random.

### **Sampling Size**

- What would you say if a department reported that they received 100 percent excellent/good ratings on citizens' satisfaction with the department overall with only three people responding to the survey? Most would consider this finding as invalid and unreliable because only a few people responded to the survey (a correct conclusion). Again, it is extremely important that consistency be used among Village departments in the number of customers surveyed – we want survey figures reported in the budget and to citizens, staff, and the City Council, to be accurate and reliable. Taking this into account the following sampling standards should be used.
  - If the program or service does not have a large number of clients or users, the department should survey all customers on an ongoing basis (at some fixed interval of time after each client has received service). Try not to report figures for any survey receiving an insignificant number of responses as the reporting of invalid statistics is misleading and undesirable. Should you need to report insignificant survey results, indicate the number of responses received and that the results are not statistically significant.
  - If the program or service does include a large number of clients or participants, the department should seek sample sizes of no fewer than 100 clients. In general, samples of 100 randomly chosen customers should be accurate to plus or minus ten percentage points with a 95 percent probability and plus or minus about eight percentage points with a 90 percent probability.
  - What you need to know is that departments should sample the entire population of users, clients, or participants if the expected number of returned surveys is less than 100. If by sampling the entire target population, the department would expect the number of returned surveys to be greater than 100, the department should consider selecting a representative sample with the goal of collecting a minimum of 100-200 responses and a maximum of 400 responses.

### **Reporting Survey Results**

- When reporting survey results include the sample size, the number of participants responding, and the response rate. Example: 90 percent of customers surveyed rated their satisfaction with the department overall as excellent or good (86 out of 110 customers responding to the survey, indicating a 78 percent response rate).

- Date stamp outgoing surveys and again when they are returned – this way you can track the survey time period.
- Keep track of the number of surveys mailed and returned so you can calculate your response rate.
- Treatment of non-responses to individual survey questions.
  - Tally the response rate of each question separately and make note of any questions that may have been skipped by respondents. Those questions should not be treated as *Don't Know/No Opinion* responses. When reporting survey results include the sample (or population size) of the survey, the number of participants responding, and the response rate of each question.

### **Frequency of Survey Administration and Analysis**

- Departments utilizing surveys measuring general department service delivery should survey customers on *at least* a quarterly basis. This rate of administration should provide information frequently enough to help improve and assess service delivery.
- Each department should develop a survey schedule, outlining at what times during the year each survey is to be conducted. The schedule must be followed consistently to avoid departments inundating both internal and external customers with surveys at the end of the year. (This has occurred within several departments who delayed conducting their performance measurement surveys until November and December).
- All surveys should be reviewed as soon as they are returned to the Village in order to determine if any immediate follow-up is necessary.
- Thereafter, collect and report information from surveys frequently, at least quarterly. Frequent collection and analysis provides information on “seasonal considerations” and will enable staff to obtain timely feedback on the results of new measures they have taken to improve services.
  - The data from each quarter should be reported both for the quarter and the year to date.
  - If data is available, it should be reported in your department's monthly report to the City Manager.

### **Careful Considerations**

- Keep in mind that we do not want to inundate our customers and residents with surveys. Before sending a survey out, look at alternative means of gathering the information you need. This may include conducting focus groups, telephone surveys, or simply keeping a record of comments made by customers and residents. If possible, consider combining survey questions with other departments or program areas. Also, remember the biennial Citizen's Survey – have the same questions been asked there?

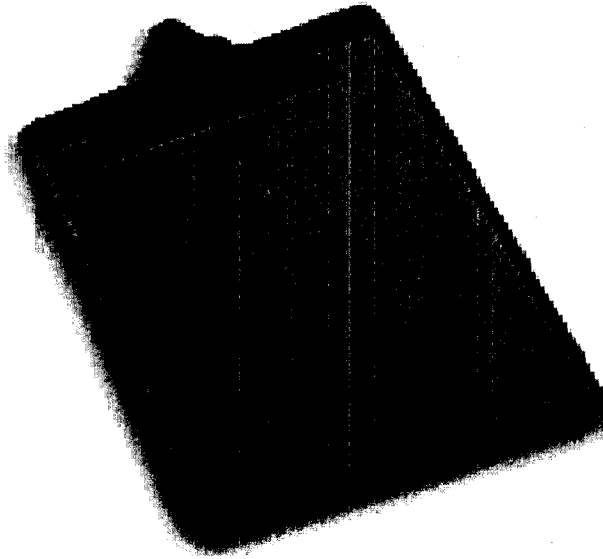
### **Sources of Information**

- There are many books written on survey design and administration that may be helpful to your department. Below are listed three that were used in the writing of this report.
- Fink, Arlene and Jacqueline Kosecoff. How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, 1996.
- Hatry, Harry P., et. al. How Effective Are Your Community Services? Procedures for Measuring Their Quality. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute and ICMA, 1992.
- Miller, Thomas I. and Michelle A. Miller. Citizen Surveys: How to Do Them, How to Use Them, What They Mean. Washington, DC: ICMA, 1991.

### **Sample Survey**

- Following, you will find a sample survey developed to illustrate some of the points made in this report. Please note the short statement of purpose written by the City Manager at the beginning of the survey, the use of a balanced rating scale, the inclusion of space for the respondent to write in any further comments, and the section committed for follow-up.

# Appendix A



**Sample Survey**

**HOW DID WE SERVE YOU?**

At Greenwood Village, we are committed to quality customer service. Our goal is to provide you with world class service every time you have contact with the Village. That means you should expect to be treated courteously, professionally, and fairly.

We would like to know how we are doing in meeting this goal in regards to your recent contact with the Village. If we did a good job, we would like to hear about it. If you were not satisfied with the service you received, we want to know so we can do better in the future. Your comments and suggestions assist us in continually improving our quality of service.

Upon completing this card, please drop it in the Greenwood Village City Hall drop box, give it to a Village employee, or simply drop it in the mail. Thank you for taking the time to tell us about your experience with Greenwood Village.

Sincerely,  
Steven S. Crowell, Jr.  
City Manager

1. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please explain the reason for your contact with the Village: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Department/Employee (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

4. How would you rate:

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Bad</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
a. Accessibility . . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Friendliness/Helpfulness . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Response Time . . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Accuracy of Response . . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Quality of Service . . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Please rate your overall satisfaction with your experience:

<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Bad</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How can we better serve you? \_\_\_\_\_

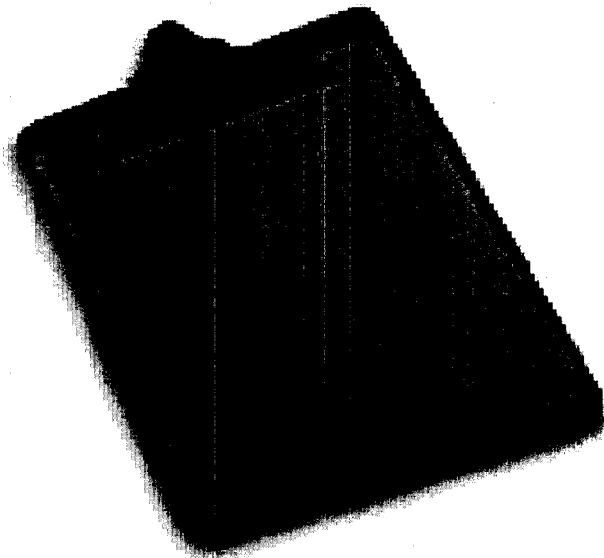
Would you like a follow-up telephone call? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(This information is not required, but helpful for follow-up)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

6060 South Quebec Street, Greenwood Village, CO 80111, 303-773-0252

# **Appendix B**

## **Quick Reference Guide:**



## **Helpful Tips for Department Surveys**



## Helpful Tips for Department Surveys

### Survey Content

#### • Helpful Tip

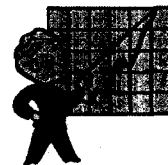
- Do not ask for information unless you are able to act on it.
  - Questions in a survey can raise the hopes and expectations of the respondent, avoid asking for information that may raise expectations that cannot be fulfilled.
- Example:
  - In a survey of the Village's need for a recreation center, it would be unfair to have people rate their preference for a water park if the Village were unable to support such a service.

### Survey Format: The Importance of Aesthetics

- Your survey's appearance is important; a hard to read survey complicates the process of answering questions for a respondent and may annoy them. Respondents may skip questions or refuse to complete a confusing survey.
- Helpful Tips
  - Put only one question on a line and leave ample space for responses.
  - Do not abbreviate words or combine questions.
  - Begin and end your survey with easy to answer questions that are interesting to the respondent.

### Rules for Writing Forced Choice Questions

- Definition: "Multiple choice, closed-ended survey questions consist of a stem, which presents a problem in the form of a statement, a question, a brief case history, or a situation followed by several alternative choices or solutions."
- Helpful Tips
  - Make questions relevant to the respondent.
    - In a survey of service delivery, the questions should be about the service itself, the performance of the employee, and so on. If you include other questions that may seem irrelevant, such as those questions concerning age or gender, explain the relevance and purpose of the question.
  - Use standard English and grammar.
    - All survey questions should be clear and concise, use conventional grammar, syntax, and spelling, also avoid technical or specialized words and abbreviations.
  - Keep it simple.
    - Sentences should be short and easy to read.
    - Remember that many people do not like reading instructions so they should be simple and easy to understand.



- Highlight important information.
  - Stress basic instructions such as *most recently* and **check only one** by italicizing, bolding, or underlining the words in order to get respondents to interpret questions as you intended.
  - Assume that the respondent is reading and answering the questions quickly; highlighting important words and information will help the respondent accurately answer questions.
- Avoid double-barreled questions.
  - Avoid combining questions or including questions that present more than one issue. "Double-barreled questions contain more than one issue and therefore, responses cannot be interpreted because there is uncertainty as to which issue is motivating the response."
- Design questions so that they are close to the respondent's personal experience.
  - Examples:
    - *Poor*: Did you enjoy today's art class?
    - *Improved*: Would you recommend this art class to anyone else?
    - Asking someone if they would recommend attending a class or event to someone else is more objective and a better indicator of their experience than asking them if they enjoyed the event.
- Avoid personal questions.
  - Personal questions may entice the respondent to misrepresent the truth or skip over the question resulting in a source of bias. When it is necessary to ask personal questions, attempt to generalize the question by providing categories of responses.
    - Examples:
      - *Poor*: What was the reason you appeared in court today?  
Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
      - *Improved*: What was the reason you appeared in court today?
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic ticket	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-traffic ticket
<input type="checkbox"/> Parking ticket	<input type="checkbox"/> Witness on a case
<input type="checkbox"/> Trial	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

**Open-Ended Surveys**

- Many Village surveys are used to find out whether our clients and customers are satisfied with our quality of customer service or their satisfaction with a program or event. Open-ended questions are effective for gauging customer satisfaction by gathering information concerning what customers liked best about our service, program, or event and what they liked least.

- **Helpful Tips**

- Questions should direct the respondent to list a specified number of things they liked best about the service or event and what they liked least.
- An effective way to relate to the respondent is to ask questions about a specific aspect of the service delivery or event instead of asking about the entire program or service.
- Example:
  - *Poor:* Did you like today's art class? Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Please explain:  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - *Improved:* List at least one thing, but no more than three things, you liked best about today's art class: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☑ **Overview of Self-Administered Surveys**

- For longer surveys that are being mailed out, consider sending a letter to respondents in advance of the survey to prepare the respondents and to describe the survey's purpose.
- All surveys should include a short introductory paragraph on the survey or a formal letter should be attached to the survey describing the survey's intent.
- If you ask personal questions regarding such things as gender, age, or income, explain why they are being asked.
- Keep the survey procedures simple. Provide a stamped self-addressed envelope and avoid folding the survey.
- Keep your survey as short as possible by asking only necessary questions. Provide plenty of room for respondents to write and leave space between each question.



Source: Fink, Arlene and Jacqueline Kosecoff. How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, 1996.

Additional sources of helpful information on writing and conducting surveys:

Hatry, Harry P., et.al. How Effective Are Your Community Services? Procedures for Measuring Their Quality. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute and ICMA, 1992.

Miller, Thomas I. and Michelle A. Miller. Citizen Surveys: How to Do Them, How to Use Them, What They Mean. Washington, DC:ICMA, 1991.