



## How to Use Text Messaging For Data Collection

### Introduction

Text messaging survey or interview questions is a creative way to collect program evaluation data. This can be done by program staff or a third-party program evaluator. The texted questions should be very short in word count and very few questions in total. We recommend that if program staff collect the evaluation data, that they do not collect this data through text messaging with past clients that they directly worked with; instead, give past clients some privacy by having a non-serving staff member conduct the text messaging.

Below are two categories of questions. Consider which type of information your program needs – operational or outcomes data.

### How to Introduce the Text Messaging Approach

When reaching out to past clients, consider using something akin to the following phrasing:

- Hi [name]. It's [name] from [organization or program name]. Can I text you a few questions so that we know how to improve our program for people in the future? I have 4 questions.
- Hi [name]. It's [name] from [organization name or program]. Can you share feedback with me about our program? We want to improve our program for people in the future. I have 4 questions.
- Can we do it right now? I can send you a ques and then you answer each ques, one at a time. I have a total of 4 questions.

### Experience Questions

Experience questions refer to asking past clients about their experiences engaging in the program. This is not about the actual outcomes from having participated in the program; instead, these questions are related to the operations of the program and quality assurance.

- How much did you enjoy the workshop? A lot, Medium amount, Very little, Not at all
- Which workshop topics were the best for your life? \_\_\_\_\_
- Where the workshop trainers were knowledgeable? Always, Most of the time, Half of the time, Rarely, Never
- Will you recommend the workshop to your friends? Yes, Maybe, No

### Growth Questions

Growth questions refer to the outcomes for past clients having participated in the program. What direct benefits (e.g. Knowledge, Skills, and Networks) did the past clients gain from their participation in your program?

- How much new information did you learn from the workshop? A lot, Medium amount, Very little, Nothing
- How many new skills did you learn from the workshop? A lot, Medium amount, Very little, Nothing
- Which new skills did you learn? Did you learn any of these: \*How to\* fill-out forms, find recourse centers, make personal records and notes, anything else?
- How many community connections did you get from being in the workshop? A lot, Medium amount, Very little, Nothing
- Which community connections did you get? Join newsletter list, Visit a resource center, Make phone call to resource center, Learn the main person to contact for a service, anything else?

This hand-out accompanies the [AnchoringSuccess.com](http://AnchoringSuccess.com) blog titled *How to use text messaging to collect program evaluation data published on Monday Dec 4, 2017.*