

# EVALUATION 101

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# INTRODUCTIONS

The background is a dark blue gradient with a field of small, light blue stars. Overlaid on this are several technical diagrams in a lighter blue color. In the top right, there is a large circular gauge with a scale from 0 to 210 and a needle pointing towards 180. Below it is a smaller circular diagram with concentric rings and arrows. In the bottom left, there is a partial circular diagram with arrows. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and technical.

“

State court leaders have a duty to hold our organizations accountable to the public and our inter-branch partners by instituting a set of empirical measures, and a program of on-going assessment of court outcomes with the wide publication of the results of those assessments.

”

Conference of State Court Administrators, December 2008, *“Promoting a Culture of Accountability and Transparency: Court System Performance Measures”*

# LEARNING TO COUNT AND BEYOND

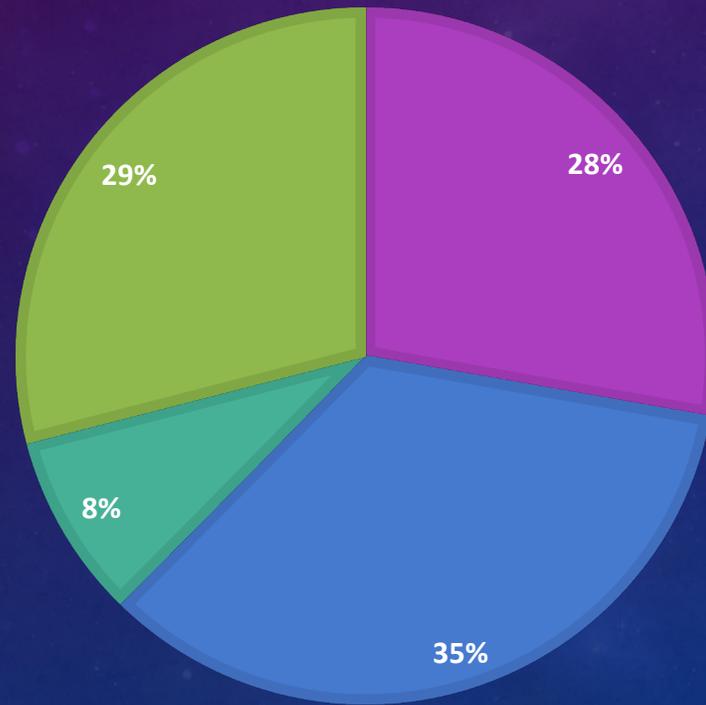
- Babylonia 2,000 years BCE
- Across civilizations
  - Greeks, Chinese, Islamic Empire, Japanese, Hindu and Indians, Europeans, Incans
  - Roman numerals gave way to Arabic numbers in the middle ages
- Numbers are related to our, and animals, sense of fairness



By Rama - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.0 fr,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=49320547>

# DATA STILL MATTERS

## CIRCUIT COURT FILINGS FISCAL YEAR 2018



- Civil - General
- Civil - Family
- Juvenile
- Criminal



# WE COMPARE OURSELVES TO OTHERS

- [https://www.ted.com/talks/frans\\_de\\_waal\\_do\\_animals\\_have\\_morals?language=en#t-766677](https://www.ted.com/talks/frans_de_waal_do_animals_have_morals?language=en#t-766677)

# WHY EVALUATE YOUR PROGRAM?

- Accountability
- Program improvement

**Beware of data-free programs**



<http://quotesgram.com/performance-evaluation-funny-quotes/>

# WHAT MAKES A GOOD QUESTION?

- Are your program goals being met?
- Are your questions about:
  - Program design
  - Program performance

# GOOD QUESTIONS OR BAD QUESTIONS

## Reasonable and appropriate

- Did we improve the quality of life of drug court participants?
- Did the number of drunk driving arrests decrease?
- Were the participants in juvenile drug court free of prior charges?

## Answerable

- Is the program successful?
- Did the intervention empower Veterans to take control of their lives?
- How long did DUI Court Participants stop drinking?
- Did Family Recovery Court participants demonstrate improved family values?

# PROGRAM DESIGN

An HMO developed a smoking cessation hotline in a cancer control project.

- The program planners developed phone scripts.
- Counselors were on call during day and evening hours.
- Advertised in local newspapers and in 'quit kits' from health department.

# COMPARED TO WHAT?

- A similar court
- Baseline or historical data
- Performance criterion

# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Who does it affect?
- Is the target population being reached?
- Are the intended services being provided?
- Are inter-agency collaborations occurring?
- Are the materials used appropriate?
- Is a performance goal being met?
- How are goals being met in comparison to historical data?
- **Are the results due to our program or other factors?**

# THREE EVALUATION TOOLS

- Observation
- Interview
- **Survey**

# OBSERVATION

- Natural, it's how we learn
- Can help narrow focus of future evaluation if unsure where to start
- Time consuming



# OBSERVATION



- Natural, it's how we learn
- Can help narrow focus of future evaluation if unsure where to start
- Time consuming
- **Our biases filter what we see, record, remember, interpret**



# INTERVIEW

- Can allow follow-up questions and unexpected information, learning what we didn't know to ask
- Time consuming
- Qualitative data requires work to analyze



# INTERVIEW

- Allows follow-up questions, learning what we didn't know to ask
- Time consuming
- Qualitative data requires work to analyze
- **Insight from participant (via our bias)**

People  
generally see  
what they  
look for, and  
hear what they  
listen for.

— *To Kill a Mockingbird*,  
Harper Lee



# SURVEY

- When you asked someone to marry you, what was the response?

.....

.....



# SURVEY

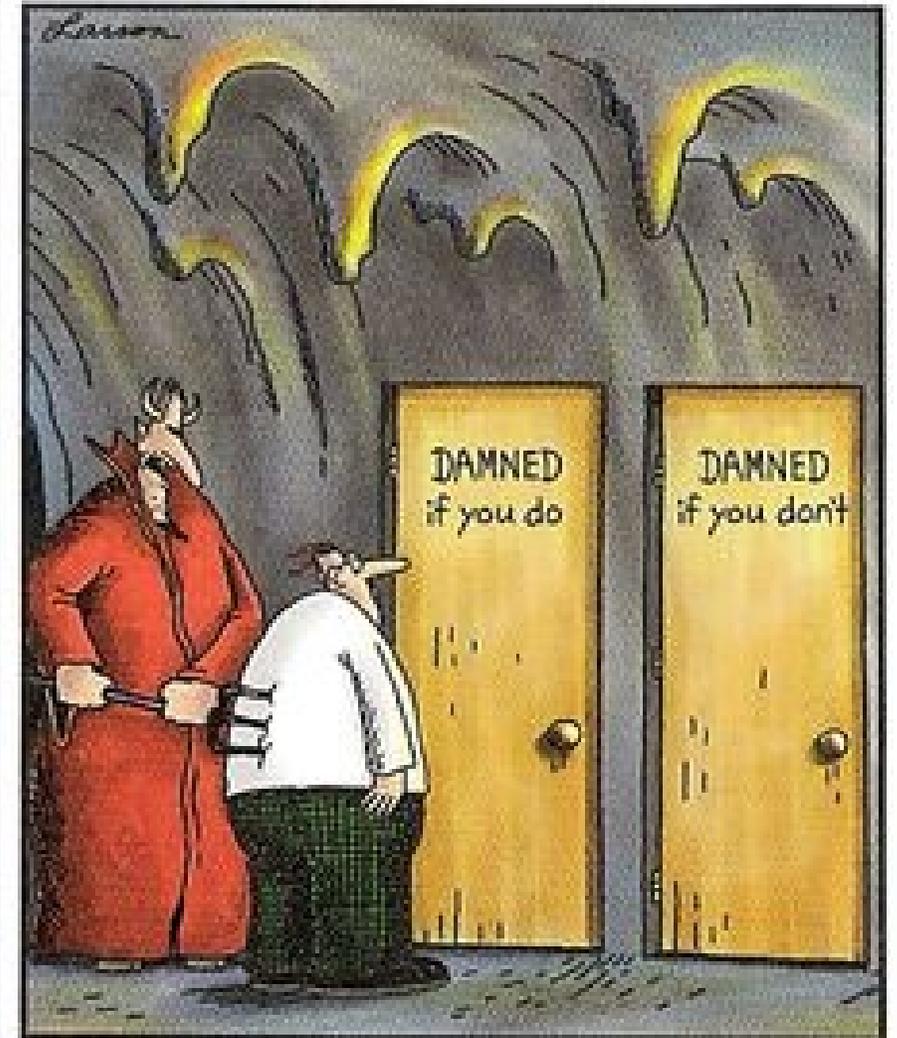
- Surveys often limit responses
  - Hard to write a good question, subject matter knowledge important
  - Questions we ask and don't ask
- Low cost
- Easily replicated and distributed
- Can provide privacy for responder (confidentiality or anonymity)
- Low return rates can be an issue
- Questions can have bias or be interpreted multiple ways



# SURVEYS

## Yes/No Questions

- Easy to read, trained since childhood
- Easy to score
- Can screen respondents
- No middle ground option
- Doesn't tell you how much, Y/N – a lot or little
- May want to leave space for written comments



"C'mon, c'mon—it's either one or the other."

# SURVEYS

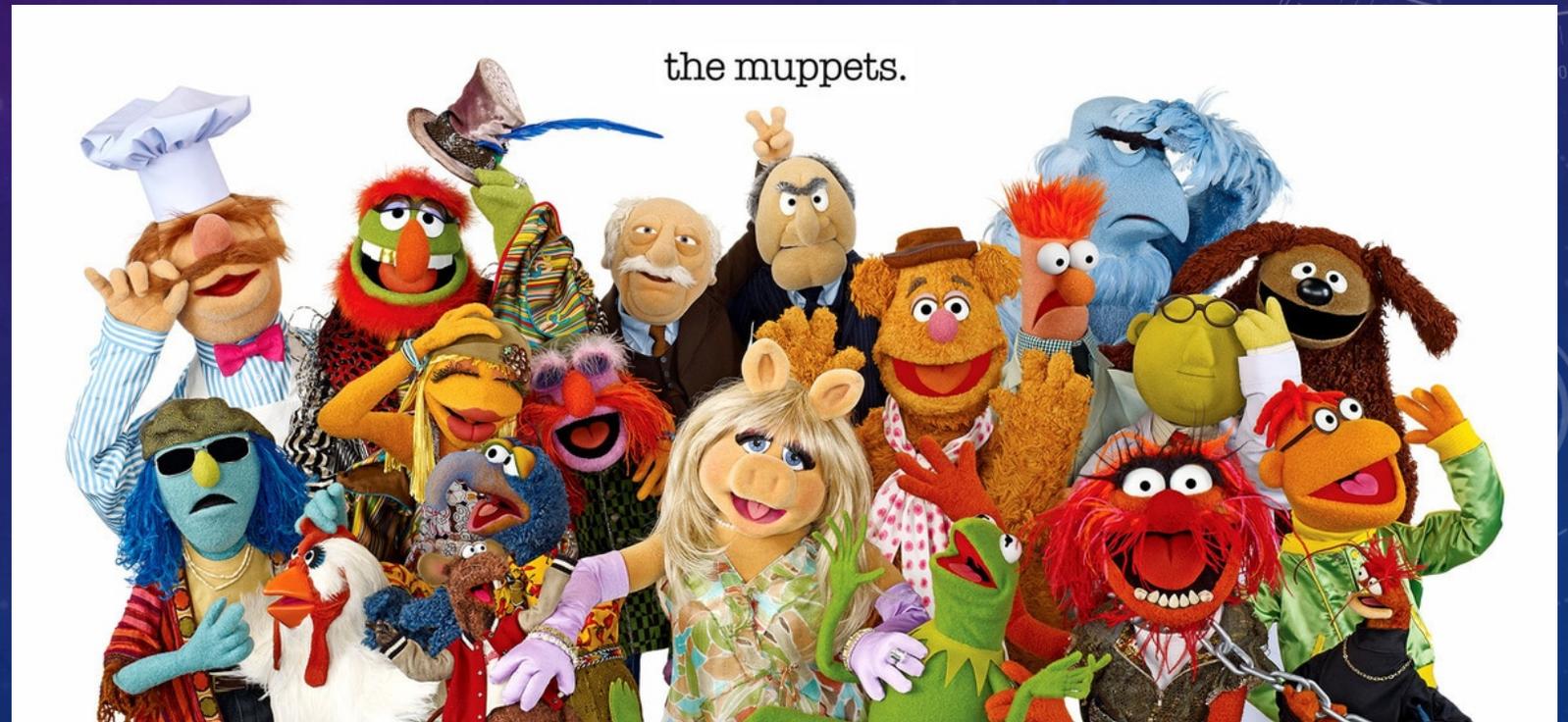
## Multiple Choice

- Trained since childhood
- Giving response options makes it easier for responders

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# SURVEYS

## Multiple Choice

- Trained since childhood
- Giving response options makes it easier for responders
- Easy to score if “Mark one”, if “Mark all that apply” more complex
- Limit choices



# SURVEYS

## Likert Scale

(Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)

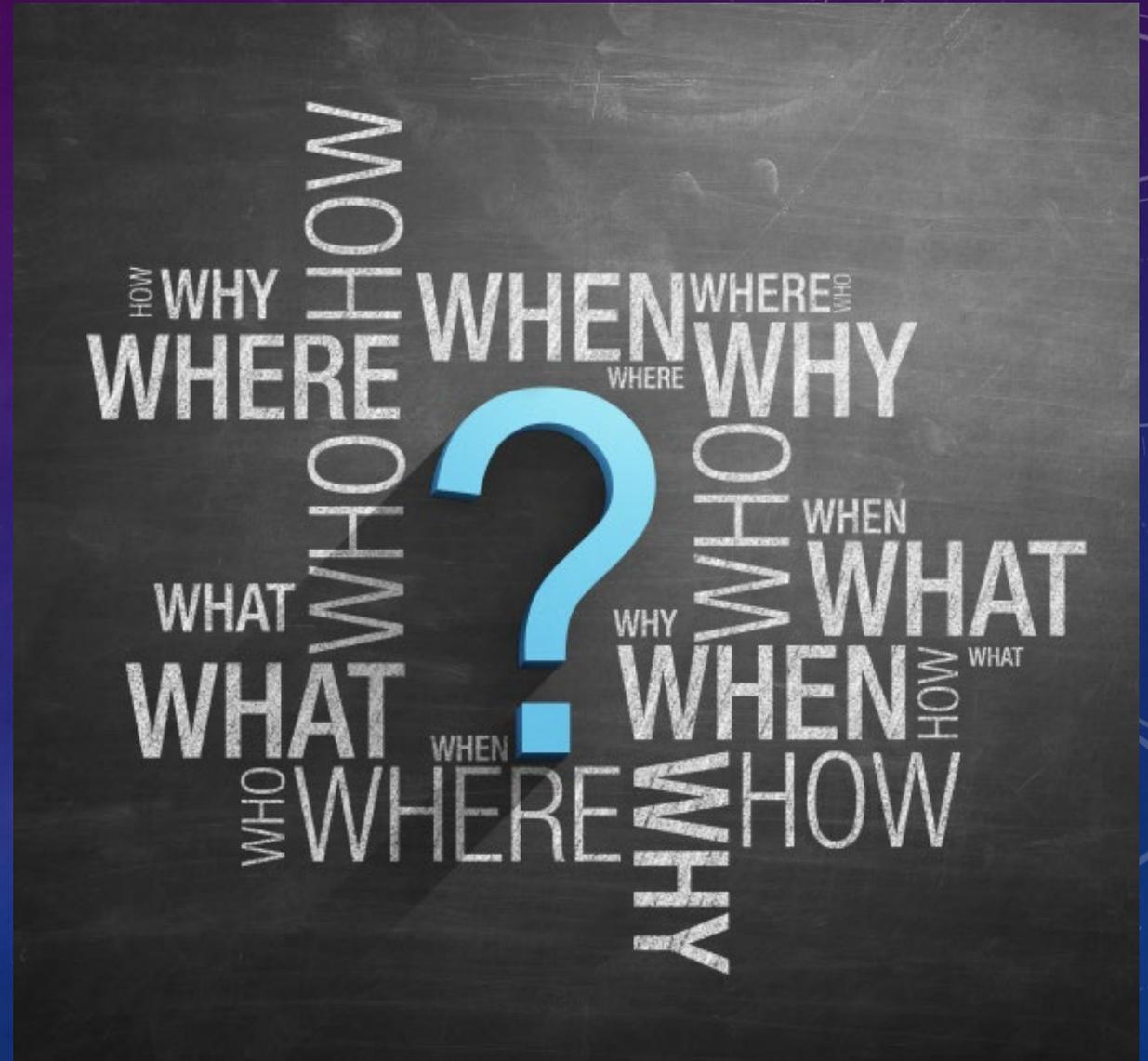
- Lick the lollipop
- Midpoint or no midpoint
- Be consistent with scale
- Avoid 10 point scales
- Avoid two questions at once; “... and ...”
- Keep positive and negative options balanced



# SURVEYS

## Open-Ended

- Describe your experience with...
- Gives the respondent the control
- Richer, details, explanation
- Harder to analyze
- Lower response rate
- Space



# SURVEYS

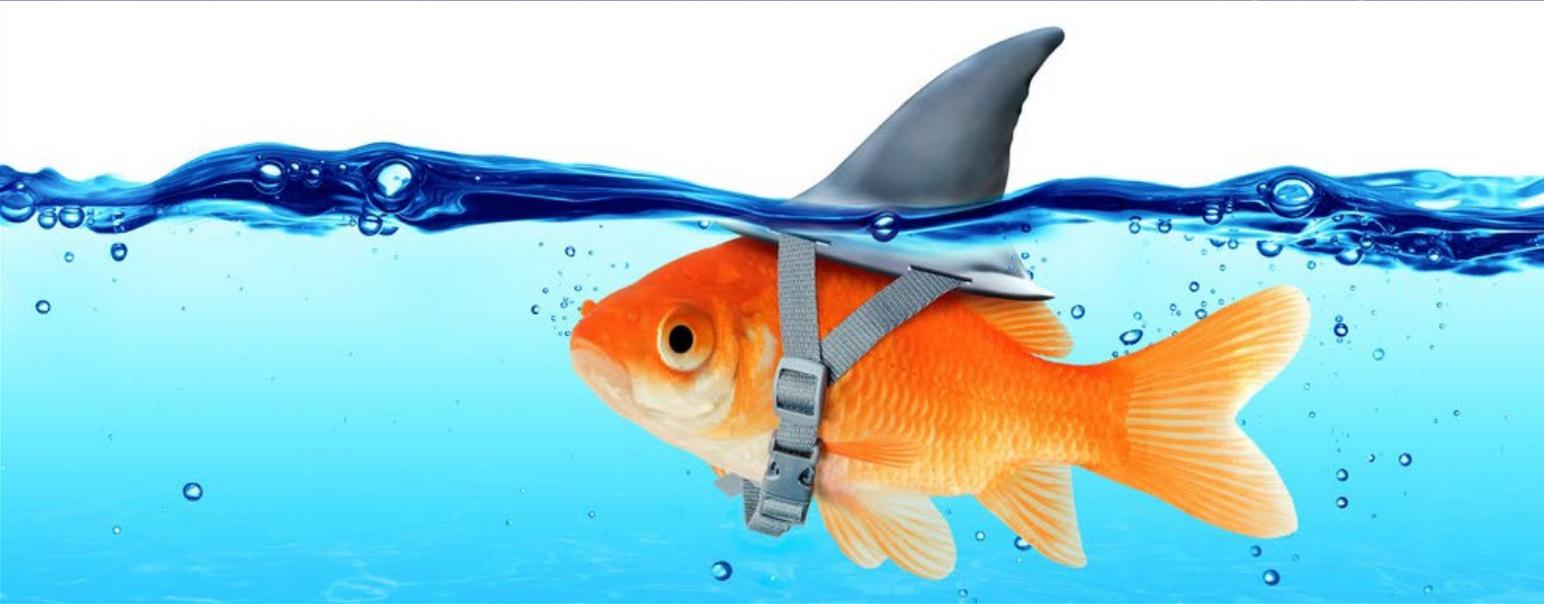
## Analysis

- Desk drawer
- Part of technology package
- Database
- Keep questions focused on what you need
- Remember – people are self-reporting their perceptions



# SURVEYS

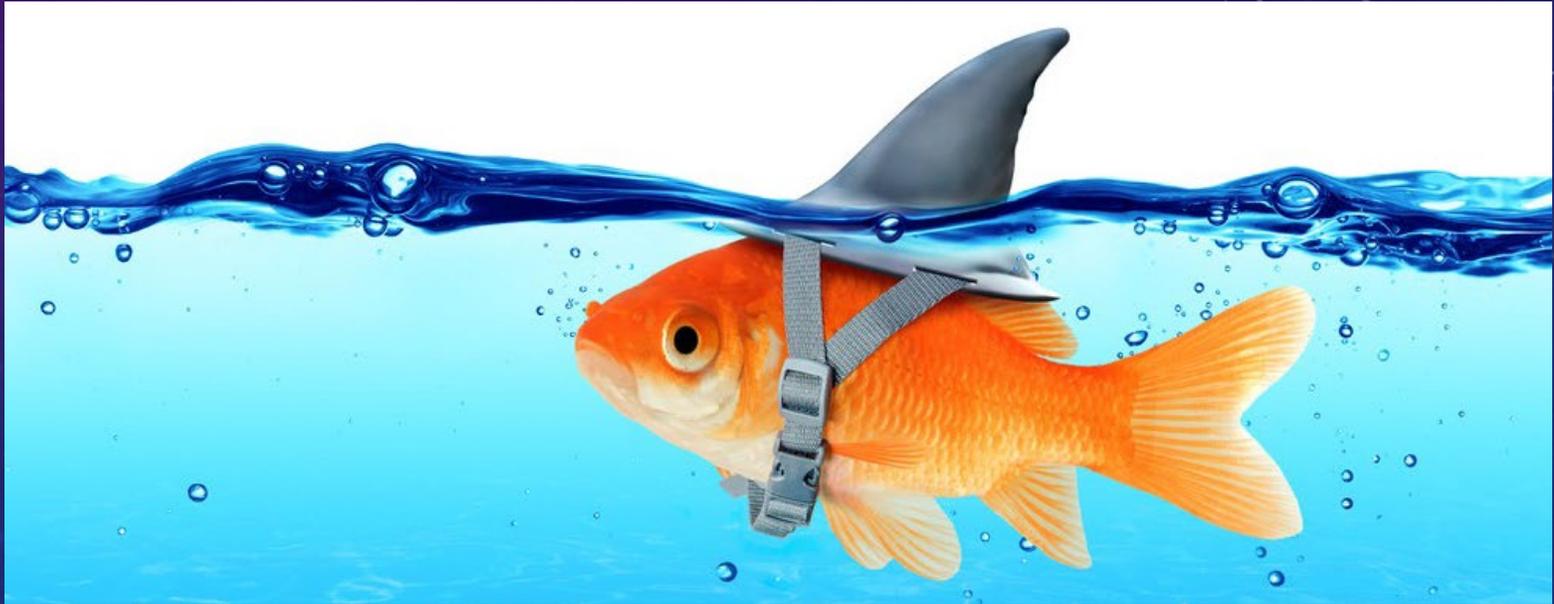
## My Wish for You



# SURVEYS

## My Wish for You

- You keep the survey simple
- You field test your survey
- You actively minimize your bias in design and analysis



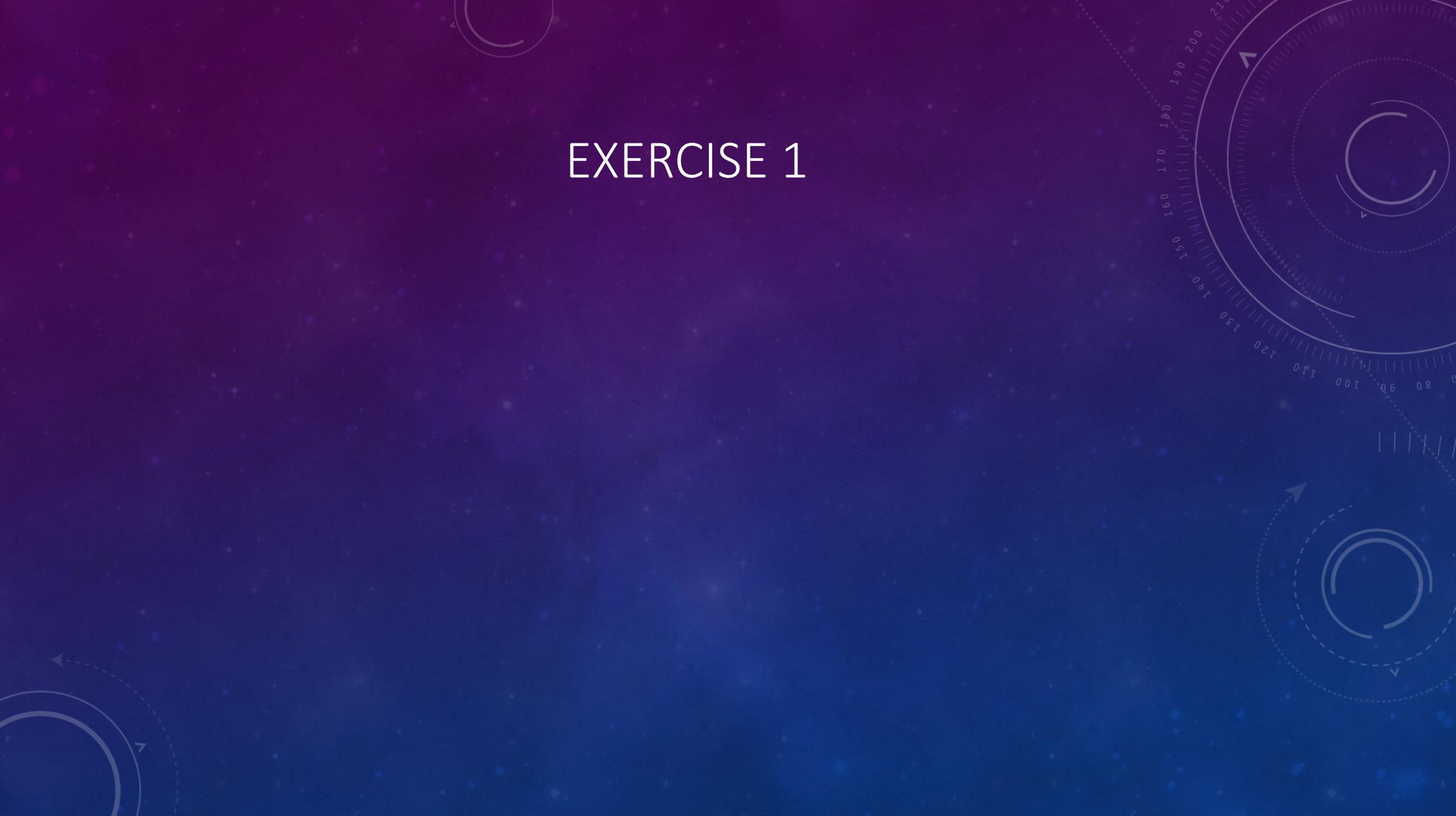
# SURVEYS

## My Wish for You

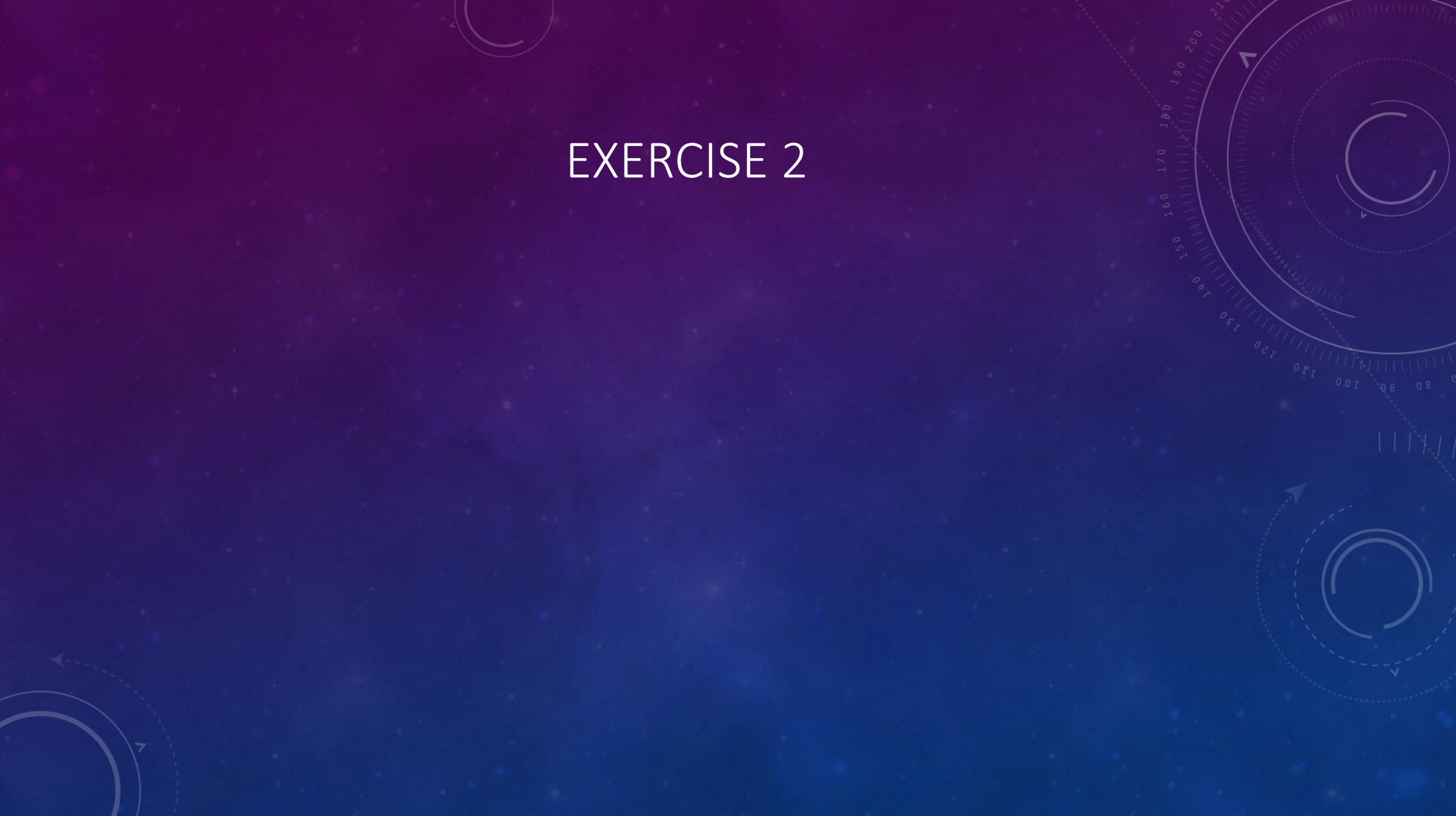
- You keep the survey simple
- You field test your survey
- You actively minimize your bias in design and analysis
- You learn some things that challenge your assumptions and provide new insights!



# EXERCISE 1



# EXERCISE 2



# QUESTION ORDER IS IMPORTANT

- Priming and consistency
- Pretest
- Randomize
- Sensitive Questions



# CONSIDER THE WIIFM FACTOR?

What's in  
it for me?

Why do  
they care?

- Your goals
- Their goals

# HONESTY IS IMPORTANT



Kanin

*"Can I buy you a drink? And then if things don't work out  
between us you can pay me back?"*

# ONLINE SURVEYS OR PAPER

Anonymity

Design

Easy

Target Audience

Question Bank

Logic

Analysis

Cost

Security



<https://cutecatshq.com/cats/cat-working-with-computer/>

# DOS AND DON'TS

- One question at a time
- Watch the order
- Be clear
- Speak their language
- Don't use leading questions
- PRETEST



One at a time, please!

From: i95rock.com

# COMPARED TO WHAT?

- A similar court
- Baseline or historical data
- Performance criterion

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT METHODS

## Qualitative

- Assumes the truth is subjective, flexible
- Data is collected through interviews
- Analysis of themes

## Quantitative

- Assumes there is a fixed, measurable reality
- Data is collected by measurement (e. g., surveys, counts)
- Analysis of numerical comparison

# QUESTIONS FOR US?

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