

# Survey Savvy

Use a survey to gather facts and/or opinions from a select group of people (sample). As with any other resource, you must gather, record, analyze, and report your data.

## The Questions

- Write questions related to your research topic so people can express opinions or give facts.
- Design clear questions. Be sure they are **not**:
  - loaded or leading*  
Which political candidate acted unethically? (Assumes that one was unethical.)
  - vague*  
Do you brush your teeth regularly? (Who decides what "regularly" is?)
  - full of unknown terms*  
Should 3rd graders take the ITBS? (Assumes participant knows that test.)
- Decide on the survey format:
  - open-ended*  
What is your opinion of the Roc-On Band? \_\_\_\_\_
  - choice*  
How many CDs of the Roc-On Band do you have? 0 \_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_ other \_\_\_
  - rating scale*  
How well do you like the Roc-On Band?  
Not at all \_\_\_ Slightly \_\_\_ A lot \_\_\_  
The best \_\_\_
- Keep your survey short. Put questions in a logical order.

## The Sample

- Gather necessary background information about your participants for your survey:
  - age*
  - sex*
  - address*
  - occupation*
  - etc.*

- Decide on a method of data gathering:
  - orally (in person or by phone)*
  - on a written questionnaire*
- Choose your target population:
  - an age group*
  - a certain profession*
  - sports fans*
  - etc.*
- If you can't survey your whole target population, select a random sample by:
  - drawing from the hat*
  - taking every 5th (or some number) from an ABC list*
  - using a table of random numbers (found in statistics and survey manuals)*

## The Action

- Prepare the survey.
- Set a time frame for collecting the results.
- Keep careful records.

## The Results

- Tally and analyze all the results. Do not throw out any responses.
- Show results in charts and graphs. Use this data to answer your research question(s).
- Report your results and conclusions in an oral or written report and/or a display.
- Point out the significance of your results – who may be affected or what may change.

