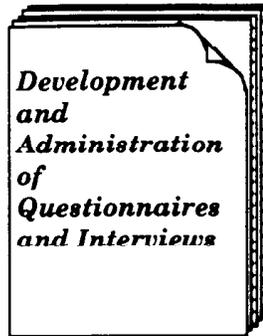


**TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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**M O D U L E T W O**



**JOB AID 26**

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***Development and  
Administration of  
Questionnaires and  
Interviews***

U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command  
Training Development and Analysis Directorate  
Ft. Monroe, VA 23651-5000

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**SEPTEMBER 1992**

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### ■ **PURPOSE OF JOB AID**

TRADOC Schools, Integrating Centers, and HQ TRADOC developed this job aid in conjunction with other job aids and student workbooks that make up the Training Evaluator's Course.

As a DOES evaluator, you can use this job aid to help you develop, evaluate, and administer questionnaires and interviews as part of your responsibility to conduct training evaluations.

#### ■ **PROPONENT**

The proponent for this job aid, and for the entire Training Evaluator Course, is the Commander, Headquarters Training and Doctrine Command (HQ TRADOC). Send comments and recommendations on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) directly to Commander, HQ TRADOC, ATTN: ATTG-CD, Fort Monroe, VA 23651-5000. Make telephone inquiries by calling DSN 680-5590 or COMM (804) 728-5590.

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**TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

***Questionnaires and Interviews***

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

#### ■ DIRECTIONS

1. Use this job aid in conjunction with the student workbook for Module 2 (The Evaluation Process) of the Training Evaluator's Course.
2. Using the guidance in the workbook, you should have already made an initial decision that you need a questionnaire and/or interview. If you are still not sure whether you need a questionnaire/interview or possibly another data collection instrument, such as a checklist or test, consider the following guidance.
  - **checklists** are used for observing training programs, observing individual or unit performance, or for reviewing training documents, products, or processes
  - **tests** are used for measuring student learning or for assessing individual or unit performance
  - **questionnaires and interviews** are used for **collecting information from individuals** associated with or affected by the training programs, products, or processes being evaluated.
3. This job aid provides guidance for development and administration of questionnaires and interviews. It does not provide guidance for development and administration of other data collection instruments, although some of the information applies to other data collection instruments.
4. Read all the way through the job aid before you begin development of your instrument. If there are any terms you do not understand, see the glossary in the back of the job aid.
5. The process of developing questionnaires and interviews is divided into four major steps as shown below. This job aid is likewise divided into four major sections which correspond to these steps.
  1. Decide on type instrument
  2. Develop draft of instrument
  3. Evaluate the instrument
  4. Administer the instrument

## ***TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE***

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### ***Evaluation Planning***

6. The steps indicated in the job aid are topical in nature and only approximate the sequential development of a questionnaire or interview. Some of the decisions and/or steps in the job aid may need to be performed out of the sequence presented here.

7. As with the other Training Evaluator Course materials, feel free to add additional information to the job aid as you wish.

## TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE

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### Questionnaires and Interviews

PROCEDURES FOR  
DEVELOPMENT  
AND  
ADMINISTRATION  
OF  
QUESTIONNAIRES  
AND INTERVIEWS

▼.....

1. Decide on type instrument
2. Develop draft of instrument
3. Evaluate the instrument
4. Administer the instrument

*Step 1  
Decide on the  
type of  
instrument  
needed*

**Step 1a. Determine what information needs to be collected and why**

Questions regarding what information needs to be collected and why the data collection instrument is needed should be considered during the Planning phase (Phase 1) of the evaluation process. During the Planning phase, an evaluation plan is developed. The evaluation plan identifies the evaluation problem, the questions that must be answered to solve the problem, and the information needed to answer these questions. Initial plans regarding the type of instruments needed to collect the required information are also made and included in the evaluation plan.

If for some reason you have not developed an evaluation plan and considered what information you need to collect and why you need a questionnaire or interview, then you should consider the following questions before doing anything else.

1. Why is the questionnaire/interview being developed?
2. What decision will be made based on the information collected?
3. What facts will be needed to make the decisions?
4. What information will be collected?
5. Why is this information needed?
6. Can questions be formulated to obtain the desired information?
7. Who has the answers to the questions?
8. Who will be surveyed?
9. Where are they?
10. How many of them are there?
11. How many do you need to survey?
12. How can you contact them?

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

#### **Step 1b. Determine the type of instrument needed**

Review the chart below and determine which method of data collection is the most appropriate for your survey based upon the advantages listed under each column.

While selecting, also keep in mind time constraints, cost, and staffing capabilities available.

#### **Advantages of Questionnaires**

1. Questionnaires are less costly to administer. With a fixed amount of funds and/or time, a larger sample can be obtained with mailed questionnaires than with interviews.
2. Questionnaires offer the possibility of complete anonymity. Anonymous questionnaires often result in a higher proportion of socially unacceptable responses (that is, responses that place the respondent in an unfavorable light) than face-to-face interviews.
3. The absence of an interviewer assures that there will be no interviewer bias. Respondents and interviewers interact as human beings, and this interaction can affect the subject's responses.
4. Questionnaires offer the best format for multiple response alternatives. When given multiple options, respondents are likely to remember only the high and low choices of the alternatives during interviews.

#### **Advantages of Interviews**

1. The response rate tends to be quite high in face-to-face interviews. A well designed and properly conducted interview study normally achieves a response rate of 80 to 90 percent.
2. There are many individuals who simply cannot fill out a questionnaire. Interviews are normally feasible with virtually all types of people.
3. Interviews offer a protection against ambiguous or confusing questions. In questionnaires, items which are misinterpreted may go undetected by the researchers and the responses may, thus, lead to erroneous conclusions.
4. The information obtained from questionnaires tends to be somewhat more superficial than interview data.
5. Respondents are less likely to give "I don't know" responses or to leave a question unanswered.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### ***Evaluation Planning***

5. Questionnaires offer higher accuracy as the length of the instrument increases.
6. In an interview, the researcher has strict control over the order of presentation of the questions. It is possible that a different ordering of questions from the one originally intended could bias the responses.
7. Interviews permit greater control over the sample in the sense that the interviewer knows whether or not the person being interviewed is the intended participant.
8. Face-to-face interviews have an advantage in their ability to produce additional data through observation.

## TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE

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### Questionnaires and Interviews

- √ 1. Decide on type instrument
- 2. Develop draft of instrument**
3. Evaluate the instrument
4. Administer the instrument

#### **Step 2** *Develop draft of instrument*

#### **Step 2a. Select the type of questions to use**

The first step in question development is the determination of whether to use open-ended questions, closed questions, or a combination of both types. The following checklist provides examples as well as the advantages and limitations for each type of question.

#### **Open Ended Questions**

##### *Examples*

- Essay questions

##### *Advantages*

- Provides for information in respondent's own words.
- Allows respondents "other" categories to answer.
- Provides opportunity to probe the respondent.

##### *Limitations*

- Difficult to interpret or summarize.
- Respondents may be unable to clearly express themselves.
- Answers take up too much space.

#### **Closed Questions**

##### *Examples*

- True-False
- Multiple Choice (rating and ranking scales forced choice items)
- Checklist type questions

##### *Advantages*

- Easy for respondent to complete
- Answers easy to interpret, summarize, and automate.
- Provides specific required information.

##### *Limitations*

- Answers are not in respondent's own words.
- Does not provide respondent with "other" options.
- Provides no unique answers.

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## TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE

### Questionnaires and Interviews

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#### Step 2b. Construct the questions

Ask the following to determine if a question should be used in the instrument.

- | Yes                      | No                       |                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1. Is the question relevant to the problem and important to the study?                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2. Do the questions and responses have the same meaning to the evaluator and the respondents alike? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3. Does the question deal with a single concept?                                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Does the question provide for discrimination within the target population?                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Does the question avoid all types of bias?                                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6. Does the question ask for the needed information clearly?                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7. Do the question responses exhaust all the meaningful answers that can be anticipated?            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8. Is the question within the experience range and level of understanding of the target population? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9. Does the question have unemotional words?                                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10. Is the question well-defined?                                                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. Does the question have words that are specific or concrete?                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. Is the question a valid measure of the problem under study?                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. Is the question grammatically correct?                                                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. Is the question worded in positive terms wherever possible?                                     |

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## ***TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE***

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### **Step 2c. Sequence the questions**

*Consider the following when sequencing questions on a questionnaire or a structured interview guide.*

1. When both open-ended and closed-ended questions are used, place open-ended questions first.
2. When general and specific questions are used, place general questions first.
3. Group items that bear on one issue or topic, or place related items in relatively close proximity.
4. Factual or objective questions about events, situations, or behaviors should appear in the first part of the questionnaire.
5. Questions about attitudes, opinions or values should appear in the latter part of the questionnaire due to their sensitive or threatening nature.
6. Whenever possible, place background questions at the end of the questionnaire.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### **Step 2d. Format the instrument**

*Consider the following principles when formatting a questionnaire.*

1. Make the questionnaire as “eye appealing” and easy to complete as possible.
2. Center a descriptive title at the top of the first page.
3. State an introduction or purpose of the questionnaire below the title.
4. Instructions should follow purpose or introduction and should be clear and brief.
5. If questions appear on both sides of page, put word “over” on the bottom of the front side of that page.
6. Avoid constructing sections of the questionnaire to be answered only by a subgroup of respondents.
7. Do not over crowd the pages of the questionnaire.
8. Arrange the questionnaire so that the answers are marked close to the question they go with.
9. Group items into logically coherent sections or specific topics.
10. Make smooth transitions between sections. Introduce each section.
11. Number questionnaire pages and items so that the respondent will not become confused while completing the form.
12. Put the name and address of the person to whom the form should be returned on the questionnaire even if you are including a self-addressed return envelope.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### **Step 2d. Format the instrument (continued)**

*Consider the following principles when formatting a structured interview guide.*

1. Print questions on only one side of the paper.
2. Material to be read aloud should be easily distinguished from other written material appearing on the page.
3. Instructions should be clearly stated so that the interviewers will know exactly which questions to ask after each response.
4. Arrange questions so that interviewers will not have to refer back to earlier parts of the interview guide.
5. Limit response options to what the respondent can comfortably remember them.
6. Do not use an open-ended question to end the interview.
7. Provide extra space on each page for interviewers to record any additional important information obtained from the respondent.
8. When possible, provide a list of possible anticipated responses for the interviewer to use as a checklist.
9. Define on the interview guide any terms where a particular meaning is intended.
10. Balance the interview guide with countable responses as well as narrative response questions. (Avoid relying entirely on data from either type).
11. Keep general attitude or evaluation questions to a minimum.
12. Where skill levels or a variety of jobs are encountered:
  - a. Conduct an interview with individuals at different levels of the organization.
  - b. Prepare questions that address the respondent's personal knowledge, or experience.
  - c. Develop separate interview guides tailored to each level and/or job.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

- √ 1. Decide on type instrument
- √ 2. Develop draft of instrument
- 3. Evaluate the instrument**
4. Administer the instrument

*Use the following guidelines when evaluating the instrument.*

#### **Step 3 Evaluate the instrument**

1. Critically review and discuss the instrument with subject matter experts from the field or area being evaluated.
2. Have other evaluators critically review the question structure, clarity, grammar, etc., of the instrument.
3. Pretest the instrument with a sample target population group to determine its clarity, adequacy, and freedom from bias.
4. Field test the instrument for reliability and validity.
5. Revise the instrument as required.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

- √ 1. Decide on type instrument
- √ 2. Develop draft of instrument
- √ 3. Evaluate the instrument
- 4. Administer the instrument**

#### **Step 4 Administer the instrument**

#### **Administering a questionnaire**

*If the questionnaire is to be administered by mailing it to respondents, use the following guidelines.*

1. Secure authorization for administration of the questionnaire.
  - a. Local - If administration is to be conducted within command lines, local authorization will be sufficient.
  - b. Outside command lines - Surveys conducted across major command lines are authorized through the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel Integration (PERSCOM). A survey control number (SCN) is issued and must appear on the cover of the questionnaire. (Ref AR 611-3 and DA PAM 600-8)
2. Prepare a cover memo and address labels. Memo should briefly:
  - a. identify the subject of the study
  - b. identify the sponsor(s)/endorser(s)
  - c. describe why the study is being done
  - d. explain why the individual/organization is receiving the questionnaire
  - e. explain how the results will be used
  - f. justify why people should cooperate in the study
  - g. encourage prompt response
  - h. mention the inclusion of a postage paid (if possible) self addressed return envelope
  - i. state your policy on confidentiality of data gathered
  - j. include a point of contact
  - k. thank them for their cooperation

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

1. Include the signature of the highest authority level available.
3. Prepare follow-up letters if applicable.
4. Determine the number of individuals to be surveyed (sample size) if not already done. See TR 350-15 (Appendix K) for guidance.
5. Print the questionnaire: NOTE - A "Privacy Act Statement" should appear on the first page.
6. Package questionnaire, self addressed return envelope and cover memo for mailing.
7. Set up a system for recording returns.
8. Mail the questionnaires.
9. To increase the return rate, follow up on late or "no returns", by phone and/or mail inquiries.

*If the questionnaire is to be administered in person, use following guidelines.*

1. Determine sample size needed. (see paragraph 4 above).
2. Prepare an introduction to be given to those who will complete the questionnaire. Include same information as in memo discussed above (paragraph 2)
3. Coordinate with organizations that will provide respondents. (coordinate time, place, etc.)
4. Print the questionnaire.
5. Set up a system for recording completed questionnaires.
6. Administer the questionnaire.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### ***Administering a structured interview***

The quality of interview data is very dependent upon the attitude and proficiency of the interviewers. The interviewer's primary task is to put the respondents at ease in order to obtain honest opinions. He serves as a medium of communication. Interviewers should always be appropriately dressed, courteous, friendly and on time (if an appointment has been made). Whenever possible, conduct interviews in a quiet and professional surrounding that is free from interruptions.

The following checklists contain basic guidelines (Do's and Don'ts) to use when conducting an interview.

- DO'S**
1. DO study all questions until you know what they mean and can ask the question without sounding like you are reading from the interview guide.
  2. DO practice interviewing; first on yourself and then on someone else.
  3. DO reread your instructions between interviews.
  4. DO check with your supervisor whenever you encounter difficulties with question wording or procedures.
  5. DO be polite and act naturally.
  6. DO be firm about interruptions and privacy. You are interviewing one specific individual.
  7. DO try to complete the interview in one setting.
  8. DO assure the respondent of the confidentiality of their responses.
  9. DO interview the person you are scheduled to; accept no substitutes.
  10. DO use the introduction written for the interview guide.
  11. DO try to record "free response" answers word for word. DO be able to reconstruct respondent's answers from your notes.
  12. DO use the response categories provided for each question.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

13. DO ask the questions exactly as they are worded and in the same order.
14. DO record every answer in the correct place.
15. DO record the qualifications (“yes, if...” or “yes, but not ...”) to straight yes/no questions. Record qualifications in a space nearby.
16. DO obtain specific comments, not vague, meaningless generalities. Ask “why”?
17. DO keep talking as you write. Keep the respondent’s attention on the questions.
18. DO take the blame for faulty communication.
19. DO check over your interview guide before leaving the interview.
20. DO interview alone unless assigned as a team.

#### **DONTS**

1. DON’T get involved in long explanations of the study.
2. DON’T try to explain sampling in detail.
3. DON’T try to justify or defend what you are doing.
4. DON’T interpret the meaning of a question.
5. DON’T add or subtract from a question.
6. DON’T change the sequence of questions
7. DON’T rush the respondent.
8. DON’T patronize respondents who do not speak standard English as well as you do.
9. DON’T react to answers.
10. DON’T do anything that suggests to the respondent that the answer is right or wrong.
11. DON’T record a “don’t know” answer too quickly. Some people say “I don’t know” when taking time to think.
12. DON’T let another unit member sit in on the interview or interject answers for the respondent.

## ***TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE***

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### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

13. DON'T tell the respondent in advance what questions will be asked, and never let the respondent see the interview guide.
14. DON'T interpret the reply.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### **GLOSSARY**

▼.....

**ANONYMITY:** Protection of the participant in a study such that even the researcher cannot link him or her with the information provided.

**BIAS:** Any influence that produces a distortion in the results of a study.

**CLOSED-ENDED-QUESTION:** A question that offers respondents a set of mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive alternative replies, from which the one that most closely approximates the "right" answer must be chosen.

**CONCEPT:** An abstraction based on observations of certain behaviors or characteristics (e.g., stress, death).

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Protection of participants in a study such that their individual identities will not be linked to the information they provided and publicly divulged.

**DATA:** The pieces of information obtained in the course of a study (singular is datum).

**INTERVIEW:** A method of data collection in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions of another person (a respondent); interviews are conducted either face-to-face or by telephone.

**ITEM:** A term used to refer to a single point or question on a test or questionnaire, or a single statement on an attitude or other scale (e.g., a final examination might consist of 100 items).

**OPEN-ENDED QUESTION:** A question in an interview or questionnaire that does not restrict the respondents' answers to preestablished alternatives.

**POPULATION:** The entire set of individuals (or objects) having some common characteristic(s).

**PROBING:** Eliciting more useful or detailed information from a respondent than was volunteered during the first reply.

**QUESTIONNAIRE:** A method of gathering self-report information from respondents through self-administration of questions in a paper-and-pencil format.

**RELIABILITY:** The degree of consistency or dependability with which an instrument measures what it is purported to measure.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Evaluation Planning***

**RESPONSE RATE:** The rate of participation in a survey; calculated by dividing the number of persons participating by the number of persons sampled.

**SAMPLE:** A subset of a population selected to participate in a research study.

**SAMPLING:** The process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population.

**SUBJECT:** An individual who participates and provides data in a study.

**TARGET POPULATION:** The entire population in which the researcher is interested and to which he or she would like to generalize the results of a study.

**VALIDITY:** The degree to which a questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure; a questionnaire is valid for a particular purpose and for a particular group.

**VARIABLE:** A concept that can assume any one of a range of values, e.g. intelligence, height, aptitude.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### **Step 2d. Format the instrument (continued)**

*Consider the following principles when formatting a structured interview guide.*

1. Print questions on only one side of the paper.
2. Material to be read aloud should be easily distinguished from other written material appearing on the page.
3. Instructions should be clearly stated so that the interviewers will know exactly which questions to ask after each response.
4. Arrange questions so that interviewers will not have to refer back to earlier parts of the interview guide.
5. Limit response options to what the respondent can comfortably remember them.
6. Do not use an open-ended question to end the interview.
7. Provide extra space on each page for interviewers to record any additional important information obtained from the respondent.
8. When possible, provide a list of possible anticipated responses for the interviewer to use as a checklist.
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11. Keep general attitude or evaluation questions to a minimum.
12. Where skill levels or a variety of jobs are encountered:
  - a. Conduct an interview with individuals at different levels of the organization.
  - b. Prepare questions that address the respondent's personal knowledge, or experience.
  - c. Develop separate interview guides tailored to each level and/or job.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

- √ 1. Decide on type instrument
- √ 2. Develop draft of instrument
- 3. Evaluate the instrument**
4. Administer the instrument

*Use the following guidelines when evaluating the instrument.*

#### ***Step 3 Evaluate the instrument***

1. Critically review and discuss the instrument with subject matter experts from the field or area being evaluated.
2. Have other evaluators critically review the question structure, clarity, grammar, etc., of the instrument.
3. Pretest the instrument with a sample target population group to determine its clarity, adequacy, and freedom from bias.
4. Field test the instrument for reliability and validity.
5. Revise the instrument as required.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

- √ 1. Decide on type instrument
- √ 2. Develop draft of instrument
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- 4. Administer the instrument**

#### **Step 4 Administer the instrument**

##### **Administering a questionnaire**

*If the questionnaire is to be administered by mailing it to respondents, use the following guidelines.*

1. Secure authorization for administration of the questionnaire.
  - a. Local - If administration is to be conducted within command lines, local authorization will be sufficient.
  - b. Outside command lines - Surveys conducted across major command lines are authorized through the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel Integration (PERSCOM). A survey control number (SCN) is issued and must appear on the cover of the questionnaire. (Ref AR 611-3 and DA PAM 600-8)
2. Prepare a cover memo and address labels. Memo should briefly:
  - a. identify the subject of the study
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  - c. describe why the study is being done
  - d. explain why the individual/organization is receiving the questionnaire
  - e. explain how the results will be used
  - f. justify why people should cooperate in the study
  - g. encourage prompt response
  - h. mention the inclusion of a postage paid (if possible) self addressed return envelope
  - i. state your policy on confidentiality of data gathered
  - j. include a point of contact
  - k. thank them for their cooperation

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

1. Include the signature of the highest authority level available.
3. Prepare follow-up letters if applicable.
4. Determine the number of individuals to be surveyed (sample size) if not already done. See TR 350-15 (Appendix K) for guidance.
5. Print the questionnaire: NOTE - A "Privacy Act Statement" should appear on the first page.
6. Package questionnaire, self addressed return envelope and cover memo for mailing.
7. Set up a system for recording returns.
8. Mail the questionnaires.
9. To increase the return rate, follow up on late or "no returns", by phone and/or mail inquiries.

*If the questionnaire is to be administered in person, use following guidelines.*

1. Determine sample size needed. (see paragraph 4 above).
2. Prepare an introduction to be given to those who will complete the questionnaire. Include same information as in memo discussed above (paragraph 2)
3. Coordinate with organizations that will provide respondents. (coordinate time, place, etc.)
4. Print the questionnaire.
5. Set up a system for recording completed questionnaires.
6. Administer the questionnaire.

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## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### ***Administering a structured interview***

The quality of interview data is very dependent upon the attitude and proficiency of the interviewers. The interviewer's primary task is to put the respondents at ease in order to obtain honest opinions. He serves as a medium of communication. Interviewers should always be appropriately dressed, courteous, friendly and on time (if an appointment has been made). Whenever possible, conduct interviews in a quiet and professional surrounding that is free from interruptions.

The following checklists contain basic guidelines (Do's and Don'ts) to use when conducting an interview.

- DO'S**
1. DO study all questions until you know what they mean and can ask the question without sounding like you are reading from the interview guide.
  2. DO practice interviewing; first on yourself and then on someone else.
  3. DO reread your instructions between interviews.
  4. DO check with your supervisor whenever you encounter difficulties with question wording or procedures.
  5. DO be polite and act naturally.
  6. DO be firm about interruptions and privacy. You are interviewing one specific individual.
  7. DO try to complete the interview in one setting.
  8. DO assure the respondent of the confidentiality of their responses.
  9. DO interview the person you are scheduled to; accept no substitutes.
  10. DO use the introduction written for the interview guide.
  11. DO try to record "free response" answers word for word. DO be able to reconstruct respondent's answers from your notes.
  12. DO use the response categories provided for each question.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

13. DO ask the questions exactly as they are worded and in the same order.
14. DO record every answer in the correct place.
15. DO record the qualifications (“yes, if...” or “yes, but not ...”) to straight yes/no questions. Record qualifications in a space nearby.
16. DO obtain specific comments, not vague, meaningless generalities. Ask “why”?
17. DO keep talking as you write. Keep the respondent’s attention on the questions.
18. DO take the blame for faulty communication.
19. DO check over your interview guide before leaving the interview.
20. DO interview alone unless assigned as a team.

#### **DON'TS**

1. DON'T get involved in long explanations of the study.
2. DON'T try to explain sampling in detail.
3. DON'T try to justify or defend what you are doing.
4. DON'T interpret the meaning of a question.
5. DON'T add or subtract from a question.
6. DON'T change the sequence of questions
7. DON'T rush the respondent.
8. DON'T patronize respondents who do not speak standard English as well as you do.
9. DON'T react to answers.
10. DON'T do anything that suggests to the respondent that the answer is right or wrong.
11. DON'T record a “don’t know” answer too quickly. Some people say “I don’t know” when taking time to think.
12. DON'T let another unit member sit in on the interview or interject answers for the respondent.

## ***TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE***

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### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

13. DON'T tell the respondent in advance what questions will be asked, and never let the respondent see the interview guide.
14. DON'T interpret the reply.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### **Questionnaires and Interviews**

#### **GLOSSARY**

▼.....

**ANONYMITY:** Protection of the participant in a study such that even the researcher cannot link him or her with the information provided.

**BIAS:** Any influence that produces a distortion in the results of a study.

**CLOSED-ENDED-QUESTION:** A question that offers respondents a set of mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive alternative replies, from which the one that most closely approximates the "right" answer must be chosen.

**CONCEPT:** An abstraction based on observations of certain behaviors or characteristics (e.g., stress, death).

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Protection of participants in a study such that their individual identities will not be linked to the information they provided and publicly divulged.

**DATA:** The pieces of information obtained in the course of a study (singular is datum).

**INTERVIEW:** A method of data collection in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions of another person (a respondent); interviews are conducted either face-to-face or by telephone.

**ITEM:** A term used to refer to a single point or question on a test or questionnaire, or a single statement on an attitude or other scale (e.g., a final examination might consist of 100 items).

**OPEN-ENDED QUESTION:** A question in an interview or questionnaire that does not restrict the respondents' answers to preestablished alternatives.

**POPULATION:** The entire set of individuals (or objects) having some common characteristic(s).

**PROBING:** Eliciting more useful or detailed information from a respondent than was volunteered during the first reply.

**QUESTIONNAIRE:** A method of gathering self-report information from respondents through self-administration of questions in a paper-and-pencil format.

**RELIABILITY:** The degree of consistency or dependability with which an instrument measures what it is purported to measure.

## ***TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE***

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### ***Evaluation Planning***

**RESPONSE RATE:** The rate of participation in a survey; calculated by dividing the number of persons participating by the number of persons sampled.

**SAMPLE:** A subset of a population selected to participate in a research study.

**SAMPLING:** The process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population.

**SUBJECT:** An individual who participates and provides data in a study.

**TARGET POPULATION:** The entire population in which the researcher is interested and to which he or she would like to generalize the results of a study.

**VALIDITY:** The degree to which a questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure; a questionnaire is valid for a particular purpose and for a particular group.

**VARIABLE:** A concept that can assume any one of a range of values, e.g. intelligence, height, aptitude.

## **TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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### ***Questionnaires and Interviews***

#### **REFERENCES**

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**TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE**

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***Evaluation of Student Learning***

8. Did you observe all students performing to standard during this class?

Yes       No

EXPLAIN \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Of the following instructional methods, mark the one(s) you used in this class with an **X** and mark the one(s) you think would improve this class with a **Q**.

- Lecture
- Conference
- Guest Speaker
- In-Basket
- Role Playing
- Case Study
- Group Process Plan
- Wargaming (computer assisted)
- Seminar
- Wargaming (non-computer)
- Programmed Instruction
- Command Post Exercise (CPX)
- Practical Exercise
- Field Training Exercise (FTX)
- Demonstration
- Mentoring
- Simulation Exercise
- Small Group Instruction (SGI)
- Other, please explain.

***TRAINING EVALUATOR COURSE***

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***Evaluation of Student Learning***

10. Add any additional comments here:

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