VSys Voices:
Creating Surveys to
Measure Program Impact

Presenters

Roseanna Galindo, CAVS, CCBA, blends three decades of teaching experience with 16 years in healthcare leadership, including many years as a Volunteer Manager where she oversaw multiple volunteer programs. Certified in business analysis, she helps nonprofit and healthcare leaders to confidently harness data for meaningful impact. Through her blog on www.PeriscopeBPA.com, she bridges communication and data, championing the human experience in healthcare and the essential role of volunteer leaders. Roseanna is also the developer of the Volunteer Satisfaction Index (VSI) and the Executive Director of a nonprofit foundation.

Dana Litwin, CVA, is a globally recognized strategic advisor, speaker, and advocate for civic service. Since 2002 she has guided organizations nationwide to produce breakthrough volunteer and community engagement programs. Dana is the creator of the YouTube channel "Priceless Advice for Leaders of Volunteers". She served as President of the Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (AL!VE) and is a founder of the National Alliance for Volunteer Engagement. Learn more at danalitwinconsulting.com.
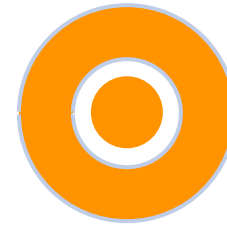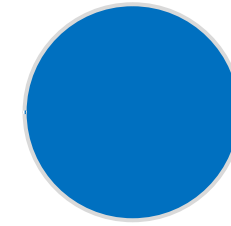
Target audience for today's webinar

SKILL LEVEL
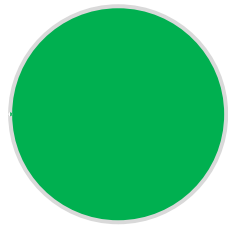
Minimal Knowledge
Looking for some basic information, key principles and "how-to's" on the subject.

Working Knowledge
Integrated practices and moving beyond basic concepts. Looking for breadth and depth on a topic

Authoritative Knowledge
Looking for advanced knowledge, integration and concepts that are innovative and cutting edge.

Today's Objectives

1. Recognize the strengths and weaknesses of surveys

2. Select the right question types when preparing a survey

3. Use best practices for survey data collection

Why Surveys Matter

- Understanding your stakeholders
  - Current volunteers
  - Potential volunteers
  - New volunteers

- Adapting communication and processes to the needs and preferences of your stakeholders.

Strengths of Surveys

Surveys are used to elicit program information

- from groups of people

- in a structured, standardized way

- in a relatively short period of time

- through written form or a technology platform

Limitations of Surveys

- Skills in statistical sampling methods may be needed to achieve unbiased results

- Response rates may be too low for statistical significance

- Questions may be left unanswered or answered incorrectly

- Requires follow up questions, interviews, or focus groups for deeper understanding

- Analysis is dependent upon question type and wording.

Collecting Audience Analysis Information

- Demographic information
  - Age, gender, sexual orientation, religion
  - Group membership, racial, ethnic and cultural background

- Psychographic information
  - Beliefs, attitudes, values

- These, along with Situation Analysis, also need to be considered when later sharing the data
  https://www.periscopebpa.com/post/the-best-audience-analysis-tools-for-your-data-storytelling

Types of Survey Questions
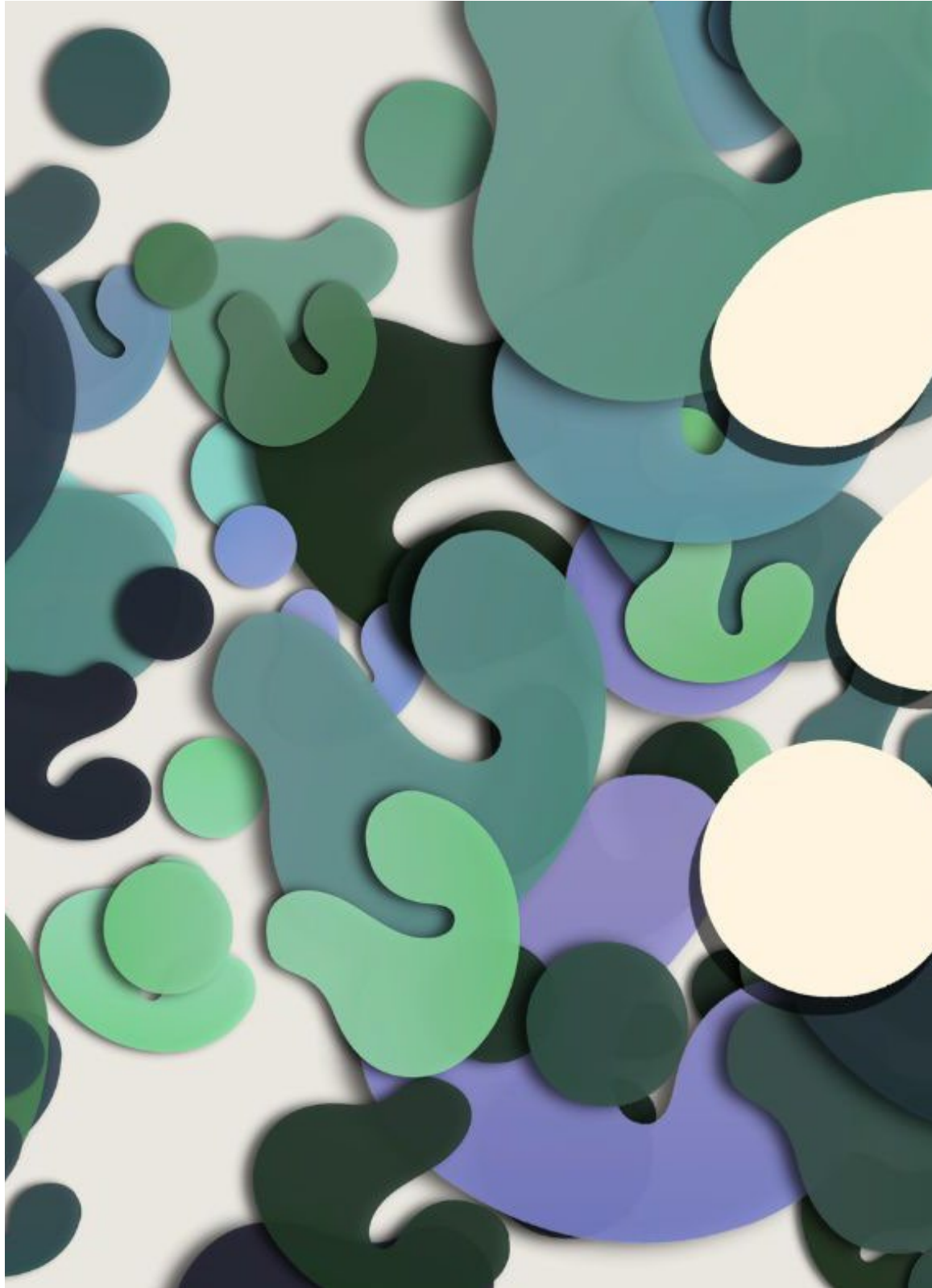
- Three question types

  – Fixed-alternative questions

  – Scale questions

  – Open-ended questions

- Each has advantages and disadvantages in collecting information.

Fixed Alternative Questions

- Offer a fixed choice between two or more responses. For example:

  Which of the following was most important in your choice to volunteer?

  _____Friendship/Belonging

  _____Meaning/Purpose

  _____Fame/Fortune

- Produce clear, unambiguous results

- Easily analyzed and visualized

- Tend to yield superficial results Surface data only

- Add "other", "unsure", or similar to identify outliers

Scale Questions

- Require responses at fixed intervals along a scale of answers. For example:

  How important is Friendship/Belonging to you in choosing to volunteer?

  Very unimportant |_____|_____|_____|_____|_____| Very important

- Useful for getting at the strength of a respondent's attitude

- Needs a neutral mid-point to avoid having fixed-alternative output

  – Use odd number of intervals

Open-Ended Questions

- Give the maximum leeway in responding. For example:

  What is the most important consideration for you in choosing to volunteer ?

  _____

- Invite more detailed responses

- Increases the likelihood of getting responses that do not give the information needed

Preparing Your Survey

- Plan the survey carefully to elicit precisely the information you need.

- Use all three types of questions

- Make sure the questions are clear and unambiguous

- Keep the survey relatively brief

  - Survey fatigue is real!

Example Pulse Check Survey

- 6 questions

    - <u>Two</u> fixed alternative questions to establish level of knowledge or involvement

    - <u>Two to three</u> scale questions to gauge the degree of the attitude or belief

    - <u>One to two</u> open-ended questions to probe for specific topic information

1. <u>Do</u> you <u>look</u> for opportunities to engage in more volunteer work for this organization?

    _____Yes

    _____No

2. Have you engaged in any volunteer work for this organization beyond your regular shift?

    _____Yes

    _____No

3. If you have engaged in additional volunteer work, how rewarding was the experience?

   Very unrewarding |____|____|____|____|____| Very rewarding

4. How much do you agree with the following statement: "Volunteers should help the organization with additional projects when they are able."

    Strong disagree |____|____|____|____|____| Strongly agree

5. If you have engaged in additional volunteer work, do you plan to do so again? Why or why not?

    _____

    _____

6. If you have not engaged in additional volunteer work, what is your major reason for not doing so? Please explain.

    _____

    _____

Question Wording
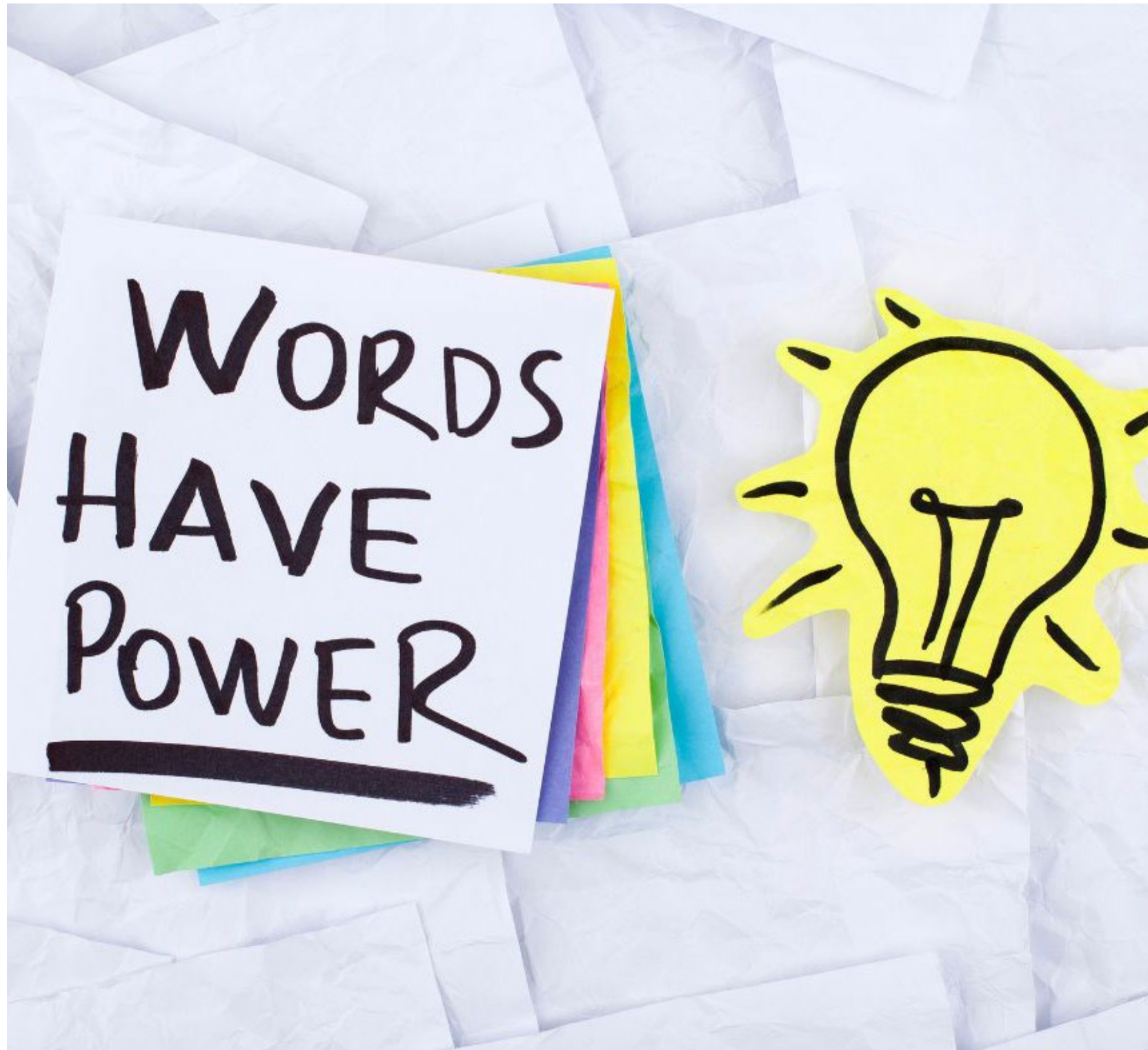
- Write clear, unambiguous questions

- Ask for opinions and test the survey to vet wording

- One word can change the meaning

- Ensure all questions support the stated objectives

- Validity and reliability concerns/issues

Examples from forward>backward Serbian VSI translation

Olivér Lubics, PhD student Eötvös Loránd University translated the VSI for use with volunteers in Serbia.

ORIGINAL. *The chance I have to utilize my knowledge and skills in my volunteer work.*

BW TRANSLATION. *The opportunity to improve my knowledge and skills through my voluntary work.*

Problem: The words "utilize" and "improve" do not deliver the same message. The intent of the original question is if the voluntary work provides opportunities to use skills the volunteer believes he or she has. The backward translation uses the word "improve" which has a different meaning.

ORIGINAL. *The level of challenge this volunteer job provides me.*

BW TRANSLATION. *The level of challenge I face at my voluntary work*.

The connotative use of the word "challenge" in the backward translation is distinctly different from the original. The word "challenge" can have both a positive and a negative connotation.   In the original, the phrase "level of challenge" has a positive meaning more akin to the hard work one does to get results (like an athlete). The backward translation of challenge has a negative meaning of struggles or hardships.

Population vs Sample

- Population

  - Every single individual in the group you are conducting analysis on

    - Example – every volunteer who works an average of 8 hours or more a month

- Sample

  - A subset of the population

    - Example – a portion of volunteers who work an average of 8 hours or more a month

Targets and Timelines

- Establish a timeline for survey administration

  - Establish when the survey will be closed or considered complete

  - Data collection for 2-4 weeks

  - Include communication schedule

- Determine acceptable response rate

  - If the actual response rate is lower than acceptable threshold, survey results may be limited

  - Establish when the survey will be closed or considered complete

Administering the Survey

- Communicate before, during, and after the survey timeline

  – Before

    Survey objectives, timeline, how the results will be used, any confidentiality arrangements

  – During

    Reminders, timeline, encouragement

  – After

    Thank respondents, share results

Report the Results

- Aggregate and summarize the responses

- Identify emerging trends

- Visualize the key findings
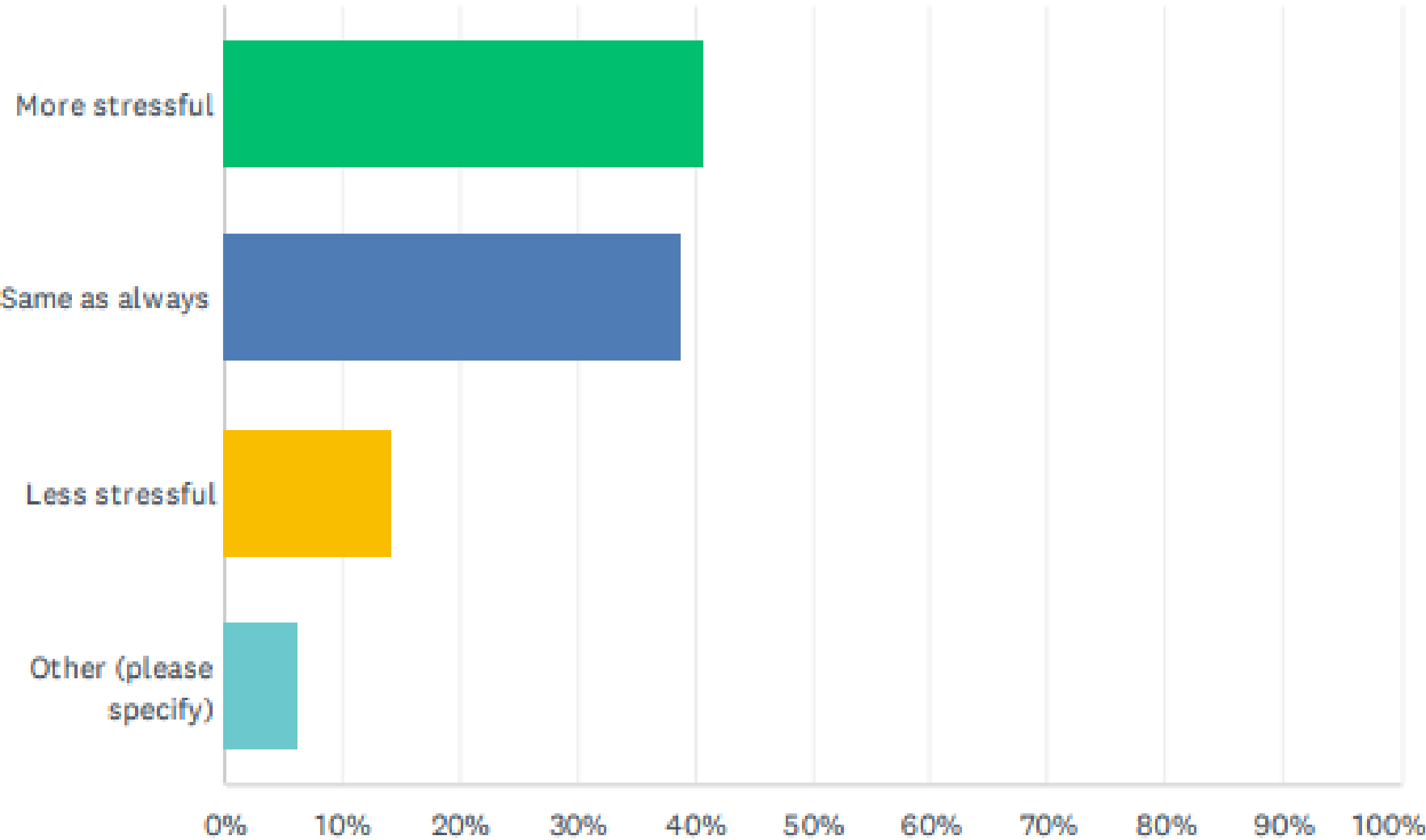
  –Data Storytelling Essentials

Vsys One Survey Results

Q1 Compared to this time last year is your work life:
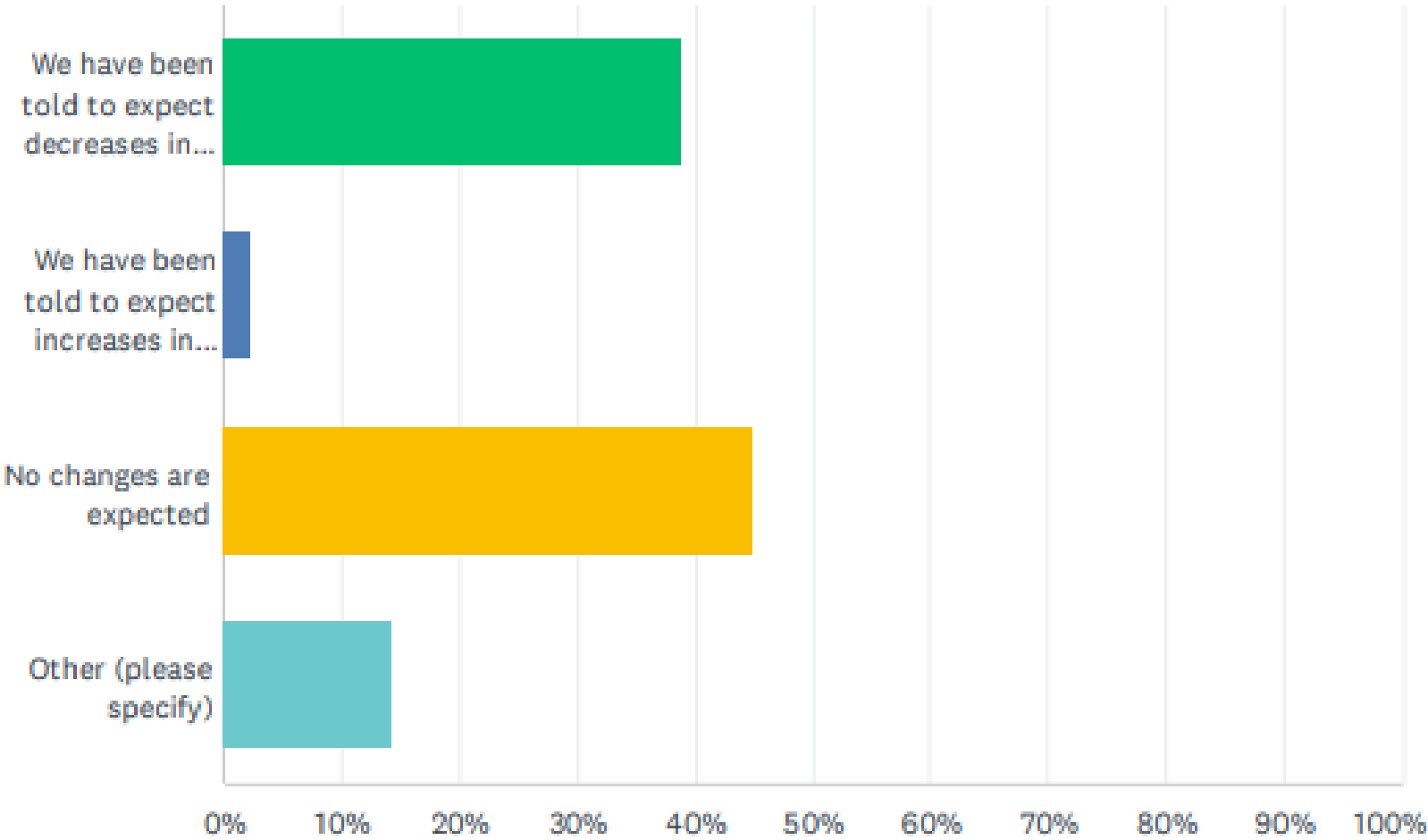
Answered: 49   Skipped: 0

Vsys One Survey Results

Q2 Have you been told to expect funding changes in the next budget cycle?

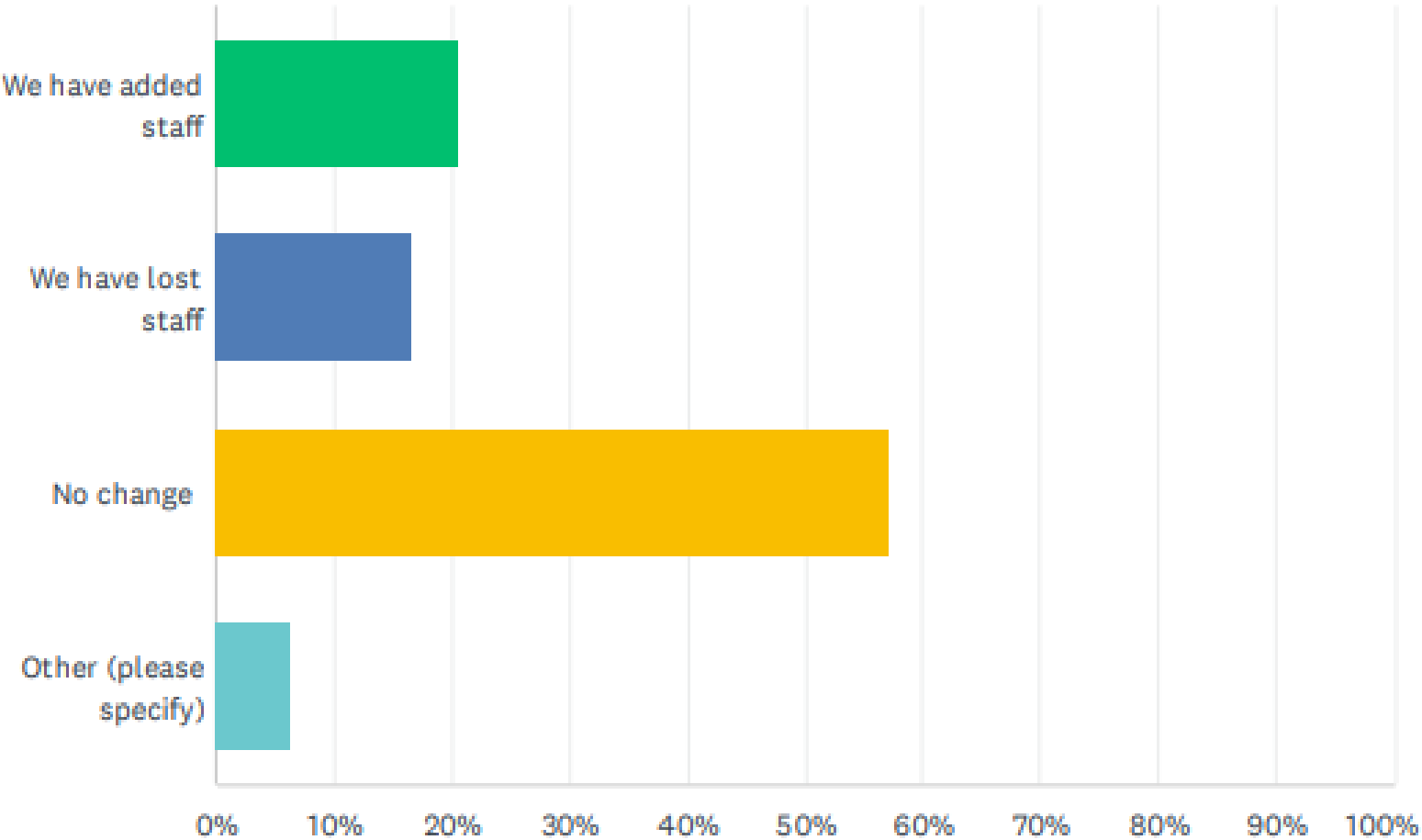Answered: 49   Skipped: 0

Vsys One Survey Results

Q3 Has your Volunteer Department headcount changed in the past year?

Answered: 49   Skipped: 0

Vsys One Survey Results: What challenges do you anticipate facing next year

❑ Recruitment challenges for our weekday - day time program.

❑ Get more volunteers

❑ shortage of volunteers

❑ Recruiting new volunteers

❑ Recruitment and retention

❑ I think next year should focus on getting more volunteers.

❑ Growth - for every handful of volunteers I bring on, I have another handful that exits due to health challenges, getting a job, etc. so we are plateauing

❑ Maintaining and increasing interest in the volunteer program

❑ Retaining older volunteers

❑ We are moving locations again and will lose local volunteers. We need to find more in the new location

❑ As the volunteer program continues to grow, I anticipate challenges related to managing increased onboarding volume while maintaining personalized support for each volunteer. Additionally, adapting to evolving hospital policies and ensuring timely compliance across all volunteers may require enhanced coordination and communication strategies. Balancing these operational demands with the need to foster engagement and recognition will be key

❑ More required paperwork for new volunteers

❑ Due to physical expansion of the campus, we are expected to provide more volunteers with no increase in Volunteer Services staff

❑ The time volunteers can commit to has been decreasing. Many more vacations/trips that take stop their volunteering for weeks at a time.

❑ Increase in volunteers and new programs.

❑ Loosing volunteers to attrition and not replacing them

❑ Potentially more reliance on volunteers to help staff shortfalls. Also, there is continuing to be a limited number of mature adult volunteer applicants who we desire because of their potentially longer length of service and higher levels of emotional maturity.

# Vsys One Survey Results: How are you planning to handle these challenges?

- ❑ I plan on learning everything I can about Vsys
- ❑ Continued increased efficiency using VSys, potential additions to intern roles
- ❑ Increase cross-training for staff, promoting wellness to decrease fatigue and low morale.
- ❑ We are collaborating with our clinical and operations partners to ensure we are aligned about what is realistic for our scope of practice. For the recruitment of older adults, we are exploring and executing various specific outreach efforts.
- ❑ Continuing recruitment. Perform more recruiting engagements
- ❑ Exploring new ways to communicate with volunteers; community and student advertising for new volunteers
- ❑ Connect with pre-retirement programs to encourage newly retired members of the community to volunteer
- ❑ PR plan, presentations at community events/groups, social media
- ❑ With HR assistance
- ❑ I have to bring on double the volunteers I normally would to net a few good ones. Rreconsider a more robust college program to get numbers up even though they cycle through faster
- ❑ Try to recruit admin volunteers and/or coop students.
- ❑ Recruiting younger volunteers and working with local business to attract volunteers
- ❑ Work with internal audit to address any issues on record keeping, process improvement and working with VSys to revamp training checklist collection.
- ❑ Streamlining processes: work smarter - not harder   Prioritize the work
- ❑ I plan to streamline onboarding processes by leveraging digital tools and templates to improve efficiency without sacrificing quality. I will also work closely with other departments to stay ahead of policy changes and ensure timely communication with volunteers. Additionally, I aim to implement more structured check-ins and recognition efforts to maintain volunteer engagement and satisfaction throughout the year.
- ❑ Asking for help and clarification if needed.
- ❑ seeking additional funding sources
- ❑ advertising & keeping volunteers engaged
- ❑ We'll continue to promote the ways volunteers can contribute.

Vsys One Survey Results

Q6 Do you use texting to communicate with volunteers and/or applicants?

Answered: 49   Skipped: 0
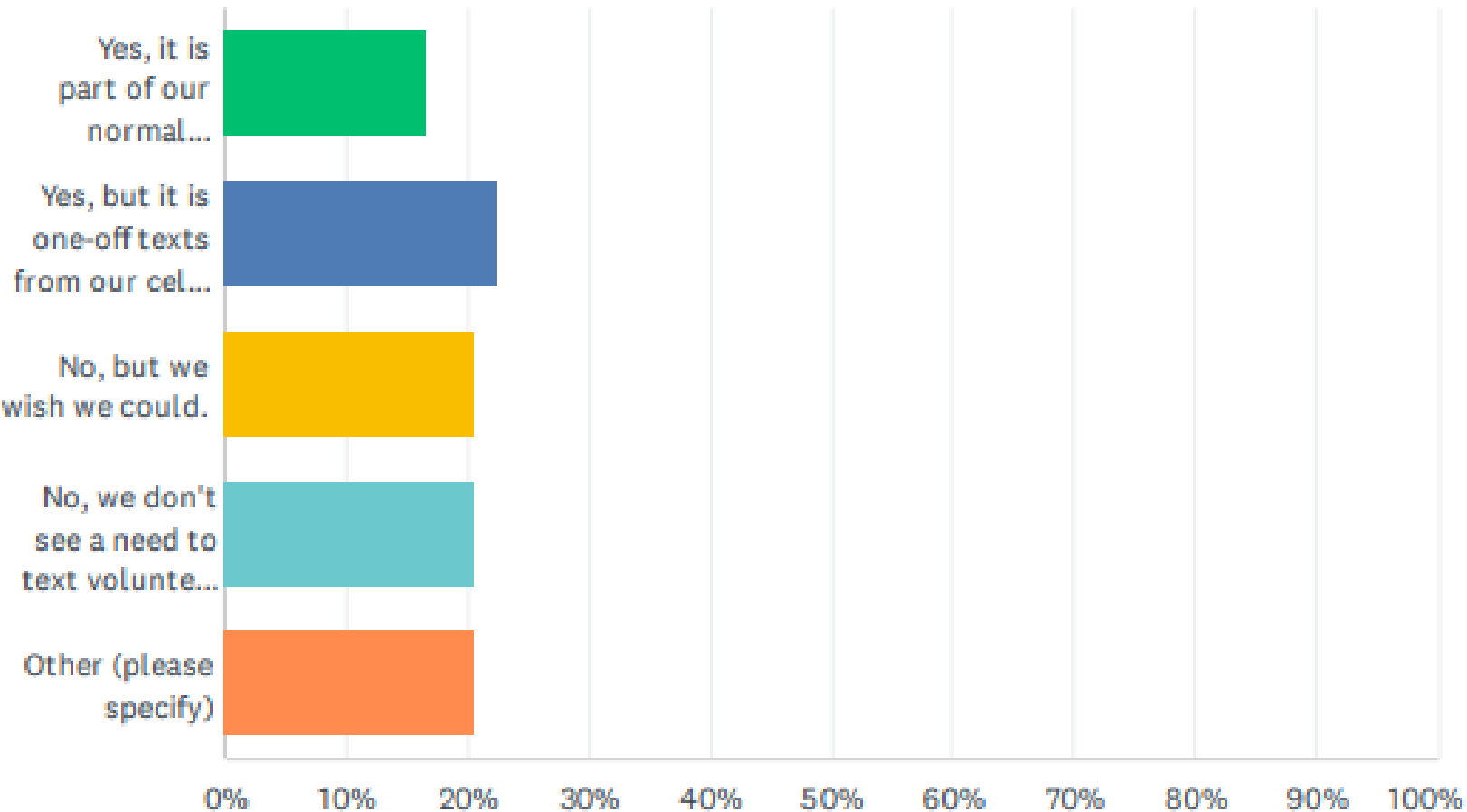
Vsys One Survey Results: We've had clients ask us how others are using texting. If you are using texting, can you list how you use texting? (e.g. to confirm shifts) **?**

- ❑ **For emergency/unexpected dire needs** only. Volunteers must willingly sign-up for the text system
- ❑ Scheduling changes, confirming shifts and to answer questions.
- ❑ To confirm shifts or relay **short-turn-around information**
- ❑ confirm shifts, call outs, rearranging schedules
- ❑ Auto training/shift reminders. **Asking them to check their emails for important information**
- ❑ Confirm shifts with the Emergency Department volunteers and notify a volunteer to come by the office when needed.
- ❑ Yes, shift reminders are the main use. **But day to day communication by and with Volunteer Managers is common.**
- ❑ Shift reminders, **important announcements**
- ❑ use it to notify people of important reasons to **check their email**
- ❑ Typically notifications about **emergency issues** ie. weather related, loss of power
- ❑ **11th hour** (no one dies alone program)
- ❑ **run errands while on site**
- ❑ **We use texting to communicate during programs they are volunteering for.**
- ❑ **Everyday items that come up, shifts, check on them, wish happy bday, etc.**

Key Takeaways

1. Surveys are a quick and useful tool for gathering a lot of information about a population

2. Each type of survey question has strengths and limitations for analysis

3. Administering the survey includes practical logistical considerations for optimal results

https://www.philanthropy.com/article/the-10-best-read-articles-in-the-chronicle-in-2023

Open Discussion & Questions

More Resources

From PeriscopeBPA.com

- Blog Article: The Best Audience Analysis Tools for Your Data Storytelling
  https://www.periscopebpa.com/post/the-best-audience-analysis-tools-for-your-data-storytelling

- [The Volunteer Satisfaction Index](#)
  Self-service administration license and resources

- [Data Storytelling Essentials](#)
  On-demand data communication training for visualization and narrative
  Use code "VSysOne24" to get either training for FREE!

Thank you for joining us!