

Creating, Launching and Learning from PAC Surveys

Public Affairs Council

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ABOUT THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

WHO WE ARE, WHAT WE DO

The Public Affairs Council is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-political organization committed to advancing the practice of public affairs.

In the space of political action committees, we focus on:

Changes and trends in the area of campaign finance

Strategies for organizations to remain compliant and transparent

Best practices to educate about the PAC and fundraise for the PAC

Effective ways to use PACs to build relationships with candidates

ABOUT US



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TODAY'S AGENDA:

- **Why surveys**→ key considerations, what can surveys tell you, who should you survey
- **Creating & launching your survey**→ sample questions, setting a realistic timeframe, motivating people to complete it
- **Examining your findings & next steps**→ what did it tell you, using the results to advocate for change, preparing for change



WHY SURVEYS?

Auditing your PAC program

Diagnosing a problem

Changing internal culture or demographics

Looking for data that can help you change course

New to your position or PAC

It's time...

*Ask yourself what your goals are for this survey

WHO TO SURVEY / WHAT TO ASK

Who to Survey:

- The broader your goals, the broader your survey population should be
- Recommend surveying your non-donors or lapsed donors as well
- Different versions for different groups (sr. management, division leaders, lapsed donors)
- Should tie in to what your goals are

What to ask:

- General satisfaction questions
- Why they joined, why they haven't joined
- Strengths of the program
- Ranking of the various benefits and how important each are
- PAC content/communications
- Recruitment, what can the PAC do to be more appealing
- Open-ended comment section

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Are you a member of [organization's] political action committee (PAC)?

- Yes
- No

In general, how satisfied are you with [organization's] PAC?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Comments

The political action committee plays an important part in the company achieving its legislative goals.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't know

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

[To current donors only] Please select up to three reasons why you joined the PAC.

- I understand the impact that policy decisions have on my company/industry/association and our future success.
- I believe it is important to build relationships with legislators and their staff.
- I am a politically active person in my personal life and believe it is important for [organization] to be politically active.
- I agree with the goals of [organization] PAC.
- I like the benefits/gifts that [organization] PAC provides.
- The PAC gives me an opportunity to play a role in the political and policy process.
- Contributing to the PAC has a bigger impact than my individual contribution to a candidate.
- I am proud to stand with my colleagues to give our organization a voice in the policy process.
- Other_____

Please rank, in numerical priority, what you consider the strengths of the PAC program (1 = most important strength):

- ___ Contribution criteria used in selection of candidates
- ___ PAC member oversight of candidate contributions
- ___ Support of candidates who understand the concerns of business
- ___ Confidentiality of participation
- ___ Senior management support of PAC
- ___ Information provided about candidates supported
- ___ Benefits offered to members of the PAC

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Please rank, in numerical priority, the reason you believe some employees/members do not contribute to the PAC, with 1 being the highest priority:

- ☐ They do not believe in PACs
- ☐ They do not want to be involved in the political process
- ☐ They do not agree with the legislative goals of the organization
- ☐ Contributing to the PAC is not among their financial priorities
- ☐ The PAC does not make a strong enough case for why the PAC is important
- ☐ The PAC does not offer good incentives for joining
- ☐ Other: Please explain _____

How important are the various benefits of joining the PAC to your decision to contribute? (Please tell us how important each item is with 1 = very important and 5 = not very important) :

	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunity to meet with elected leaders or candidates at place of work					
Email communications on political races					
PAC newsletter					
Giveaways and sweepstakes					
PAC match					
Annual PAC donor event					
More contact with government affairs to discuss policy issues important to the organization					

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

(Contributors Only) Would you be interested in volunteering to facilitate Smiths PAC solicitations with your peers?

- No
- Yes (ask for name)

How do you prefer Smiths PAC communicate information to you?

- Email
- Mail

Would you like a representative of Smiths PAC to follow up with you for any reason?

- Open-ended

Please use the space below for any additional comments you may have on Smiths PAC.

- Open-ended

ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION

Best Practices:

- Try to limit survey to 10 – 15 questions
- Think about your timing
- Recruit PAC leaders to help promote the survey
- Delivery methods and messengers
- Include survey link automatically on relevant forms
- Setting a realistic timeline
- Incentive to participate, i.e. drawing, giveaway

NEXT STEPS

Survey insights:

- Regardless of the results, take some time to digest them
- Share the results with key stakeholders (PAC board, GR team, etc.)
- Depending on your goals, there are likely changes you can make
- Focus groups or diving deeper into an issue
- Close the loop—consider communicating your findings

THANK YOU!

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