

Tool 3.4: Analysing the qualitative data

What is meant by analysis?

Analysis of the survey qualitative data aims to describe, summarise and begin drawing conclusions from responses. It should support understanding of the quantitative survey data. Broadly, this entails looking for patterns or themes across the responses, while considering their frequency and how intensely they are expressed. In doing this, it may be possible to identify relationships between themes and relate ideas or behaviours to elements of organisational culture. The themes appearing in the survey responses can also be cross-referenced with results from other tools, highlighting consistencies and discrepancies across the organisation.

Having completed the analysis, you will have a set of key themes for inclusion in the final report.

Tips for analysing the data

There are a number of methods for the analysis of qualitative data and there is no prescribed method for doing this. It may be that members of your change team have previous experience of particular approaches, and would prefer to apply these.

There are, however, a number of general tips which may help you analyse your data and ensure accuracy and consistency:

- Have at least two people look at each answer – this should help with consistency, and avoid the potential bias of one person conducting all the analysis.
- If a number of people are conducting the analysis, allocate each person one particular question, rather than each person analysing all of the qualitative responses from a selection of respondents. This allows one person to start to see the common themes occurring across the responses.
- Do not guess what respondents mean – if answers don't make sense and there is no clarification, do not include it in the analysis. In the interests of transparency, these statements could, however, be recorded in a separate section.



Note

When analysing staff and stakeholder information please ensure you are treating data in line with the Data Protection Act and adhering to your organisation's information governance policy. If in doubt, seek the advice of your Data Protection Officer or information governance team as necessary.

- If you are not sure which category to place a theme in, or whether it is positive or negative, double-check with a colleague.
- Consider keeping a record of statements that would make good quotations in the final report – this is a lot easier than going back and trying to find them at a later date.
- Bear in mind the risk of bias and reading into statements – try to be as objective as possible.

A suggested process for analysing the data

If your change team does not have previous experience of qualitative analysis, the following is a possible approach:

Step 1: collating the responses

- After your survey is complete you will be sent a results spreadsheet, including full responses for each question.
- Anonymise or redact parts of any statements which could identify individuals.
- Effective anonymisation ensures no individually identifiable information is gathered or retained and, where such information is given, it is removed and replaced with pseudonyms, replacement terms or elusive descriptors.

Step 2: read the responses for a 'general sense'

- Read through responses to gain a sense of the tone and major themes emerging.

Step 3: re-read responses to identify individual themes

- Re-read the responses, concentrating this time on the detail of what is being said.
- For each response separate out and record the key statements or parts of statements.
- For each statement group it under one of the five different cultural elements and identify the key theme being discussed (vision and values, goals and performance, support and compassion, learning and innovation and teamwork)

- Record the theme in a column next to each statement (see example below)
- If a single statement refers to multiple themes, break it down into its component themes and list these. For example 'Senior leadership communicates a clear vision that keeps everyone aligned around our organisation's goals' could break down into the themes of 'Senior leadership', 'Clarity of vision' and 'Alignment of goals'.
- Some statements and themes may themselves cross different cultural elements. If this is the case, either list them under all the relevant elements, or chose the one cultural element that seems most appropriate.
- If a statement or theme does not neatly fall under one of the five cultural elements, list it under 'Other'.

Example:

Q3: Are there any other issues you wish to comment on in relation to the areas covered in this survey?

I think we are particularly good at working within teams. I have seen really good co-operation across the different professional boundaries, and everyone is happy to listen to everyone else's opinions. This means that people feel respected and aren't afraid to offer up their point of view, and feel supported to do so. This means we can learn from each other, and through this we are able to innovate and improve our care. However, sometimes we fail to communicate our decisions properly and that can lead to slip-ups. It seems there is an assumption that everyone knows what is going on and that's when mistakes happen.

Cultural element	Theme	Statement
Support and compassion	Speaking up	People aren't afraid to offer up their point of view, and feel supported to do so
	Respecting different opinions	Good co-operation across the different professional boundaries and everyone is happy to listen to everyone else's opinions
Learning and innovation	Sharing ideas	We can learn from each other, and through this we are able to innovate and improve our care
Teamwork	Inter-professional working	I have seen really good co-operation across the different professional boundaries
	Communication in teams	Sometimes we fail to communicate our decisions properly and this can lead to slip-ups

Step 4: classify the statements as positive, negative or neutral

- Having now themed all of the statements and listed them under the different cultural elements, you should assess whether the tone is positive, negative or neutral and mark this next to each statement (see example below).
- There is inevitably a subjective element to this process. It is therefore highly recommended that two people assess the statements independently to avoid bias and ensure consistency.

Example:

Cultural element	Theme	Statement	positive	neutral	negative
Support and compassion	Speaking up	People aren't afraid to offer up their point of view, and feel supported to do so	✓		
	Respecting different opinions	Good co-operation across the different professional boundaries and everyone is happy to listen to everyone else's opinions	✓		
Learning and innovation	Sharing ideas	We can learn from each other, and through this we are able to innovate and improve our care	✓		
Teamwork	Inter-professional working	I have seen really good co-operation across the different professional boundaries	✓		
	Communication in teams	Sometimes we fail to communicate our decisions properly and this can lead to slip-ups			✓

Step 5: repeat above steps for each response

- Go through each response to each question and continue to build your spreadsheet.
- List statements under existing themes, or create new themes if they have not been mentioned before.
- Listing statements under themes and recording whether the statements are positive or negative will allow you to assess how often a particular theme is mentioned, and whether respondents are predominantly positive or negative about it (see example below, with an answer from a different respondent).
- If you are finding the data set is becoming too large, you may want to split it, eg a separate spreadsheet for each cultural element, three separate spreadsheets for positive, negative and neutral comments, etc.

Example:**Q3: Are there any other issues you wish to comment on in relation to the areas covered in this survey?**

As someone who is new to the trust, I was really surprised by how people worked within teams. From what I've seen on the wards, often the juniors feel intimidated by their senior colleagues and I'm not sure they would be able to signal an issue if they saw one. Also, for me effective team working is about having really clear shared goals, and I feel like we have a lot of teams where no one really knows what the objective is.

Cultural element	Theme	Statement	positive	neutral	negative
Goals and performance	Clarity of goals	I feel like we have a lot of teams where no one really knows what the objective is			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support and compassion	Speaking up	People aren't afraid to offer up their point of view, and feel supported to do so Juniors feel intimidated by their senior colleagues and I'm not sure they would be able to signal an issue if they saw one.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Respecting different opinions	Good co-operation across the different professional boundaries and everyone is happy to listen to everyone else's opinions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Learning and innovation	Sharing ideas	We can learn from each other, and through this we are able to innovate and improve our care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Teamwork	Inter-professional working	I have seen really good co-operation across the different professional boundaries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
	Communication in teams	Sometimes we fail to communicate our decisions properly and this can lead to slip-ups			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>