

# Balancing Theory with Practice: How to Develop Successful Industry Research Practitioners

While industry researchers need practical skills, survey training often involves a balance of theory and practice. Training that focuses too heavily on practical applications may skip over foundational concepts, such as sampling theory, error reduction, or bias minimization. Without these foundations, researchers might design surveys that overlook important methodological considerations, potentially compromising data quality in ways that negatively affect insights and decision-making. At the same time, strong training programs often teach sophisticated survey methods (e.g., stratified sampling, regression analysis, psychometric scaling) that are used in academic or governmental research, but are impractical or overly complex in most industry contexts without adaptation to the time and cost constraints often present. A middle ground of training is often missing--one that trains researchers on how to adapt or simplify these more complex methodologies for practical use in the real world and how to make them accessible without sacrificing quality. The presenter will discuss the holes often seen in hiring trained survey researchers and the complimentary development that is necessary to bring them up to speed to be successful industry practitioners.

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