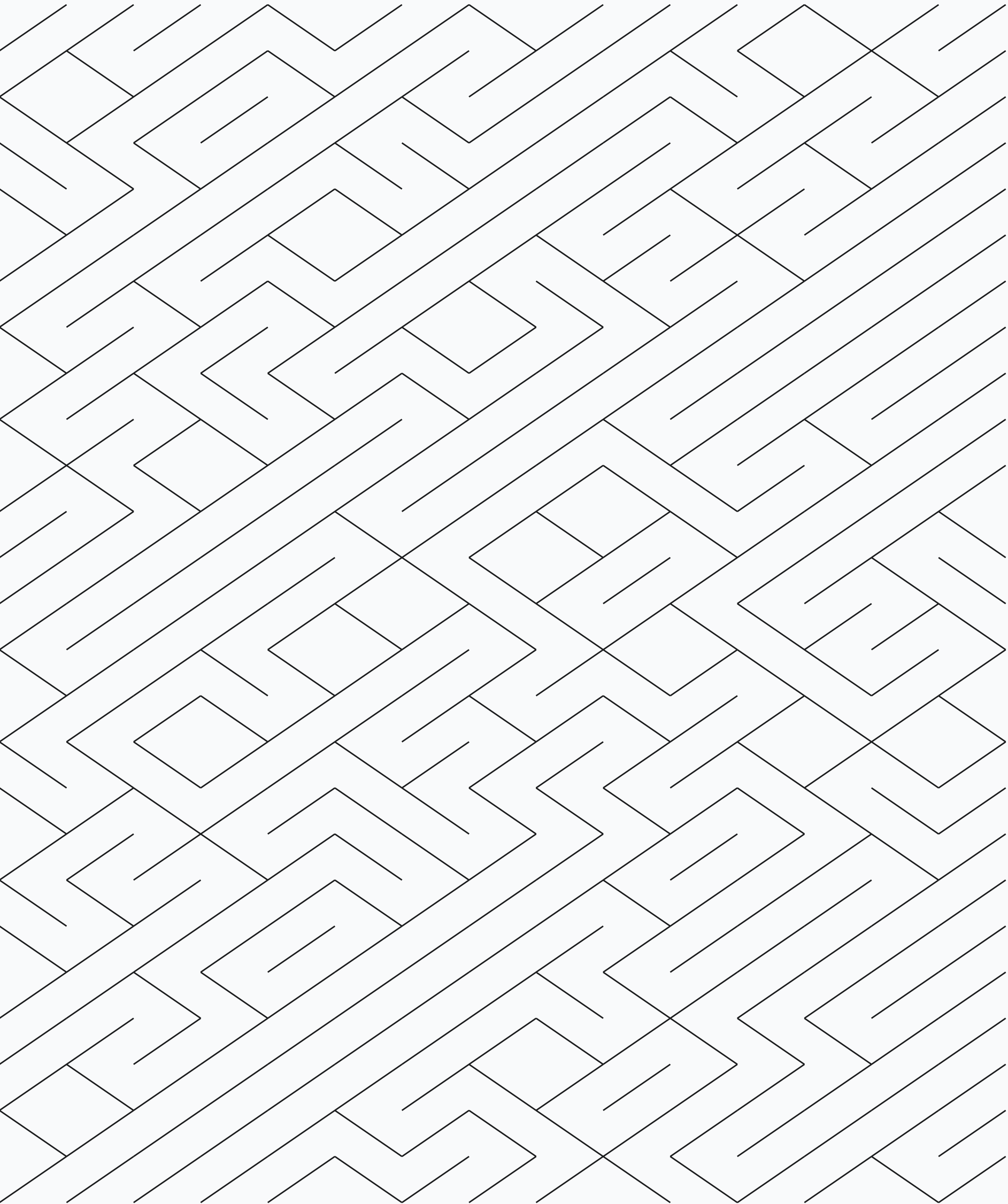DX

Developer Experience Survey Template

Before getting started with surveys, it can help to have the bigger picture of the types of surveys that exist as well as the types of data that can be collected. This micro-workshop from DX's CTO, Laura Tacho, gives the full landscape. Laura also shares some important questions to consider before running surveys.

Link to watch: https://youtu.be/3pa3gwoEb6c
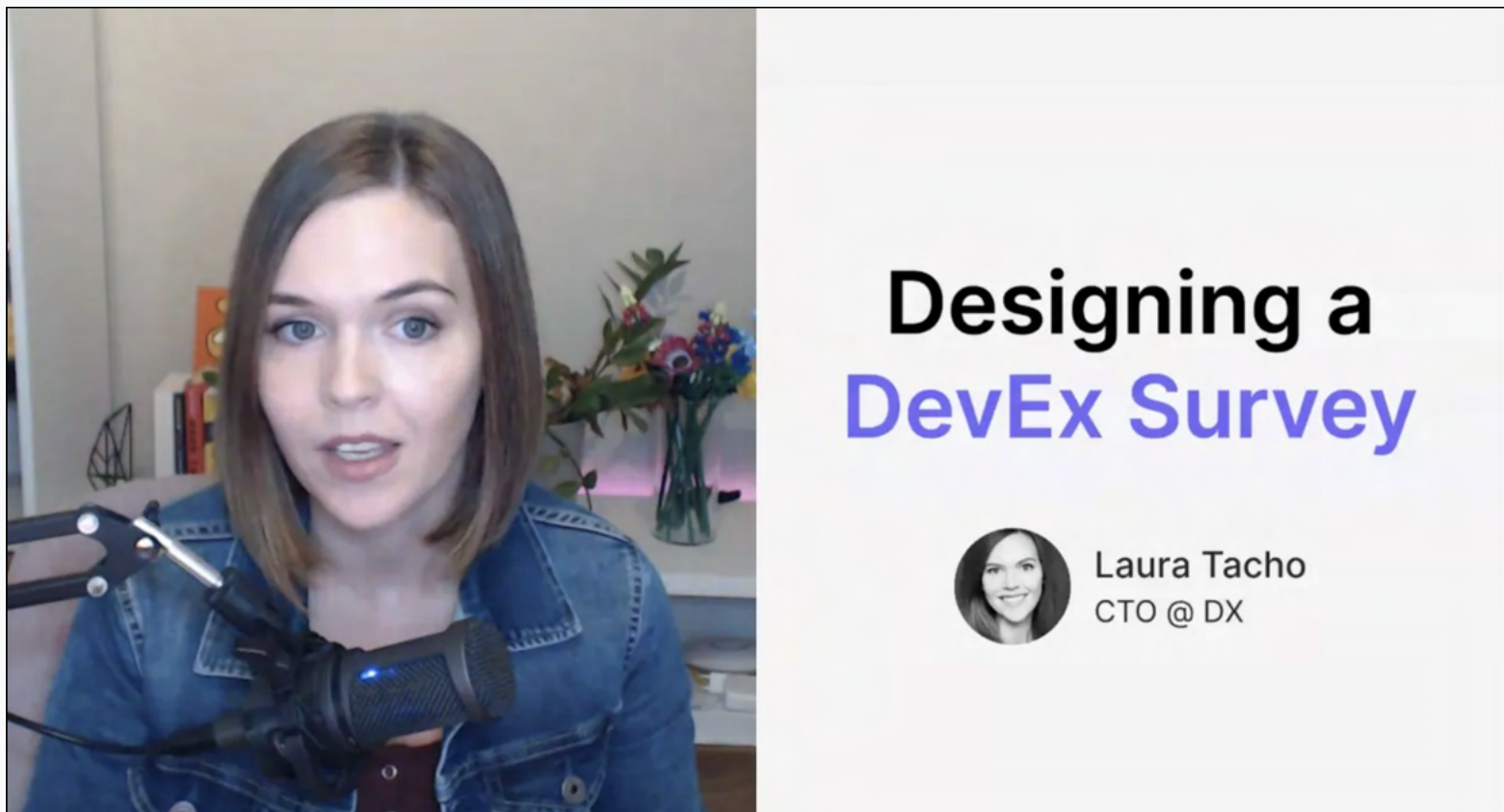
This template was created to help you get started with DevEx surveys. It's worth noting: developer experience surveys can be very substantive. For example, Shopify's survey is around 20-minutes long while Google's survey is over 30-minutes long! But if you're just getting started, something simple works great.

The questions in this template are designed to help you measure overall satisfaction, as well as satisfaction with team processes, tooling, focus time, and quality practices.

Question #1: Perceived Productivity

This question measures how productive developers feel. This gives you a holistic signal of how developers feel about their productivity day-to-day.

> How often do you feel highly productive in your work?
>
> - None of the time
> - A little of the time
> - Some of the time
> - Most of the time
> - All of the time

Question #2: Developer Effort Score

This question measures the ease or difficulty of being a developer at your company. The results are highly indicative of the quality of your tools and processes.

> How easy or difficult is it for you to do work as a developer or technical contributor at [COMPANY]?
>
> - Very difficult
> - Somewhat difficult
> - Neither easy nor difficult
> - Somewhat easy
> - Very easy

Question #3: Developer Satisfaction

This question measures how satisfied developers are overall with the tools and processes they use at your company. This question becomes more valuable over time: it's the trend that's most useful to pay attention to.

> How satisfied or unsatisfied are you with the development tools and practices at our company?
>
> - Very unsatisfied
> - Somewhat unsatisfied
> - Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied
> - Somewhat satisfied
> - Very satisfied

Question #4: Developer Engagement

This question measures the degree to which developers feel energized by their work. The results capture an important characteristic of Flow State, which is one of the <u>three core dimensions of developer experience</u>.

> How energized are you by your work?
>
> - Not energized at all
> - A little energized
> - Somewhat energized
> - Very energized
> - Extremely energized

Question #5-18: Drivers of Developer Productivity

The remaining questions ask about different aspects of the developer experience that influence developer productivity. These questions provide insight into the areas which are causing the most friction for development teams.

> Please rate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements:
>
> 1. I believe we follow development best practices.
> 2. I get enough focus time.
> 3. My normal work is regularly interrupted.
> 4. I feel like a lot of my time gets wasted.
> 5. I'm satisfied with the level of test coverage.
> 6. We ship code frequently enough.
> 7. It's easy to deploy software.
> 8. I'm satisfied with the speed and reliability of our CI/CD tooling.
> 9. Our code review process helps us release better code.
> 10. Our codebase is easy to contribute to.
> 11. We have a reasonable amount of technical debt.
> 12. My projects are well-scoped with clear goals.
> 13. Our team processes are efficient.
> 14. Our meetings are effective and useful.

Scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree.

Instructions

To use the survey template, load the questions into your preferred tool. If you'd like to use Google Forms, you can save time by making a copy of this ready-to-use template. Next, decide whether to make your survey anonymous or not. Either way can work, but anonymous surveys generally get better participation.

Before sending out your survey, be sure to send out clear announcements over email or Slack to make sure that developers know (1) what the purpose of the survey is and (2) how the data will be used. To officially launch your survey, a short message like this works well:

> We want to continuously improve the way we work. But to know what to focus on and how to improve, we need to get your feedback! Please fill out this short survey to help us do so – your responses are anonymous and the results will be shared with you after we've analyzed responses.
>
> [link to survey]

After you've collected responses, score the multiple choice questions using either mean or top box scoring. Mean scores are calculated by assigning each option a value between 1 and 5 and taking the average. Top box scores are calculated by the percentages of responses that choose one of the top two most favorable options. DX's industry benchmarks use top-box scoring, if you're interested in comparing your scores.

Also be sure to carefully review open text responses, which can contain the most actionable bits of information. If you've collected a large number of comments, LLM tools such as ChatGPT can be useful for extracting core themes and suggestions. When you've finished analyzing results, be sure to publish your findings back to your organization so people feel that their time filling out the survey was worth while.

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