

Occupant survey (element 5)

Assessing the occupant's levels of satisfaction and perception of their control and comfort provides understanding in terms of how they use and interact with their environment. This can be undertaken through a number of methods, both one-off measurements and more long-term monitoring. Depending on objectives, occupancy survey methods can be alternative sources for collecting occupancy patterns and estimated operation of systems or even windows.

General note about timing: It is often recommended that when possible; administer questionnaires / surveys after a minimum of one year of occupancy. This ensures that occupants experience the full range of seasonal variation in the building.

Level 2: Occupant satisfaction survey: interview

Cost: ₹	Time: ⌚⌚	Skills: 🙋🙋
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Interviews are generally performed for a select sample of the total population that provided questionnaire responses. Interviews can be used to follow on from questionnaires to explore topics that were emphasized by the respondents. It allows a deeper investigation into specific subject or queries.

As examples, to expand on the questionnaires, occupant motivations and aspirations can be studied in relation to comfort and control, e.g.,

- What do people believe? Do they believe that turning off lights saves electricity?
- What is considered normal in relation to consumption?
- How much difference do people think their behaviour affects the environment?

Potential tools needed:

- Prepared interview
- Pen and paper

It can be produced in either paper or online form. Both formats have positives and limitations; an online interview has the added benefit of the answers being stored automatically (saving the researcher time in processing and managing the data) but do not often allow for additional (but relevant) comments to be made by the participant. Paper interview affords the researcher the potential to meet face-to-face with the participants.

How to Conduct an Occupant Interview:

- Let respondents know what you are doing and why you are doing it. Explain how they might benefit from participating in the interview – will adjustments be made to improve conditions in the building they tell you about? Or is the interview just to inform future practice?
- Ensure that the interview is conducted with the intention of making some improvements, as most people will expect that the results will inform some improvement to the conditions within the building.
- Ensure to note in any report the relevant context of when the survey was conducted. Issues such as a recent round of redundancies in an office, or construction work on an adjacent floor or building can affect people's responses and influence the results.

In the case of a building that was just occupied, it is ideal to allow occupants to become accustomed to their environment before asking questions about their experience. However, there may be an interest in comparing results of initial perception and perception after the occupants have settled in.

