

Survey Report #13

Evidence Based Management (EBM)

March 2016



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About

The Survey

This Survey Report presents findings of a *PSRPanel* survey about evidence-based management (EBM) in the public and nonprofit sectors.

The survey was conducted in January to February 2016, and included online responses from 122 panelists.

Some tables presented in the results may not add to 100% because of rounding.

The Panel



The Public Service Research Panel, *PSRPanel*, is an online community of public service professionals who sign up to participate in occasional web-based surveys and studies about the important work they do and the organizations they help lead.

It is important to point out that the panel is not a random sample, and thus the results are not scientifically projectable to a larger population.




For more information, visit www.psrpanel.org or email psrpanel@rutgers.edu

The first few questions are about some current issues and topics in public affairs





1. Generally speaking, would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Right direction		63	53%
2	Wrong track		56	47%
Total			119	100%



2. In general, do you feel that the laws covering the sale of firearms should be made . . .

#	Answer		Response	%
1	More strict		99	82%
2	Less strict		2	2%
3	Kept as they are now		20	17%
Total			121	100%

3. How much confidence do you have in the US government to protect its citizens from future acts of terrorism?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	A great deal		26	22%
2	A fair amount		72	60%
3	Not much		20	17%
4	None at all		2	2%
Total			120	100%

4. Which of the following is more important to you in a presidential candidate?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Experience and a proven record		73	61%
2	New ideas and a different approach		47	39%
Total			120	100%

On the next few pages, you will read four blocks of statements – with seven statements in each block. These statements are about your professional work and may sound similar, but each one is different. So please read each statement carefully and indicate the extent to which you agree, or disagree.

When reading these statements, please think about **your current job or work organization** -- or (if you are not currently working) your last job or work organization.

5. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	Good evidence is essential in the work I do	0	0	10	23	25	58	9.26
2	Research findings help me understand problems I confront in my job	0	2	11	26	19	58	9.07
3	People who rely on evidence to make decisions fit in here	1	4	11	26	16	58	8.90
4	A fact-based approach is the best guide for decision making	0	1	9	25	23	58	9.21
5	My organization values proven results	2	7	10	20	21	60	8.85
6	My organization seeks guidance from objective evidence	3	7	8	31	10	59	8.64
7	My organization's budget depends on evidence of effectiveness	4	17	16	19	3	59	8.00
8	My organization regularly evaluates its programs and activities	1	17	15	15	10	58	8.28
9	I'm expected to know how to interpret data	1	2	6	22	27	58	9.24
10	I try to keep up with the latest research in my field	0	1	7	28	24	60	9.25
11	I like to have data to back up my decisions	1	0	3	27	29	60	9.38
12	Facts are more important for decision making than beliefs	0	4	9	21	24	58	9.12
13	I always study a problem before deciding on a solution	0	1	5	26	25	57	9.32
14	We take an evidence-based approach to most things in my organization	4	9	11	24	10	58	8.47

6. Again, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements:

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	We don't do much to track our organization's outcomes	14	21	9	9	6	59	6.53
2	Program analysis does little to help my organization get things done	11	23	10	13	2	59	6.53
3	It's not really possible to measure the impact of my work	8	29	9	9	3	58	6.48
4	Political influence is more powerful than scientific evidence	4	10	10	21	13	58	7.50
5	Values matter more than facts for the kind of work I do	6	27	13	12	1	59	6.58
6	I would rather tackle problems than study them	4	12	19	19	4	58	7.12
7	There's not much use in my organization for people with a scientific background	16	20	8	10	5	59	6.46
8	Often the best course of action in my job is to just follow your instincts	6	19	16	15	3	59	6.83
9	Management is more of an art than a science	2	8	16	18	14	58	7.59
10	Research is used mostly to backup preconceived opinions	13	18	19	7	2	59	6.44
11	Good decisions are mostly based on intuition	9	32	10	8	0	59	6.29
12	My organization doesn't rely much on research findings to guide the work it does	12	19	13	11	2	57	6.51
13	Personal experience is the best guide for making good decisions	3	18	22	11	4	58	6.91
14	There is no such thing as objective research	16	27	8	5	3	59	6.19

7. Now, again, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements:

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	Good evidence is essential in the work I do	2	3	11	33	10	59	8.78
2	Research findings help me understand problems I confront in my job	0	4	14	27	14	59	8.86
3	People who rely on evidence to make decisions fit in here	4	5	17	24	8	58	8.47
4	A fact-based approach is the best guide for decision making	0	3	15	29	11	58	8.83
5	My organization values proven results	3	11	10	26	6	56	8.38
6	My organization seeks guidance from objective evidence	3	7	11	26	11	58	8.60
7	My organization's budget depends on evidence of effectiveness	9	14	11	15	8	57	7.98
8	My organization regularly evaluates its programs and activities	7	10	10	23	8	58	8.26
9	I'm expected to know how to interpret data	0	4	6	25	24	59	9.17
10	I try to keep up with the latest research in my field	0	4	8	26	19	57	9.05
11	I like to have data to back up my decisions	0	1	3	28	25	57	9.35
12	Facts are more important for decision making than beliefs	1	1	8	38	10	58	8.95
13	I always study a problem before deciding on a solution	0	4	15	21	20	60	8.95
14	We take an evidence-based approach to most things in my organization	3	9	12	27	7	58	8.45

8. And finally, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements:

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	We don't do much to track our organization's outcomes	15	15	11	10	4	55	6.51
2	Program analysis does little to help my organization get things done	6	24	13	10	3	56	6.64
3	It's not really possible to measure the impact of my work	11	29	7	9	3	59	6.39
4	Political influence is more powerful than scientific evidence	4	6	15	20	13	58	7.55
5	Values matter more than facts for the kind of work I do	3	21	23	6	4	57	6.77
6	I would rather tackle problems than study them	1	19	20	16	2	58	6.98
7	There's not much use in my organization for people with a scientific background	9	18	6	16	6	55	6.85
8	Often the best course of action in my job is to just follow your instincts	6	21	16	9	4	56	6.71
9	Management is more of an art than a science	2	13	11	23	7	56	7.36
10	Research is used mostly to backup preconceived opinions	9	18	9	18	1	55	6.71
11	Good decisions are mostly based on intuition	13	20	18	4	1	56	6.29
12	My organization doesn't rely much on research findings to guide the work it does	5	23	13	10	7	58	6.84
13	Personal experience is the best guide for making good decisions	3	18	27	7	2	57	6.77
14	There is no such thing as objective research	12	23	8	9	3	55	6.42

Following are some additional questions are about your work organization. (If you are currently not working, please answer for your last job or work organization.)

- How much weight does your organization place on the information available from each of these sources? Please select the most appropriate level of weight for each of the sources listed.

#	Question	None	Little	Some	Much	Very Much	Total Responses	Mean
1	Research and Formal Evaluations	2	15	36	37	22	112	3.55
2	Think Tanks	24	32	30	21	5	112	2.56
3	Legislators	3	18	41	23	27	112	3.47

10. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement about your organization.

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	My organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place	24	34	21	24	6	109	2.58
2	People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks	19	32	27	24	7	109	2.71
3	The glue that holds my organization together is a commitment to innovation and development	21	28	32	20	8	109	2.69
4	There is an emphasis on being best	11	12	27	49	10	109	3.32
5	My organization emphasizes growth and acquiring new resources	13	28	25	33	10	109	2.99
6	Readiness to meet new challenges is important	8	9	14	49	29	109	3.75

11. Please indicate the extent to which you personally agree, or disagree, with the following statements:

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses	Mean
1	Politics is a dirty word	21	35	32	13	6	107	2.51
2	The give and take of public policymaking does not appeal to me	20	49	22	11	5	107	2.36
3	I don't care much for politicians	9	26	34	30	8	107	3.02
4	I unselfishly contribute to my community	0	7	21	50	29	107	3.94
5	Meaningful public service is very important to me	1	2	8	34	62	107	4.44
6	I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the whole community even if it harmed my interests	1	7	18	48	33	107	3.98
7	I consider public service my civic duty	2	6	13	37	49	107	4.17
8	It is difficult for me to contain my feelings when I see people in distress	3	20	28	43	13	107	3.40
9	I am often reminded by daily events about how dependent we are on one another	1	7	12	49	38	107	4.08
10	I have little compassion for people in need who are unwilling to take the first step to help themselves	14	49	21	20	3	107	2.52

The next few questions are about scientific facts -- please answer each question as best you can.

12. Which of these is the main way that ocean tides are created?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	The rotation of the earth on its axis	11	10%
2	The gravitational pull of the moon	92	87%
3	The gravitational pull of the sun	3	3%
Total		106	100%

13. What does a light-year measure?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Brightness	2	2%
2	Distance	89	84%
3	Time	15	14%
4	Weight	0	0%
Total		106	100%

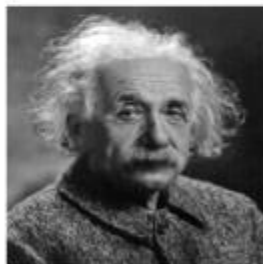
14. Which of these people developed the polio vaccine?



Marie Curie



Isaac Newton



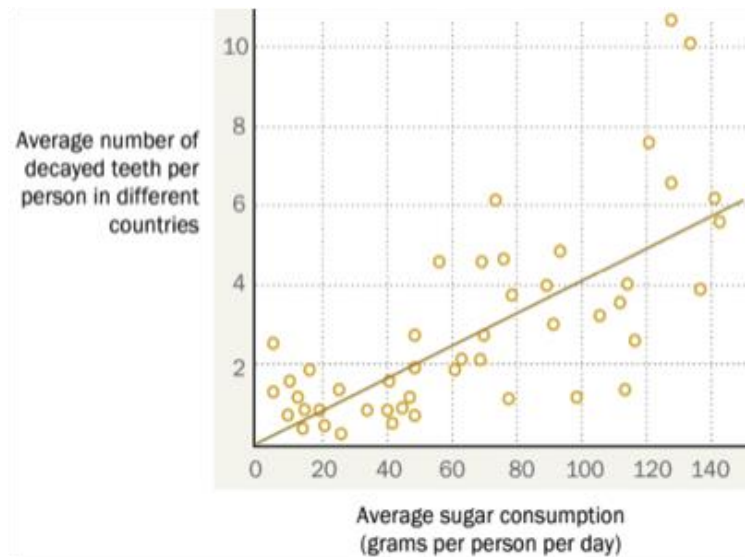
Albert Einstein



Jonas Salk

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Marie Curie	7	7%
2	Isaac Newton	1	1%
3	Albert Einstein	3	3%
4	Jonas Salk	96	90%
Total		107	100%

15. Which of the following statements best describes the data in the graph below?



#	Answer	Response	%
1	In recent years, the rate of cavities has increased in many countries	3	3%
2	In some countries, people brush their teeth more regularly than in other countries	1	1%
3	The more sugar people eat, the more likely they are to get cavities	86	83%
4	In recent years, the consumption of sugar has increased in many countries	13	13%
Total		103	100%

The next few questions ask about how you feel about numbers and quantitative information.

16. How good are you at working with fractions?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Not at all good	5	5%
2		3	3%
3		15	14%
5		20	19%
6		39	37%
7	Extremely good	23	22%
Total		105	100%

17. How good are you at working with percentages?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Not at all good	4	4%
2		4	4%
3		7	7%
5		17	16%
6		43	41%
7	Extremely good	31	29%
Total		106	100%

18. How good are you at calculating a 15% tip?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Not at all good	1	1%
2		2	2%
3		5	5%
5		15	14%
6		32	30%
7	Extremely good	51	48%
Total		106	100%

19. How good are you at figuring out how much a shirt will cost if it is 25% off?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Not at all good	0	0%
2		3	3%
3		4	4%
5		11	10%
6		32	30%
7	Extremely good	56	53%
Total		106	100%

20. When reading the news, how helpful do you find tables and graphs that are parts of the story?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Not at all helpful	2	2%
2		1	1%
3		5	5%
5		12	11%
6		49	46%
7	Extremely helpful	37	35%
Total		106	100%

21. When people tell you the chance of something happening, do you prefer that they use words ("it rarely happens") or numbers ("there's a 1% chance")?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Always prefer words	7	7%
2		7	7%
3		11	10%
5		18	17%
6		29	27%
7	Always prefer numbers	34	32%
Total		106	100%

22. When you hear a weather forecast, do you prefer predictions using percentages (e.g., “there will be a 20% chance of rain today”) or predictions using only words (e.g., “there is a small chance of rain today”)?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Always prefer words	4	4%
2		3	3%
3		3	3%
5		10	9%
6		39	37%
7	Always prefer numbers	47	44%
Total		106	100%

23. How often do you find numerical information to be useful?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	0	0%
2		1	1%
3		1	1%
5		9	8%
6		39	37%
7	Very often	56	53%
Total		106	100%













Work characteristics

24. Where do you currently work?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Federal government	12	11%
2	State government	25	24%
3	Local government	36	34%
4	Nonprofit organization	15	14%
5	Private company or business	2	2%
6	Independent consulting or self-employed	4	4%
7	Not currently working / retired / student	5	5%
8	Other (specify)	7	7%
Total		106	100%

Other (specify)
Higher Education
Private university
Retired Academic
School District
State related university
State Government Authority
Private school

25. Which policy issue or area below best describes the work you do? (If you are not currently working, please answer for your last job or professional experience.)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Criminal Justice		7	7%
2	Culture and Society (such as arts, civil rights)		9	9%
3	Economic Affairs (budget and taxes)		10	10%
4	Education (elementary, secondary, and higher education)		19	18%
5	Environment (air quality, global warming)		2	2%
6	Government Operations (campaign finance reform, privatization)		13	13%
7	Health (health insurance, medicare)		12	12%
8	Social Welfare (social security, welfare)		17	16%
9	Foreign Affairs and National Security		4	4%
10	Transportation		6	6%
11	Parks and recreation		2	2%
12	Tourism		0	0%
13	Sanitation and waste management		0	0%
14	Natural resources and conservation		3	3%
Total			104	100%







26. What is the approximate size of your organization (or the last organization you worked for)?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Less than 20 employees	14	13%
2	20-99 employees	20	19%
3	100-299 employees	13	12%
4	300-500 employees	13	12%
5	More than 500 employees	46	43%
Total		106	100%







27. Which of the following best describes your current (or most recent) management responsibilities?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Top manager	30	28%
2	Middle manager	26	25%
3	Team leader	13	12%
4	Supervisor	9	8%
5	None (not a manager or supervisor)	28	26%
Total		106	100%

28. Does your current (or most recent) job involve any of the following areas of expertise? (Check all that apply)

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Scientific monitoring/testing		9	13%
2	Health sciences		24	35%
3	Environmental sciences		17	25%
4	Technology		29	43%
5	Research		47	69%
6	Engineering		11	16%

29. How long have you worked for your current employer? (If not currently working, answer for your last job or professional experience.)



#	Answer		Response	%
1	Less than 1 year		12	11%
2	1-3 years		16	15%
3	4-5 years		10	9%
4	6-10 years		26	25%
5	11-20 years		24	23%
6	More than 20 years		18	17%
Total			106	100%

30. How satisfied are with your (main) job? (If not currently working, answer for your last job.)







Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
0.00	10.00	6.09	3.04	99

The last few questions are just some background facts about yourself for statistical purposes

31. Are you . . .

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Male		56	53%
2	Female		50	47%
Total			106	100%

32. What is your age?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	19 or under		0	0%
2	20-29		7	7%
3	30-39		17	16%
4	40-49		20	19%
5	50-59		31	29%
6	60-69		29	27%
7	70 or older		2	2%
Total			106	100%

33. Do you consider yourself to be primarily. . .

#	Answer	Response	%
1	White	72	69%
2	Black	17	16%
3	Hispanic	4	4%
4	Asian	7	7%
5	Other	5	5%
Total		106	100%

34. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Less than High School	0	0%
2	High School / GED	0	0%
3	Some College	2	2%
4	2-year College Degree	0	0%
5	4-year College Degree	20	19%
6	Master Degree	63	60%
7	Doctoral Degree	14	13%
8	Professional Degree (JD, MD)	6	6%
Total		105	100%

35. Are any of your degrees in the following areas? (check all that apply)






#	Answer	Response	%
1	Natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)	3	8%
2	Math or statistics	2	5%
3	Economics or finance	16	40%
4	Computer or data science	4	10%
5	Behavioral sciences (experimental psychology, etc.)	15	38%
6	Health sciences (including public health)	5	13%
7	Engineering (electrical, industrial, etc.)	5	13%

36. Where do you currently live?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Northeast (US)	39	37%
2	South (US)	19	18%
3	Midwest (US)	17	16%
4	West (US)	24	23%
5	Outside the US (please specify country)	6	6%
Total		105	100%

Outside the US (please specify country)
United Kingdom
Australia
Bangladesh
United Kingdom
United Kingdom
India

37. Would you consider yourself to be politically . . .

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Very liberal		15	14%
2	Liberal		44	42%
3	Moderate		32	30%
4	Conservative		11	10%
5	Very conservative		4	4%
Total			106	100%



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