

Delphi Freeware

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As many of you know, Delphi is a process that overcomes some shortcomings of group meetings, such as conformity to a leader's opinions. It involves an anonymous iterative survey of a panel of experts. The panel can be any size, though the general rule is between 5 and 20. The experts receive feedback and revise their estimates for each round.

Recently, we have developed Delphi freeware that:

- guides you step-by step through designing an expert survey,
- provides links to key resources about the Delphi method,
- allows one to send out and monitor email surveys, and
- provides summaries of responses for each round.

Delphi is applicable to forecasting problems (e.g., experts' sales forecasts for a new product) as well as selection decisions (e.g., the hiring process in companies or universities). For selection problems, say in the recruiting of junior faculty, the Delphi panel might consist of all full-time faculty.

Research shows that Delphi provides more accurate forecasts and better selection decisions than do traditional approaches – and typically saves much time. It does not increase happiness or satisfaction of those involved. It is best suited for non-autocratic organizations where the quality of the forecast or decision is important.

The program, supported by the International Institute of Forecasters, has been in development for two years. It is available on the Software page at <http://armstrong.wharton.upenn.edu/delphi2/>.