

## Member Survey Results – What do I do with Them Now?

One of the strengths of our club is our ability to offer a high level of personalized service to our members and their guests. To make the service ‘personalized,’ we have to know the wants and needs of our members and then meet or exceed those expectations. One of the best ways to determine the wants or needs of your club’s membership is through the use of annual member surveys.

Annual surveys provide valuable insights into the overall ‘pulse’ of the membership. By asking the members to rate certain criteria on a scale, surveys will provide an average score for each criterion. This is not only important to see how we are doing in the current year, but also gives us a benchmark that can be analyzed over time. Another great area to look for member sentiment, concerns, or suggestions is to allow them to enter written comments. This is basic “Surveying 101” – but what do you do with the results whether they are good, bad, or indifferent?

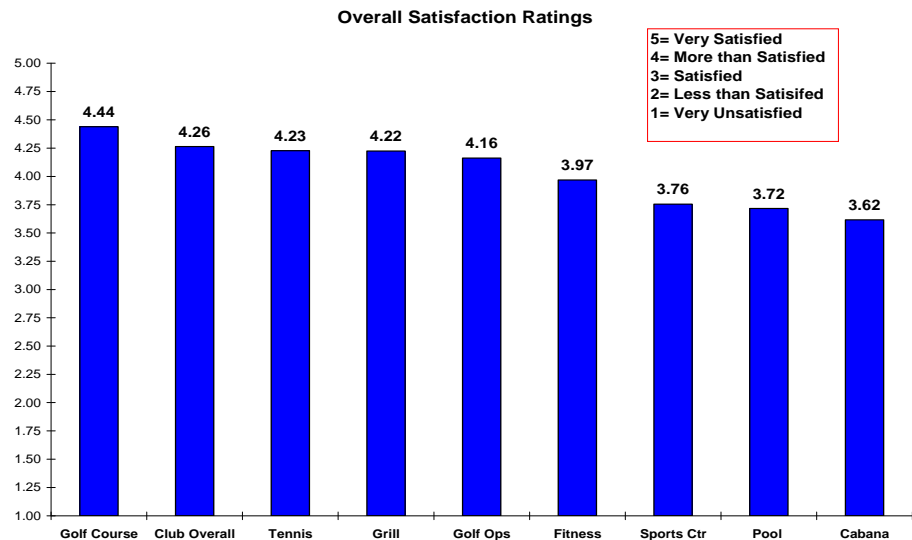
At the very least, it is vitally important to let members review the overall results if so desired. The results should be gathered, averaged, and formatted in a way that is easy to view and comprehend. Members are generally interested in the overall ratings for each department and how they compared with previous years. The chart below was created based on the 2007 River Club Member Survey and looks at the overall satisfaction ratings on 9 criteria that are analyzed with the two previous years’ responses. This allows the member to easily see how the club is rated in a year-over-year format for these criteria.

### Comparison of Overall Satisfaction Ratings Year Over Year

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>3-Year Average</u>	<u>Difference from 2006 to 2007</u>	<u>Difference from 2005 to 2007</u>
Overall Satisfaction with Golf Course	4.44	4.63	4.74	4.60	-0.19	-0.30
Overall Satisfaction with the River Club	4.26	4.51	4.52	4.43	-0.25	-0.26
Overall Satisfaction with the Tennis Program	4.23	4.49	4.70	4.47	-0.26	-0.47
Overall Satisfaction with the Golf House Grill	4.22	4.42	4.53	4.39	-0.20	-0.31
Overall Satisfaction with Golf Operations	4.16	4.41	4.43	4.33	-0.25	-0.27
Overall Satisfaction with the Fitness Program	3.97	4.15	4.23	4.12	-0.18	-0.26
Overall Satisfaction with the Sports Center	3.76	4.15	4.35	4.09	-0.40	-0.59
Overall Satisfaction with the Pool	3.72	4.34	4.18	4.08	-0.62	-0.46
Overall Satisfaction with the Cabana F&B	3.62	-	-	3.62		

Scale = 1 = Not satisfied 2= Could be Better 3 = Satisfied 4=More than Satisfied 5 = Very Satisfied

We also take a look at just the 2007 results and chart the ratings from highest to lowest in an easy-to-read format for members to review. From this chart at the right, we can easily see the areas that need to be improved and then discuss with the members ways to improve. This information is emailed to the entire membership at the conclusion.



Another great way to check for ways to improve service

is to look at written comments. We asked the members to list three areas of the club that met or exceeded their expectations and also asked them for three suggestions for improving the club. We collected 77 exceeded responses and 72 improvement suggestion comments. Both provided us with insights that we could use to start improving immediately. I admit that some of the comments were harsh and I made a point to contact every member with negative ratings or comments to discuss in greater detail. This is not easy to do as we generally don't want to discuss poor results, but in most cases, the written comments were far more brutal than the actual face-to-face or phone conversations. In a couple of instances, the harsh comments were more directed at either the developer or a particular incident with another member. In each of those cases, the member thanked me for contacting them and I realized that they were just venting in the survey since it provided them an opportunity to do so.

After contacting the members with negative or less than satisfied ratings/comment, it was time to discuss with the club's advisory board and the department heads. We then take a team approach to working on the areas that need improvement. I think it is important that each manager develops solutions to their departments' areas of concern and then prioritize their response based on the ratings. Once the effort to improve the deficient areas is unleashed, members will have an impression that the club's management team is very involved, dedicated, and actively searching for ways to improve their club. This is a powerful impression that fosters a sense of teamwork with members and helps them work in concert with your management team.

When working in harmony, the members are more apt to view the club as a partner that offers the highly personalized service they desire. It takes a little work, but having the members actively involved in the analysis of the survey results and keeping open communication with those who rated the club poorly will make your management team and you a hero in the eyes of everyone involved.

*Chris Conner, General Manager, The River Club*