Can a Survey Detect a Bad Relationship?

Survey research is a great tool for getting information, even if the information can sometimes be negative. This is especially true when it comes to relationship surveys, also known as experience surveys. And yes! A survey can help you spot a relationship that is going sour.

Two ideas to keep in mind for relationship management surveys.
First, be mindful of the questions you ask. The second would be when you do your survey. Let's dig into these a bit deeper.

There are many questions you can ask that will help you detect a relationship with a customer, member, employee or subscriber that isn't quite on track. However, you can usually condense the survey down to two or three questions:

How likely are you to recommend to a colleague or friend?
How likely are you to continue doing business with us?
How was your recent experience?

Any of these questions answered the "wrong" way will be a great indicator of something that is off the rails. For example, it's possible that a survey taker can report a great recent experience but also report they are not likely to continue doing business with you. Maybe there is a price issue you don't know about or there is a need that you don't know about? By administering a survey you can get feedback that you might not otherwise receive and detect a bad situation before things break down.

The next key is the timing of surveys. If you engage with your stakeholders once a year, don't send out a survey six months after the engagement. Send it out a couple of weeks after you finish your work. Using this method you'll get your feedback sooner, and IF something isn't good you'll get that feedback and follow-up immediately. If what you offer is more ongoing in nature, you don't need to send surveys every month. Instead, send surveys to those stakeholders once every six or eight months. Keep the surveys short so people will respond and only ask the questions you need to ask.

When you're looking for a way to stay in touch and monitor relationships, use surveys as part of the process.

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