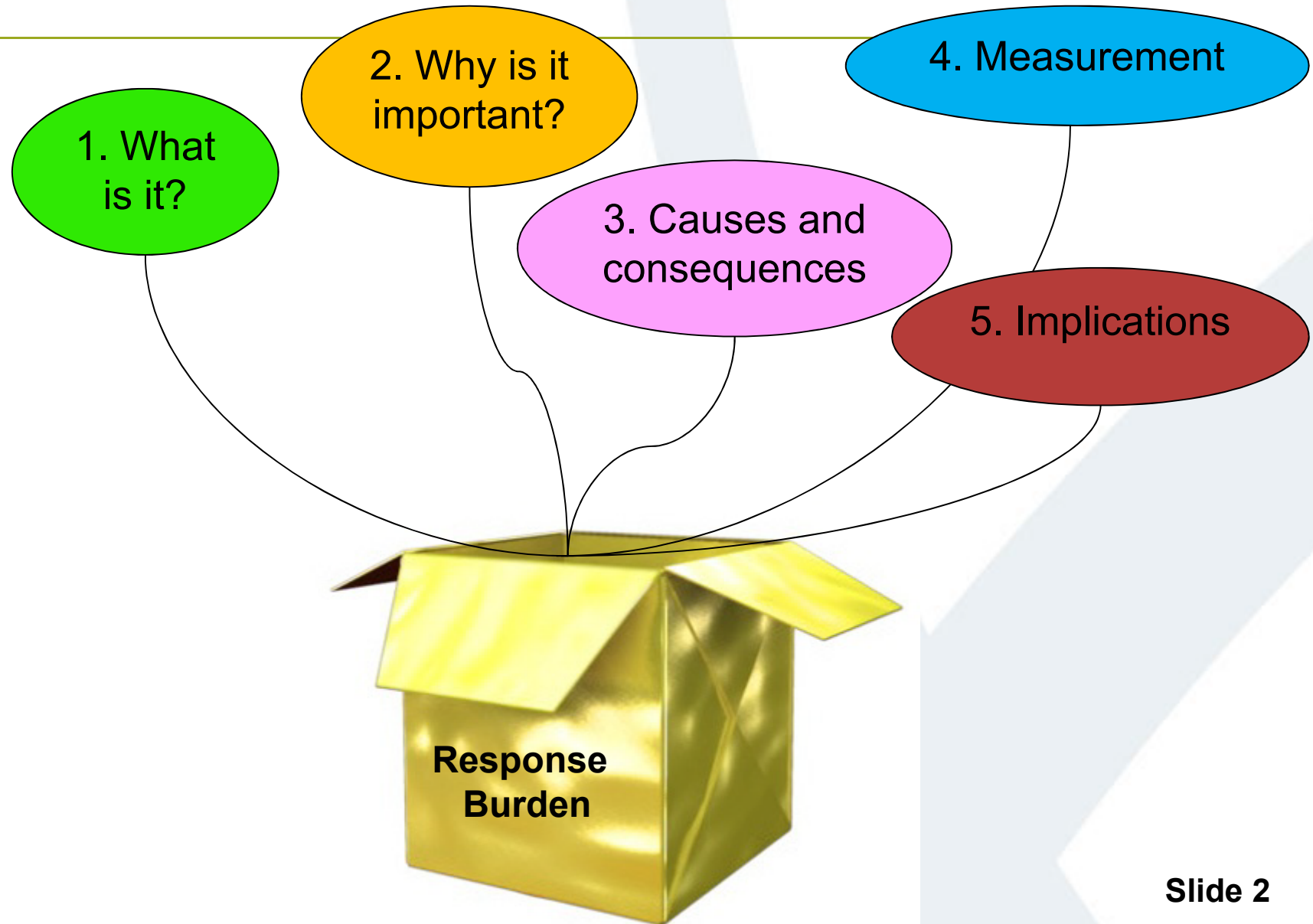


Causes, consequences and measurement of response burden: with implications for the design of business surveys

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Overview



What is response burden?

Traditional (simplistic) actual burden approach



Time taken to
respond to a survey = Cost to
businesses



Perceived response burden approach

Rs rarely equate burden with the time it takes to respond to a survey; instead they perceive burden in relation to:

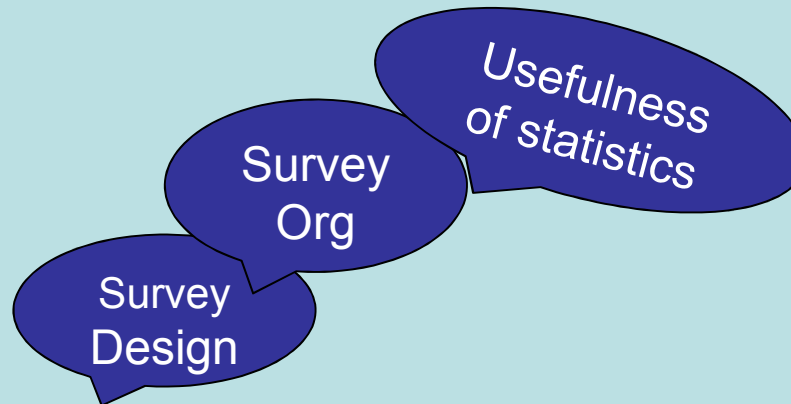
- The mode of data collection
- Who is conducting the survey
- Whether the produced statistics are useful to businesses and/or society

(Hedlin et al. 2005)

Slide 3

What is response burden?

Perceived response burden approach



Actual burden + (Perceptions) = Costs to businesses + (impact on data quality & survey costs)

Haraldsen and Jones (2007)

Analysis, of 6 Statistics Norway annual business surveys
(+ PRB questions) found:

Findings	Causes
Collating information can be burdensome	Documentation; expertise; mismatches; and time.
Poor layout and usability were often mentioned as burdensome	Questions; questionnaire; instructions; and mode.
Medium sized businesses reported highest burden	Large businesses have good systems and expertise; small businesses less to report
Perceptions of usefulness of statistics can affect PRB	Insufficient information on the use of statistics; little knowledge of survey organisation.
High PRB leads to high potential for errors	More problems to overcome

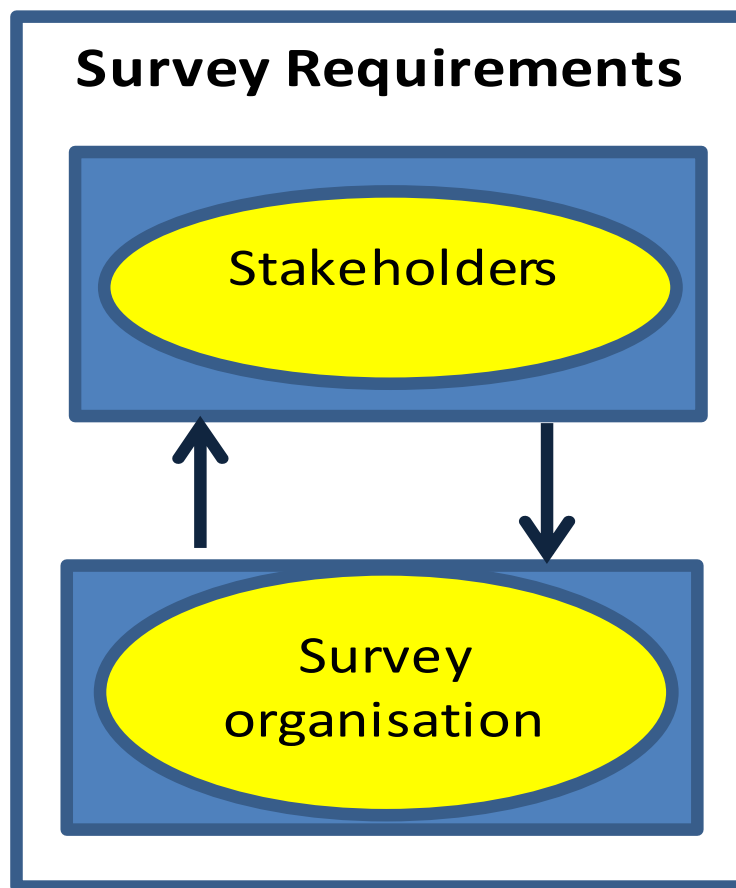
The importance of response burden

- Political concerns:

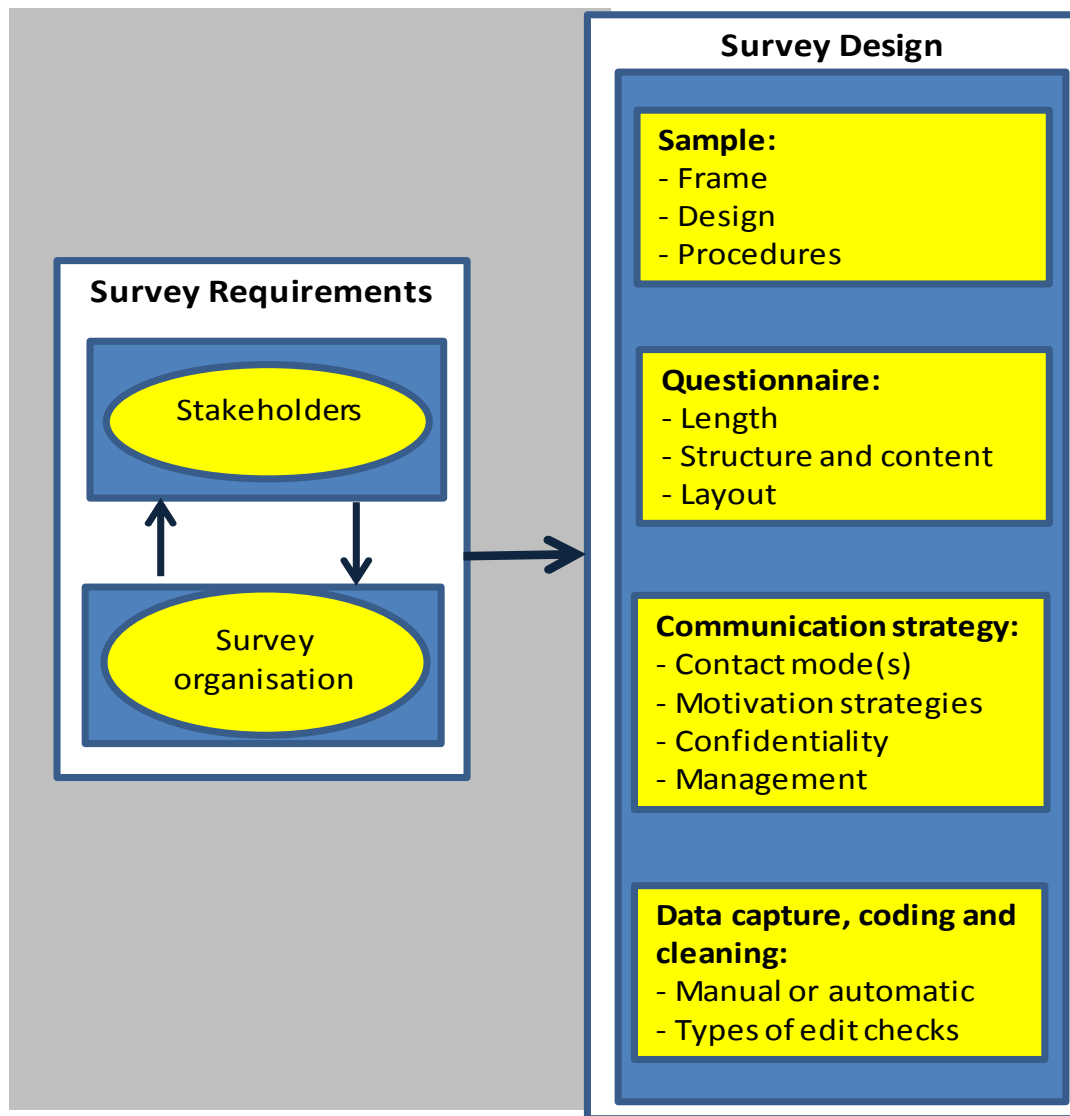
Productivity =	<u>Real Gross Domestic Product</u>
	Total number of hours worked by people employed in the economy

- Commercial concerns e.g. survey timing
- Data quality
- Survey costs

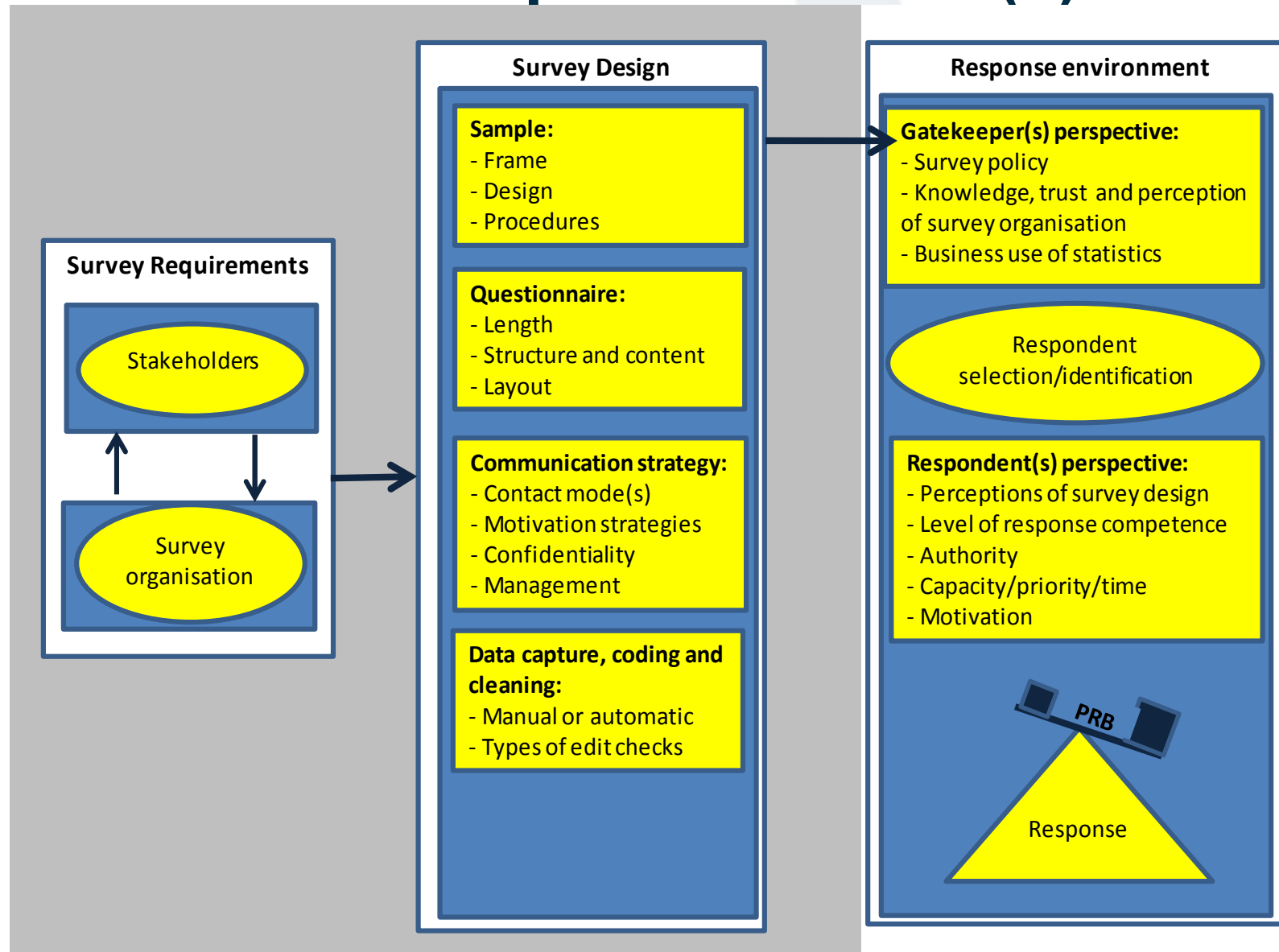
Causes and consequences of response burden (1)



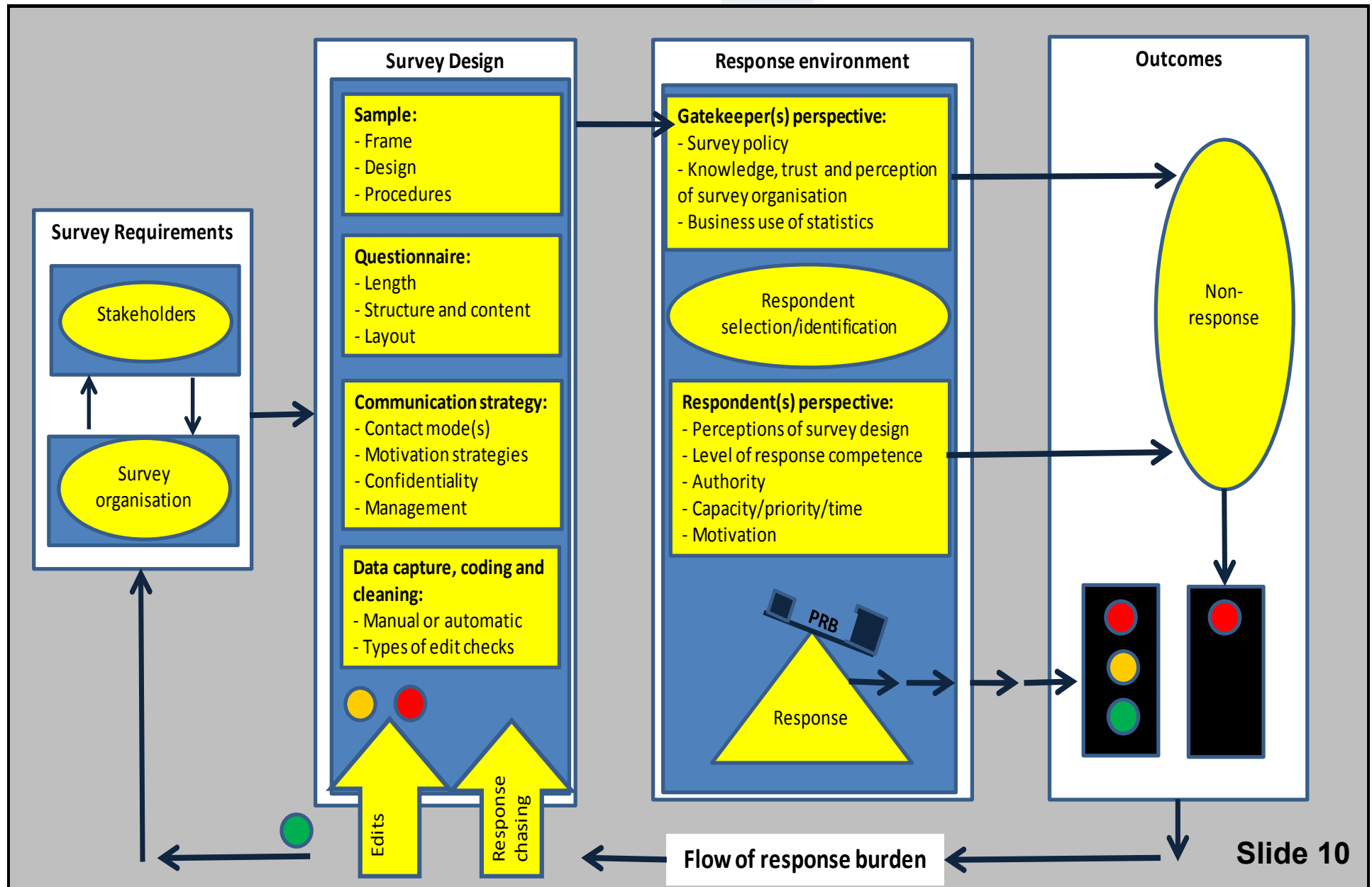
Causes and consequences of response burden (2)



Causes and consequences of response burden (3)



©Total Business Survey Burden Model



Measuring actual response burden



(R) Number of people involved in completing the questionnaire

(T) Time taken by people involved

(C) Salary costs of these people

PRB core question set:

Perceived burden	<p>Perception of time:</p> <p>Perception of burden:</p>	<p>Did you think it was quick or time consuming to collect the information to complete the questionnaire?</p> <p>Did you find it easy or burdensome to fill in the questionnaire?</p>
Actual burden	<p>Time to collect information:</p> <p>Time to complete the questionnaire:</p>	<p>How much time did <u>you</u> spend collecting the information to complete the questionnaire?</p> <p>How much time do you think <u>the business</u> spent on collecting the information to complete the questionnaire?</p> <p>How much time did you spend on actually filling in the questionnaire?</p>
Perceived causes of burden	<p>Reasons for time-consuming:</p> <p>Conditions for burden:</p>	<p>What were the main reasons that you found it time consuming?</p> <p>What conditions contributed to making the questionnaire burdensome to fill in?</p>
Motivation	<p>Usefulness for own business:</p> <p>Usefulness for society:</p>	<p>Do you think that the statistics from this questionnaire are useful or useless to your business?</p> <p>Do you think that the statistics from this questionnaire are useful or useless to society?</p>

Implications for survey organisations

- Need a recognised and trusted brand
- Remember survey Rs can also be statistical users
- Response burden can increase survey costs as well as reducing data quality
- Responding to a survey can provide benefits as well as costs

Implications for the design of business surveys

- Agree data requirements and ensure businesses can provide these data (record keeping studies)
- Think carefully about sample rotation
- Test question(naire)s and survey communication materials and procedures
- Measure and monitor the flow of response burden for each survey. For example:
 - validation gates and recontacts
 - response chasing

Thank you

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Further information on response burden can be found in:

Chapter 6 of Snijkers, Haraldsen, Jones and Willimack (2013) *Designing and Conducting Business Surveys*, Wiley.

