

# United States Patent and Trademark Office Quality Survey

Winter 2013



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## **PURPOSE OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE (USPTO) QUALITY SURVEY**

This United States Patent and Trademark Office Quality Survey is an instrument designed to measure your opinions about the services that we provide for you. The results from this voluntary survey will assist us in guiding improvements and enhancements in the future.

### **Survey Completion Instructions**

Please complete the survey based upon your overall experience working with U.S. Patent Examiners *over the past 3 month time period.*

We estimate that it will take no longer than 10 minutes to complete the survey. If you have any questions, please call Sushama Rajapaksa at Westat, at 1-888-516-1169 or send an email to [USPTO-QS@westat.com](mailto:USPTO-QS@westat.com).

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and if you choose to complete the survey, all of your responses will be used for internal analysis only.

### **Special Internet Option:**

You have the option of responding to this survey over the Internet. Please see the materials that accompanied this survey for instructions. If you respond using the Internet, please discard this survey.

## **Thank you for your assistance.**

# Summer 2012 USPTO Quality Survey

## QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU, OUR CUSTOMER

1. What is your affiliation?
  - ① Law Firm or Sole Practitioner
  - ② Corporation
  - ③ Independent Inventor
  - ④ Other (University, Federal Government, etc.)
  
2. Which technology field listed below best describes the majority of patent applications you have filed over the past 3 months? (SELECT ONLY ONE)
  - ① Chemical (Technology Centers 1600 or 1700)
  - ② Electrical (Technology Centers 2100, 2400, 2600, or 2800)
  - ③ Mechanical (Technology Centers 3600 or 3700)
  - ④ Designs (Technology Center 2900)
  - ⑤ Did not file a patent application in the past 3 months
  
3. Approximately how many Office Actions have you received during the past 3 months?
  - ① 1 to 10
  - ② 11 to 20
  - ③ 21 to 30
  - ④ 31 to 50
  - ⑤ 51 or more
  - ⑥ Have not received an Office Action in the past 3 months
  
- 4a. How often have you communicated over the telephone or in person with USPTO Patent Examiners in the past 3 months?
  - ① Have not communicated with Patent Examiners in the past 3 months → **Go to question 5**
  - ② Only once → **Go to question 4b**
  - ③ Rarely → **Go to question 4b**
  - ④ Occasionally → **Go to question 4b**
  - ⑤ Often → **Go to question 4b**

## YOUR INTERACTIONS WITH PATENT EXAMINERS

Consider your experiences over the past 3 months. Please think about the in person or telephone conversations that you initiated with the Office.

4b. To what extent was/were the **non-supervisory** Patent Examiner(s):

	Not At All	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Large Extent	Don't Know/Not Applicable
1. Available to resolve your issues	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. Attentive to your concerns	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. Responsive to your inquiries	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. Properly prepared to discuss the issues at hand	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. Able to facilitate a positive resolution	①	②	③	④	⑤

## PATENT EXAMINERS' DECISIONS

5. Consider your experiences over the past 3 months. Please think about the rules and procedures Patent Examiners must adhere to in their decisions. To what extent did the Patent Examiners you worked with adhere to the following rules and procedures with respect to:

	Not At All	Small Extent	Moderate Extent	Large Extent	Don't Know/Not Applicable
a. Citing appropriate prior art	①	②	③	④	⑤
b. Treating all claims	①	②	③	④	⑤
c. Providing enough information to advance prosecution	①	②	③	④	⑤
d. Substantively addressing your responses to Office Actions	①	②	③	④	⑤
e. Following appropriate restriction practice	①	②	③	④	⑤

## REJECTIONS PRACTICE

6. Consider all rejections you have received over the past 3 months. How often do you think the rejections made under the following statutes were reasonable in terms of being technically, legally, and logically sound with respect to:

	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Some of the Time</b>	<b>Most of the Time</b>	<b>All of the Time</b>	<b>Don't Know/Not Applicable</b>
a. 35 U.S.C. 101 Rejections	①	②	③	④	⑤
b. 35 U.S.C. 102 Rejections	①	②	③	④	⑤
c. 35 U.S.C. 103 Rejections	①	②	③	④	⑤
d. 35 U.S.C. 112 Rejections, Paragraph 1	①	②	③	④	⑤
e. 35 U.S.C. 112 Rejections, Paragraph 2	①	②	③	④	⑤

## OVERALL EXAMINATION QUALITY

7. In the past 3 months, how would you rate overall examination quality....

- ① Very Poor
- ② Poor
- ③ Fair
- ④ Good
- ⑤ Excellent

8. In the past 3 months, has overall examination quality....

- ① Significantly Declined
- ② Slightly Declined
- ③ Stayed the Same
- ④ Slightly Improved
- ⑤ Significantly Improved

9. In the past 3 months, have you experienced problems with the consistency of examination quality from one examiner to another?

- ① Yes, to a large degree
- ② Yes, to a small degree
- ③ No

**REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 112**

10. Please provide any comments you have about examiners' rejections, or lack of rejections, under 35 U.S.C. 112 when examining claims containing functional language.

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11. You may be selected to participate in this survey again. If you are interested in completing this survey online, please provide your email address below:

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*Thank you for completing this survey.  
Your information will be invaluable as we improve the quality  
of our services for you, our customer!*