

REGULATORY FOCUS STRENGTH MEASURE (ALSO KNOWN AS THE SELF-GUIDE STRENGTH MEASURE)

Description of Measure

After a brief task introduction, participants are asked to list, one at a time, four attributes they would ideally like to possess and four attributes they believe they ought to possess, in a pseudo-random order—specifically, one ideal, two oughts, one ideal, one ought, two ideals, and one ought.

After providing each ideal attribute, participants are asked to respond to the following two items:

1. For the last attribute, rate the extent to which you would IDEALLY LIKE TO possess the attribute (from 1-4).
2. For the last attribute, rate the extent to which you believe you ACTUALLY possess the attribute (from 1-4).

After providing each ought attribute, participants are asked to respond to the following two items:

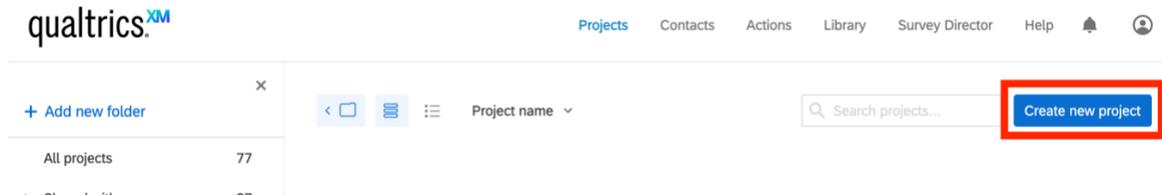
1. For the last attribute, rate the extent to which you believe you OUGHT TO possess the attribute (from 1-4).
2. For the last attribute, rate the extent to which you believe you ACTUALLY possess the attribute (from 1-4).

The computer records participants' (a) responses (both attributes and ratings) and (b) response latencies for all attributes and ratings. Thus, three response latencies are recorded for each attribute—time for typing attribute, time for ideal/ought rating, and time for actual rating.

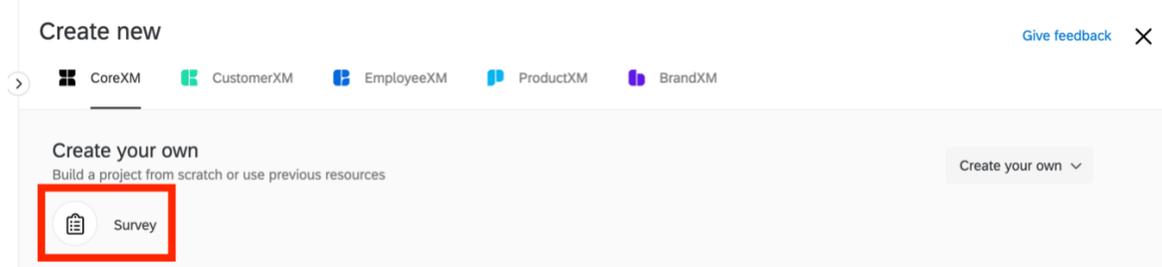
Task Administration on Qualtrics

Please see [the Higgins Lab website](#) for a Qualtrics QSF file for the Regulatory Focus Strength measure. Once you have downloaded this file, you can use the following instructions to load this task into Qualtrics:

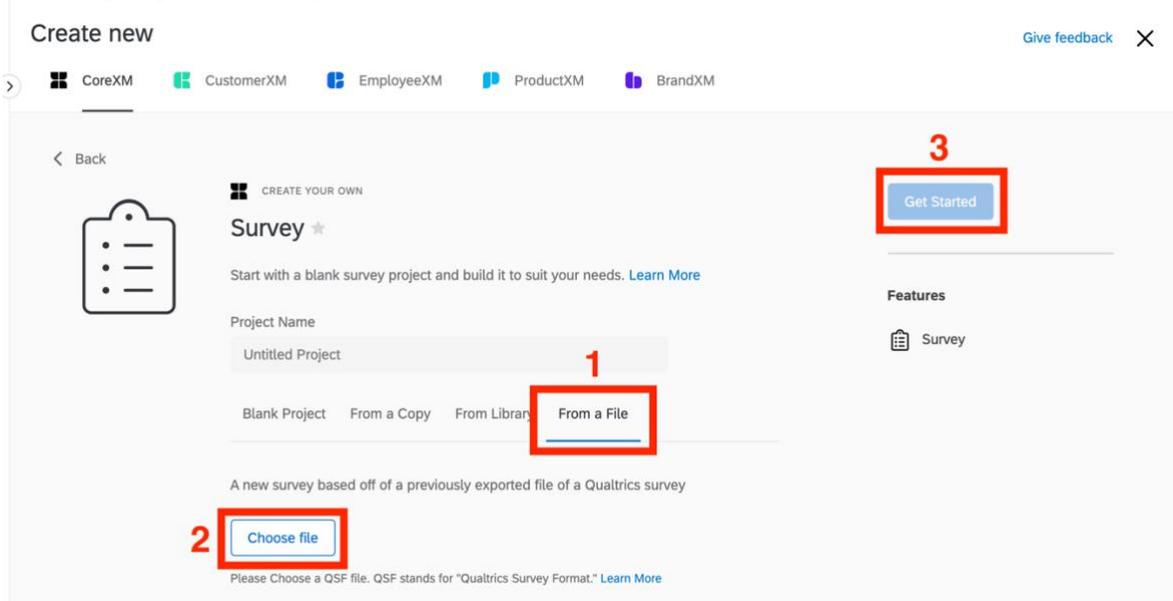
1. After logging in, click the "Create new project" button on your Qualtrics homepage.



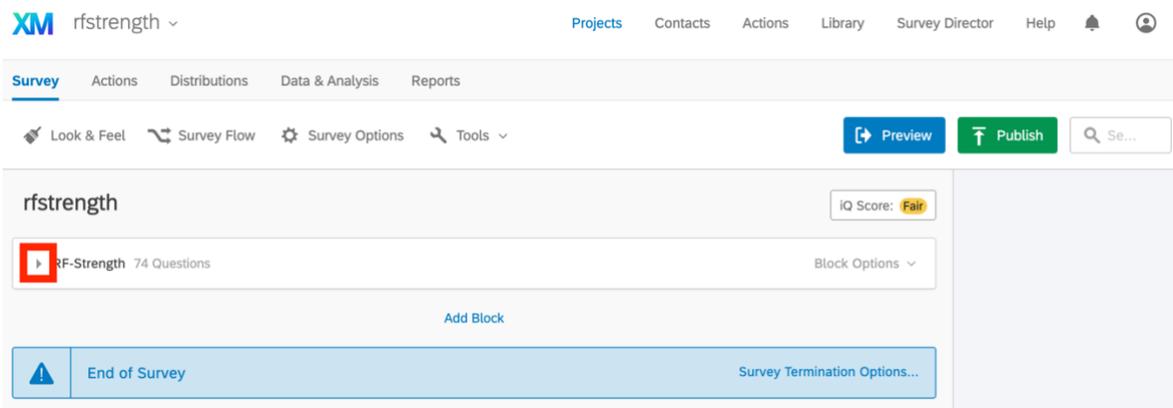
2. Then, under "Create your own", click the gray "Survey" button.



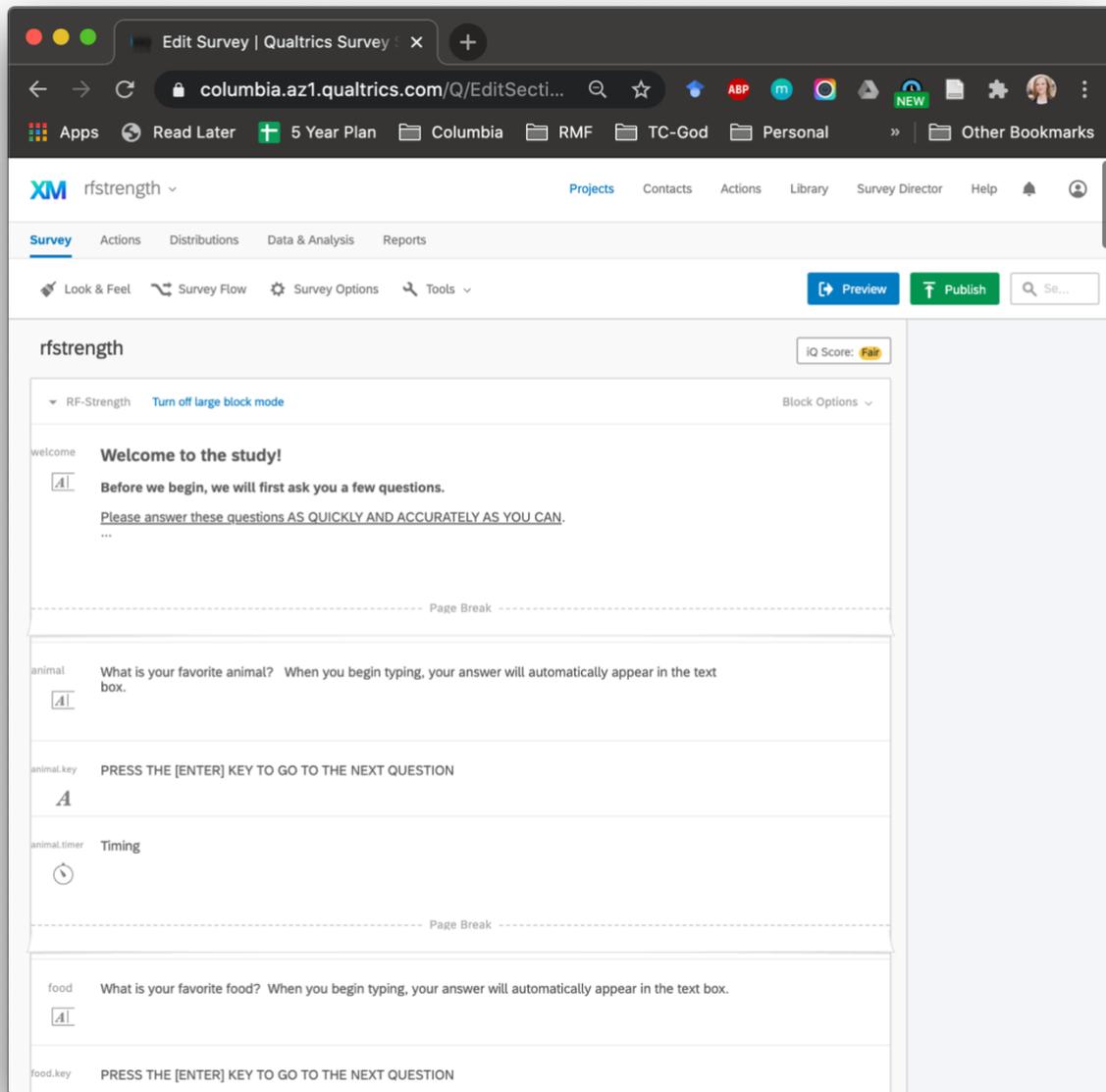
3. Click the "From a File" tab, and then click the "Choose file" button and select the "rfstrength.qsf" file that you downloaded. Then, click the blue "Get Started" button.



4. Next, you will be taken to a new project page that includes the Regulatory Focus Strength measure. To view the items that comprise the measure, click the gray triangle next to the "RF-Strength" block to open it up.



5. Upon opening up the block, you will see that there is a timer and page break following the content that will display on each page of the module. These items are important! The timers will be used to calculate regulatory focus strength, as RFS is a response latency measure, and the page breaks ensure that the questions show up on different pages. As a result, please do not move or delete these timers and page breaks.



Additional Notes:

It is important that you maintain the Qualtrics theme that (should) come bundled in this QSF, as other themes may not play as nicely with this task. If you do end up accidentally changing the theme, we would recommend changing it back to the "Blank" Qualtrics theme and "Classic" layout in the "Look and Feel" menu.

Finally, although it is possible to load a QSF task directly into an existing survey, we would recommend against it, as the page breaks and theme options may not load properly in this case. Instead, we recommend starting with this QSF as a new file (as described in the steps above) and adding the rest of your study content around it.

Scoring

Only the first three ideals and the first three oughts are used in computed ideal (i.e., promotion) and ought (i.e., prevention) strength. To calculate ideal and ought strength, log-transform the reaction times. Sum them separately for ideals and oughts. Multiply these two totals by -1 , so that higher numbers indicate greater strength/accessibility (i.e., shorter response times). Finally, always control for the opposite focus in any analyses.

Although these scores can be calculated using any statistical software, for your reference, see [the Higgins Lab website](#) for an R script that can be used to calculate regulatory focus strength scores using the output from the Qualtrics version of the task.

References

Higgins, E. T., Shah, J., & Friedman, R. (1997). Emotional responses to goal attainment: Strength of regulatory focus as moderator. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72(3), 515–525. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.72.3.515