

What's the difference between Percent Top Box and Percentile Rankings?

Anyone who visits PRCEasyView.com® will quickly realize that the two most obvious and important numbers on the website are Percent Top Box and Percentile Rankings. Each of these numbers has unique value and it is important to understand the different roles they play. Too often, though, these terms are used interchangeably and can confuse an audience.

Percent Top Box includes only those respondents who rated the question in the top box of question scale (Excellent, Always, 9/10, Definitely Yes, etc.). Simply, Percent Top Box is the percentage of people that responded with the top response to the question. Percent Top Box is often denoted on PRCEasyView.com® with a blue bar. If your blue bar or Percent Top Box is 56.3%, that means 56.3% of the patients who were asked that question responded with the top response. PRC recommends a focus on Percent Top Box because when patients respond that their overall quality of care was “Excellent” or their overall hospital rating was a “9/10”, they are four times more likely to rate their likelihood to recommend as “Excellent” or a “9/10”. Beyond garnering more loyalty, though, a focus on excellence meets the lofty goals of hospitals’ missions to provide excellent care.

The challenge with looking at Percent Top Box is a lack of context. When, say, 56.3% of your patients rate their overall care as “Excellent,” is that good or bad? In order to give more meaning to this Percent Excellent raw score, we provide Percentile Rankings.

Percentile Rankings tell you how you rank against your peers, based only on the percentage of patients who responded with a top box response to a question. To determine the Percentile Ranking, PRC collects all of the Percent Top Box scores for all of our questions for the preceding year and orders the scores from top to bottom. We can then compare the measured score against all like units to provide some meaning to that number.

With Percentile Rankings, PRC can tell you when, for example, 56.3% of your patients rate you excellent, that that puts you at the 40th percentile (better than 40% of the units you’re being compared against). If your ranking is at the 100th percentile, you score better than all of the other facilities/units in the database. If your ranking is the 0th percentile, you score better than no other facilities/units in the database. This, however, does not mean that zero patients rated that question as Top Box. Indeed, this is the biggest mistake people make—reporting a ranking as a percentage. Remember, Percentile Rankings are derived from the patients who responded with a top box, but are different from the raw percentages.

Percentile Rankings give you a sense of how well you are performing compared to the PRC universe, but sometimes these comparisons can be distracting to front-line staff. As opposed to centering conversations on Percentile Ranking, thereby asking staff to focus on how they



relate to every other unit in the database, PRC generally recommends you center these conversations on Percent Top Box, which motivates front-line staff to focus on connecting with the patients in their care right now.

