The Art of Marketing Research

Stephen J. Hellebusch

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I. Background

Preface

As the writing of this book progressed, it became clear that ethical considerations deserve mention, because much of what is discussed as the Art of Marketing Research relates to how one chooses to live. I am a researcher, and researchers seek The Truth. This book is based upon the assumption that Marketing Research (MR) seeks The Truth. "The Truth hurts." is a truism. For Marketers, not knowing The Truth can really hurt.

In the short run, The Truth can be ignored. Today (2007) many people just want to get the job done, get the monkey off their backs. If the study is rightly directed to reveal The Truth, that's great. If it isn't, that's OK too, since no one will ever figure that out.

Similarly, in MR, there have always been vendors who just want your money. We can do a $tudy! This type of vendor is not particularly concerned with The Truth, and knows that no client has the time to dig under the PowerPoint slides – digging can take hours and hours and hours. The client might learn the data have been misconstrued or are haphazardly selected for presentation. Some clients do not even ask what the base size is on a table, so there is little danger of a client finding flaws in the analysis.

This book assumes the reader is interested in seeking The Truth, and doing the work that uncovering The Truth requires.

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Being a researcher has one other implication worth noting. There is an academic element in conducting research that will not always jive immediately with the practical. Usually, in MR, this is a minor note, but it can be distracting to those who are purely practical. Like most researchers, I do not think we are always smart enough to understand when a discovered relationship might be useful, so I prefer to explore, and add flesh to the bones of practicality. It can benefit later in ways that are not conceived of at the time. If it does not, it helps marketers know and understand customers better. It may also be a waste of time, but that is the risk.

Chapter One
Definitions

<u>What is Marketing Research?</u>
My definition of Marketing Research (or MR) is "research to support Marketing" – a definition at least consistent with the textbooks. Most professionals, especially academics, like much longer, more complex definitions which must serve some unknown need for wordiness. The formal American Marketing Association (AMA) definitions of Marketing and Marketing Research, taken directly from the AMA website in February, 2006, are:

Definition of Marketing: Marketing is an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders.

Definition of Marketing Research: Marketing research is the function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through information--information used to identify and define marketing opportunities and problems; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and improve understanding of marketing as a process. Marketing research specifies the information required to address these issues, designs the method for collecting information, manages and implements the data collection process, analyzes the results, and communicates the findings and their implications.

Why the steps of a primary research project are in the definition of MR is unclear. I guess the Arthur C. Nielsen company, IMS Health, and Information Resources, Inc. will be a little surprised to learn that just reporting accurate numbers is not Marketing Research. Sometimes, there is no "issue" to be defined, beyond the fact that smart marketers want to know what is going on.

Another difficulty is that MR is not the only "function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer". Marketers do not sit in closed boxes waiting for MR to enlighten them. They learn directly from the trade, media, vendors who fit no clear category, etc. Just so you know.

<u>Is Marketing Research an art?</u>
Here is a definition of "art":

> "**Art:** … 1: skill acquired by experience; study, or observation <the ~ of making friends> 2 a : (1) : a branch of learning: (1) : one of the humanities; (2) *pl* : Liberal Arts (b) *archaic* : learning. Scholarship. 3 : an occupation requiring knowledge or skill < the ~ of organ building> 4 a : the conscious use of skill and creative imagination esp. in the production of aesthetic objects; also : works so produced."

<u>Miriam-Webster Dictionary,</u>
Miriam Webster, Inc. Springfield, MA, 1984

MR is definitely an art. But I can't prove it scientifically. The art part is soft knowledge and is always there. The definition's "skill and creative imagination" is the water the MR fish swims in, but we do not see it, and rarely talk about it. The art comes in the interaction of MR and the users, and cleverness, flexibility in design and execution. The Marketing Researcher needs to be able to diagnose the Marketing problem, and know which tool is best suited to addressing it, and how to "bring home the bacon" – make sure the research addresses the issue even when plans go wrong.

One translation of the famous Chinese book, the Tao te Ching begins with the statement "The Way that can be spoken of is not the true Way." Most Marketing Researchers understand that MR is both an art and a science, but there are few or no books I am aware of about the art[**]. Perhaps because it is so hard to speak of the art. Many MR professionals will take issue with points I make about the art; I ask their indulgence, since it cannot be spoken of directly. The art is in conducting all aspects of a project correctly, in the right way, and elegantly providing clear, needed information and thinking.

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Aside #1

I consider Marketing Research to be a profession; I think of myself as a professional. The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary relevantly defines "profession" as "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation" and "a principal calling, vocation, or employment". If you are involved in quantitative research, you had better have some knowledge of experimental design, statistical testing and multivariate techniques. You better know how to adapt if there are surprises in executing a study. If you are involved in qualitative research, you better be aware of objective questioning techniques and probing methods, as well as creative methods for drawing people out. You need specialized knowledge. A good part of the art comes with being able to create a design to get to the needed information and to communicate results and their meanings.

Other Marketing Researchers do not agree. Thomas Semon, a marketing researcher who writes often for Marketing News, has commented that Marketing Research is not a profession; Marketing Researchers are simply craftsmen (perhaps artisans?) who go about their craft much like car mechanics or sanitation engineers. There will probably never be agreement. But I, for one, think of myself as a professional, and behave accordingly. Whether I think of myself as a professional or not makes a profound difference in how I operate. The difference is related to whether you think of Marketing Research as a function defined primarily by School 1 or School 2, which are discussed later.

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[**] A quick online search found several firms that describe their services as providing an art of marketing research, but no texts. The closest was State of the Art Marketing Research, Blankenship, A., Breen, G., Dutka, A. McGraw-Hill, 2nd Edition, 1998, about the latest tools.

There are many, many texts that discuss and teach the science of MR. There are lectures, seminars, and discussions of the scientific and statistical techniques that are used. For example, the American Marketing Association tutorial series is packed with tutorials discussing basic and advanced multivariate analysis, price sensitivity analysis, basic statistics, etc. The Burke Institute seminars offer similar topics. The point of most of these is to teach the scientific methods and tools.

About two years ago, I taught a Marketing Research 101 graduate-level course at a local university. At first, the textbook impressed me favorably. The first several chapters were devoted to what MR is, how it is used, why it is important, setting objectives, the basics of primary research, etc. After that, it degenerated into a statistics text, taking great pains to explain various techniques, asking the students to implement them, and creating a fictitious case where the tool fit the problem.

There was no discussion of advertising testing, product testing, ad tracking, promotion evaluation, etc. – all the things MR professionals are regularly asked to do. I was befuddled. This was MR? No. This was statistics – great, powerful tools. But tools; not MR.

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Aside #2

I always thought I did Marketing Research, not "Market Research". Markets are either categories, like the stock market, the Cough/Cold market or the Ready To Eat cereal market, or they are geographies, like the Chicago market or the Tuscaloosa market. I agree with a former colleague, who said he would be head of Market Research the day he reported to the Vice President of Market. Until then, since he reported to the Vice President of Marketing, he would stay Director of Marketing Research.

A few years back, the American Marketing Association (Note: not the American Market Association) declared that the correct term is Marketing Research, not Market Research.

As time goes by, it becomes clear that the battle is over, and Marketing Research lost. The American Marketing Association, in their primary publication, Marketing News, regularly prints articles discussing "Market Research" issues and topics. They advertise Market Research firms on their website. No reference or explanation, just Market Research. Market Research appears in many other publications and discussions, with tacit assumption that everyone will know the reference is to Marketing Research. Practically speaking, the two terms are synonymous.

Of course since Marketing Research is a precise discipline, I will use the term Marketing Research, but the reader is free to understand that this book is about Market Research, too.

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One of the more interesting observations about the current uses of MR is that it is responsible for all of the ills, woes, and errors in marketing[^]. This follows the same logic as suing a gun manufacturer because someone shot your cousin with one of their guns. It is hard to blame the gun; it seems obvious that the blame rests on the person who pulled the trigger. The fact that people do not know how to use a tool does not mean it is a lousy tool.

Aside #3

> <u>*Sturgeon's Law*</u>
> *Theodore Sturgeon, the famous science fiction writer, was at a convention, standing in the hotel lobby, when someone approached him and said, "Aren't you Theodore Sturgeon, the famous science fiction writer?" He proudly replied that he was. The questioner then hit him with "Ninety percent of science fiction is CRAP!" Sturgeon was unfazed. He replied, "Ninety percent of everything is crap."*

The is fact that there is a lot of bad MR. The fact that many people can't tell good from bad is not the fault of MR. It is not even the fault of those who produce crap. Unless you are an independently wealthy vendor/supplier (or are in a situation where you are turning business away), you tend to handle those who order up biased or inaccurate studies in one of two ways. Either you just take their money, which is vaguely unethical, or you try to talk them into doing it right. Often, when you pursue the last course, prospective clients do not listen. Either they believe that they know better or the right way is more expensive, and they do not want to spend to do it right. After trying to convince them, you do it their way, and take their money.

The ironic flip side of Sturgeon's Law in MR is that some useful, needed research never occurs. For example, products are thrown onto the store shelf with no prior testing all the time. We often do not see lost opportunities. Hard to see what is not there.

Aside #4

> *Surprising to me are the Marketing Researchers practicing now who truly do not know what they are doing, but (even more frighteningly) think that they do. I recently explained carefully three times to an MR professional that any changes to the questioning in Wave 3 of a three-wave tracking study would make it impossible to compare the results of the three waves. After a week of hearing that this was so, she asked a fourth time if we could make big, dramatic changes to the questioning! I suspect that many vendors would just say "sure". They think the hassle (not to mention upsetting a client) just isn't worth it. But it is, if you take pride in your work.*

[^] Don Schultz, writing in an early 2005 issue of <u>Marketing News</u>.

Chapter 2
No guts, no glory.

Once when a senior professional was receiving an award from the American Marketing Association he was asked what advice he would give to today's MR folks. "Get some guts." was his reply. He implied that we are wimps, afraid to "tell it like it is".

Well, if you are going to get fired for telling it like it is, that slows you down a bit. There are three factors that are important here. First, the MR person must be able to deliver bad news without fear of reprisal. Second, there must be agreement on decision rules and actions. Third, the MR people must exercise discretion.

"No reprisal" is the most important of these three. If the motto is "shoot the messenger", you will quickly run out of messengers. But reality won't change. Sometimes, no one will listen, or they will disagree. That's OK. If you have had your say, at least your professional duty is honorably discharged. MR is not the only consideration for Marketers in making decisions.

In a supportive environment, MR can contribute a lot. Think of the MR person as the "truth teller" or soothsayer. That person can say whatever he or she wants in a professional capacity, without danger of being fired. Note "professional capacity". Calling the Vice President (VP) an idiot is not only unprofessional, but should bring reprisals – even if it is true. Telling the VP the data analysis indicates the plan won't work is not fun, but it is professional and should not bring personal consequences.

I was asked in a job interview by the VP what I would do in a meeting with him and the Marketers if he said something that I knew was wrong. I told him it depended. If it was a matter of opinion, I would keep my mouth shut. If it was a matter of fact, or even a conclusion contradicted by the facts, I would tell him. I got the job.

Aside #5

Once upon a time there was a huge company trying to decide whether to buy a big (but smaller) company in a related category. As part of the decision-making process, the huge company wanted to learn the image of the smaller company relative to the competition. So, they ordered an image study. The results came in, and the smaller company had a very positive image relative to the main competitors. The Junior Analyst who put together the report and presentation said to the Account Executive (his boss), "Let's tell them to buy it. It looks really good." The Account Executive patiently explained that many other factors would go into the decision, such as profitability, trends, discounted cash flow, etc., etc. etc. There was no way they could say, based on an image study, "buy it". So, the Junior Analyst reluctantly removed that slide from the presentation deck.

The presentation occurred amidst several presentations on the purchase issue, in a large, well-appointed conference room. The whole Board of Directors was there, including the multimillionaire who owned most of the huge company. He was a *cowboy, and sat with his boots up on the fancy mahogany table while the "suits" looked on. The Account Exec and the Junior Analyst presented as a team, with the Account Exec wrapping up. When he finished, Multimillionaire looked at the Account Exec and asked, "Well, would you buy it?"*

The Junior Analyst was busy trying to stifle his laughter (with difficulty). The Account Exec thought for a moment, and then gave an answer that was appropriately wimpy. "We see nothing in these data that say that you shouldn't."

Get some guts! Just say "yes" or "no".

The second aspect of guts is: the decision rules and actions must be clear. Many Marketers do not like this feature – it means they cannot make things up as they go.

Once there was a great deal of pressure to lead my company into a new product category that had many benefits for the company and its parent. The Marketing people were smart. They knew it was a very competitive category, and it would be difficult to succeed without a real point of difference. After some developmental work, we had many new product concepts for testing, each offering a point of difference we hoped would be considered a significant benefit to consumers. We needed to test them.

The problem was the decision criterion. Fortunately, the CEO was in the planning discussion, which cut through the communication chain. I proposed that "preference to current" be the acid test for the concepts, and we agreed not to move ahead unless we had a concept preferred to current products. When the results came back, none were preferred over current – the best was equivalent to current products. The Marketers wanted to proceed anyway, but the CEO said no. We had agreed on a decision criterion, and were going to stick to it.

No one thanked MR for the great job, but we saved the company millions by killing an effort to develop prototypes and launch a product that would fail. I think it was a significant positive contribution. But in the real situation, I was alone on that one.

The final aspect of having guts is discretion. Sometimes people from Marketing or New Products have started the train rolling down the track, and most people in the organization have jumped on board. Usually, these situations develop gradually. On one occasion, I was asked by the VP if a test market would provide the information needed. The test market was crudely designed by the Marketing people, and would not do the job. I said "no", and the train came to a screeching halt. We went back to the drawing board and designed a real test market.

On another occasion, I began reviewing the past MR my predecessor had conducted on a new product that was scheduled to launch in a few months. Launch preparations and product production were furiously underway. When I reviewed the volume forecast which had led to the launch decision, it was clear to me that it was flawed, and greatly exaggerated. I chose not to jump in front of that train. The product launched, and was deemed a failure after a year on the market, falling far short of its goal. It hung around, though, and eventually it made money.

Part of discretion is, of course, how you treat people. When I had bad news to deliver, I would often meet with the person most affected and lead him/her through it first, and not announce it to the world until the next day, or (depending on circumstance) the next few days. This gave the most concerned person time to develop a plan of action.

Chapter 3
The golden rule for business: whoever has the gold makes the rules.

One thing I have learned is no matter how far down the MR person is in the organization, and no matter how long the chain of communication, the research user MUST buy in. If the end user disagrees with the objective or the method of addressing it, there is no reason to conduct the research. MR people must be salespeople. There have been times when I could clearly see a need for a project that would provide helpful information, but the end user disagreed, so the project went nowhere. Even if I were in a position to conduct the study, I would not. Fortunately, there are more times when there has been agreement with a proactive proposal, and the project is completed. No harm in asking.

Nothing can replace a face-to-face conversation with the decision-maker, even if it is in a formal presentation to him/her. When I wrote about having some guts in the American Marketing Association's *Marketing News*, one reader commented that he agreed with my point, but most MR people were not included in important decision meetings. They have no opportunity to speak, or, if included, they are too junior in the organizational structure to have much say.

Two thoughts. First, if MR people are not included, they should be. Good managers develop their reports, and this is how MR professionals expand their horizons. There are many places where MR professionals are not included in marketing meetings and decisions. In one company I worked for, the marketers called on the MR people when they needed some numbers. They did not use my brain in their planning or decision-making. That is their right, but they pay a price for not involving all the brains available. Other places, I often invited myself to meetings, and found little or no resistance to that. Mostly, Marketers just did not think to invite MR. How do you want your organization to run?

Second, whether to include MR also depends on the MR person. There are some I have worked with who would not fit in to these discussions. They would either have no opinion or be too ill-informed to address the issues. I understand why sometimes Marketers exclude MR types who are hooked on their numbers, and don't really understand Marketing. There must be a willingness to expand horizons on MR's part.

Chapter 4
"Do you suffer from long term memory loss? (I can't remember.)"*

The MR function exists as part of an organization. MR can serve as a vital part (sometimes the only part) of the brand memory. Organizations, especially Marketing organizations, change often, and sometimes within a three year period <u>everyone</u> is new. It may be an organization that sells MR projects or a manufacturing organization. Either way, knowing what has gone before can be very helpful to those now in place. This is especially true for manufacturers. As a normal part of business, I would keep a brand book for each major brand. In the brand book would be an Abstract for each primary research project completed for the brand.

This collection can be very helpful in a number of ways. If you are fortunate enough to have programming capabilities available, Abstracts can be put in a database with key word search. If not, a book (electronic or on paper) can still come in handy. We would turn to the Brand Abstract book when asked to present history on a product, to educate new brand or assistant brand manager, to examine techniques used to answer similar questions in the past. Once, the President called me to ask what research we had done on a proposed new product, and (thanks to the book) I could easily and quickly answer. A brand manager currently handling one of these brands asked for the book <u>six years after</u> I left the brand. He needed to know what line extensions had been researched, and how they tested.

There are many forms an Abstract can take. I prefer one-page summaries and use the form shown below, which covers the basics.

File #: ____________
Job #: ____________

Study Name: ____

Location of Interviews: __________________ Supplier: _______________

Field Dates: ___________________________ Method: ________________

Cost: ______________________________

<u>Objectives/Design</u>
The objectives as stated.
A summary of the design: who was interviewed, base sizes, incidences, brief procedure and/or questionnaire description.

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* The song "Amnesia" by Chumbawumba, of "I get knocked down" fame.

Summary
Key findings and conclusions.

Key Words: Category Brand Marketing Mix Element

Prepared by: Date: ________________

Chapter 5
Not so fast, bub.

There are some questions that should be asked before you start any piece of primary research, but rarely are. One we just referred to – do you already have the answer? Check the Abstracts. If research addressing the question was completed a year ago, and nothing major has changed in the category, do you really need to go learn it again? Save the money!

What if it was not answered, but there is data that could answer it in a past study? Can you run the data to get the answer? Won't know until you ask.

After you have done your homework and established a clear objective, ask if it is <u>feasible</u> to address it in research. What if what the Marketers need to know can't be determined? We MR folks have a big bag of tricks and are clever at addressing a lot of things. But not everything.

Determining feasibility can be difficult. I have had new product developers ask to test concepts for a second-generation product, when the first generation has yet to be launched. I have had Marketers ask to evaluate a promotion after it has occurred, in situations where a Pre/Post design would be vital to an accurate determination of effectiveness. Neither of these are feasible. Could you do research? Sure. Can you be reasonably certain it would accurately answer the question. No. It is important to ask your questions up front.

Aside #6

> *Once there was a very smart person who reported to me. She had been in MR for about 10 years, working her way up to Senior Analyst. She was a divorced mother raising two children. In addition to working full time and raising children, she was attending night school to get a B.A. She worked with all M.B.A.s. Her boss was a Ph.D. When discussions were held, she would not speak because she was uncertain how her comments would be received. However, she would share them with me, after the meeting.*
>
> *Sometimes, these were key insights that changed the whole complexion of how the problem would be addressed. Once, I had to re-assemble the people who met to discuss one of these insights. So, I encouraged her to speak up all the time. The only stupid question is the one not asked.*

One thing is important concerning the "decision to be made" or "action to be taken". Often, it is helpful to provide mock data to help the decision makers determine what they will do in given instances. What will we do if Concept A is better than Concept B? What if A = B? In one instance I recall, I wish I had known of this technique.

The team that approved expenditures for new product development typically began with a review of the category information, learning who the current manufacturers were in the category, how strong they were, how the category worked, trends, etc. We happened to analyze two categories and report on them in the same month. The first was best described as a fortress. There were two players who had a 90% share between them, and manufacturing capabilities such that they could produce much less expensively than any new player would be able to for a long, long time. The second category was a fad category – extremely easy to get into, but difficult to maintain a presence. There was no fortress here. In terms of initial entry, it would be a walk in the park. The team cheerfully decided to pursue new product activity in both categories, and I was left wondering why we did a category analysis, since diametrically opposed results led to the same decision, the same actions to be taken.

There is also the issue of precision. What if we can address the question, but the research does not add anything? Suppose, for instance, that an armchair examination of syndicated data, household panel data, levels of spending, tell you (or a forecasting expert) that the new product will likely sell between $50,000,000 and $80,000,000. You can run out and do a concept test (for $100,000 and eight weeks) that will tell you it will sell $60,000,000 +/- 20%. Hmmm. $60,000,000 +/- 20% = $48,000,000 to $72,000,000. Was that volume estimation study a good idea? A good value? Probably not.

If you can be more precise than an armchair estimate, that's one thing. But, what about Cost/Benefit? Is it worth it? More on that later. Similarly, can the research tell us what it is going to tell us in time? More on that later, too.

II. Objectives

Chapter 6
The Whither-Are-We-Drifting Subcommittee of our Lay Advisory Board

There was once a columnist in a local newspaper that referred often to the Whither-Are-We-Drifting Subcommittee of our Lay Advisory Board, humorously wondering how people could decide to do some of the nuttier things they do. Not having clear goals is part of the answer.

In preparing to teach a seminar on setting the correct MR objective, I asked "why bother with objectives?" The answer surprised me a bit, because it depends on whether your philosophy of MR is School 1 or School 2.

If a Marketing Researcher operates in School 1 – Order Takers there is no need to know objectives. School 1 believes MR is to provide accurate data to Marketers upon request. These researchers often do not know how the brand is doing in the marketplace or the issues surrounding it. They are very busy, and handle more than one brand, so they have little time for reflection. Sometimes they work 100% with syndicated sales data (retail sales, prescriptions). They would probably agree with Mr. Semon – MR is not a profession, it's a job – more like being a shoe salesman than being a physician or educator. Also, School 1 will rarely, if ever, be proactive.

The other route reflects a different philosophy. In School 2 -- Questioners, the goal is to answer Marketing's questions. The researcher must know the Marketing objective and the objective of the research. Those in this school will proactively recommend research, because they know the brand's situation and want to help. While they are busy, they typically handle one major brand, product or service, and several minor ones. This gives them time to be involved and to think. They consider themselves professionals, in charge of a brand's information needs.

The difference in philosophies causes problems. If the client believes MR should operate in School #1 and the researcher is School #2, then conversations will be tense. The client will not understand why the "non-line" support group person is asking him annoying, stupid questions, like "why". In the reverse situation, the researcher will wonder why the client is taking up so much time and talking on and on and on, when all they have to do is order up what they want. What is the problem? I have seen both scenarios. I've heard frustrated clients wonder why they can't get the support they need from their researcher, and researchers wonder why they are left out of the loop.

Part of the reason there is confusion and two different schools, is that all Marketing Researchers operate in School #1 to some extent. Reported data should be on time and accurate and there often is not a need to deeply probe and understand what it means. Sometimes it is just a case of staying aware.

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If you are School 2, the question is: how do you set objectives? I think of objectives as the "most overlooked but most important part of the study"[#]. Caught up in the day-to-day dashing about, we do not stop and think. All of us are guilty of rushing.

In a typical business setting, the thrust must be on how the information obtained is going to be used to move the business ahead. Presumably, there are business goals the research supports. If not, don't do it.

I once worked on a brand that conducted quarterly advertising tracking studies to determine the impact of the brand's television advertising. Sounds reasonable, especially since many brands do that. Problem is, the studies were national, and the brand only spent about $4,000,000 on advertising nationally.

Most professionals will tell you that the impact of that spending (even with great television commercials) is insignificant. No affordable tool I know of is sensitive enough to measure an effect that small. Eventually, after four flat waves, that became clear. We stopped. From then on, we conducted Pre/Post waves in limited geographies when there was a Marketing action to be measured.

I have been asked from time to time to develop a checklist of questions to use to make sure objectives are clear. The best advice is for the researcher to act like a three-year old, and ask "why", "why" "why" "why" until all is clear. As the single working mother demonstrated, the only stupid question is the one not asked, even if you get embarrassed. It is better to ask and to appear slow or stupid than to proceed to conduct stupid, expensive research. If in doubt, quietly sound out someone you trust before raising the issue.

The checklist has been developed, and is shown below. Sometimes, the questions will be easy to answer and it will go quickly. Sometimes not.

- [ ] Who is the research user?
- [ ] Who will decide?
- [ ] What issues gave rise to the research?
- [ ] What are priorities of issues?
- [ ] How important is the project?
- [ ] Where did design come from?

- [ ] How does design address objectives?

- [ ] What is most important piece of data sought?
- [ ] How does this relate to overall goals and strategies?
- [ ] What decisions will be made from the research?
- [ ] What are the actions to be taken?
- [ ] Are there decision criteria? If so, what are they?

[#] A quote from the description of a tutorial I teach for the American Marketing Association.

- What are the alternatives?

- What deadlines are faced?
- What marketing information does research need to understand the problem?
- What are the limitations of the research?
- What are the assumptions being made?

In addition to the list, there are the questions mentioned earlier that need to be asked:

- Do we already know the answer?
- Is it feasible?
- Is it precise enough?
- Is the cost/benefit worth it?
- Will the answer come in time to make the information meaningful?

The last point is the easiest to address, of course. Marketers often think of the research information they need the day they need it. Since even a simple project will take at least 4-5 working days (and few organizations can move that fast), the MR person has to ask if the decision will be made by the time the information can be obtained. If it will, then the research is useless.

Chapter 7
Who's to say what's good or what's bad?

In life, sometimes it is not so easy.

Aside #7

Simple Old Taoist Tale

Once there was a poor Chinese farmer, who had a horse. His son foolishly left the corral gate open, and the horse ran off. His neighbor came to him to offer his condolences – so sad you lost your horse! The farmer shrugged and said: "who's to say what's good and what's bad?" The next day, the horse came back with 3 wild horses.

The neighbor came to him to offer congratulations – you now have 4 horses! That is wonderful! He shrugged and said: "who's to say what's good and what's bad?" The next day, while breaking one of the horses, the son was thrown and broke his leg. The neighbor came again to offer condolences – so sad your son broke his leg. Now, he cannot help you in the fields. The farmer shrugged and said: "who's to say what's good and what's bad?"

The next day, the army came through town, and enrolled all the young men and took them off to war. The farmer's son was not taken, because he had a broken leg. The farmer said to himself: "who's to say what's good and what's bad?"

The story is included because I like the point. In life, it is hard to say what is good and what is bad. In research it is not usually that hard, and in those situations where it is hard, keeping your objectives in mind helps a lot. If the objectives are clear, the researcher can figure out what is good and what is bad. Objectives are the touchstone of a project. Whenever there is doubt, return to the objectives and you will make the correct decision.

A good objective is one which states the marketing question clearly, and states clearly or implies strongly what will be done with the answer.

It is always better to state what will be done, but being human we often imply. If the implication is strong and clear, this works. But it is <u>always</u> better to spell it out.

- The objective is to learn which persuades more people to buy our brand, commercial A or B, so we can decide which to run, commercial A or B.
- The objective is to compare the current and new package designs, so we can determine whether to change the package, or not.
- The objective is to explore three new positionings, so we can test them against the current.
- The objective is to explore groups to which the brand appeals most and least, so we can learn which target to market to.

The first part of each statement can literally be phrased as a question. The reason the definition of a good objective refers to a question is that there always is one at the heart of the matter.

- Which persuades more people to buy our brand, commercial A or B? If we know, we can decide which to run.
- Which is preferred, the current or one of the new package designs? If we know, we can determine whether to change the package or not.
- How can we improve the new positionings? If known, we can move to the next step.
- Who are the people the brand appeals to most? Least? If known, we can better learn who to target.

It is important to <u>operationalize</u> your definitions. Make crystal clear what you mean. To operationalize means to specify the operations that define a concept. In the first and second examples above, it is clear that "more people" (or, a higher percent of people) is the key measure, but in the last two, the researcher will have to operationalize "improve" and "appeals to most" in concrete ways, and get agreement – <u>prior</u> to data collection!

Another way to define objectives is to list everything NOT included in the definition. That would get a bit tedious, but the point is that closely related elements are <u>not</u> the objective. What makes this simple idea confusing is that those other things will have objectives of their own – they are just not THE objective of the study.

For example, "Do you own a cat, or not?" is a question. It has an objective – to determine if the respondent owns a cat. Cat ownership may be very important in addressing the objective of the study, but the objective of this question is not likely to be the objective of the study. More likely, the objective will be something like "determine over time which brands of cat food cat owners are aware of, so we can measure whether or not our promotional efforts are increasing awareness" or "determine which concept is most appealing to cat owners, so we can develop the most appealing product".

Aside #8

<u>The Catornot</u>

When I began my marketing research career, I was trained in telephone interviewing, which was the method used most by the company I worked for. The rules were very strict, to ensure data quality. Interviewers had to stick to verbatims, and were not permitted to improvise, since that would destroy comparability across respondents. The company justifiably prided itself on quality data collection, and one of the rules of writing an objective, unbiased question is to always offer choices in a clear, unbiased fashion.

Once, I had to ask people if they owned a cat, and, of course, the question was worded "do you own a cat or not?" This created problems on the phone. One woman I spoke with asked me, "what's a catornot?" I slowly repeated the question, spacing every word as clearly as I could, "do   you   own *a cat OR not?" She replied (again), "what's a catornot?" I tried 2 or 3 more times, but never could get through. I was not permitted to say "meow" or "feline" or any other cat-word. I finally thanked her and gave up. For better or worse, most telephone interviewing is more flexible today.*

The element most likely to be confused with the objective is the statistical technique. This may be because the proper use of stats requires knowledge, or it may be because knowledgeable researchers are often enamored of new statistical techniques. There are some really powerful, elegant tools, and, just like the do-it-yourself home fixer lost in a Home Depot, professionals are often fascinated by them. Tools are fun and exciting!

And, of course, it is vital for a professional to know the tools of the trade. Any job is easier with the right tool. I can hammer a nail with a screwdriver, but it just doesn't work as well as a hammer. The screwdriver doesn't care, though. I can use the wrong statistical test or the wrong multivariate technique and the numbers will not complain at all – they will even provide results I can report and discuss. Using the wrong tool, or over-using one cool tool is an error that actually has a law named after it, like Murphy's Law or Sturgeon's Law. The first write-up of it I ever read refers to apparatus, but the notion certainly applies to statistical tools as well.

Aside #9

The Law of the Hammer

"This law, which is a genuinely universal one, states simply that if you give a little boy a hammer, he will find many things that need pounding. And so it is, at least to some extent, with the scientist – he somewhat too frequently finds many things that need to be recorded with the particular apparatus that he has in his laboratory. In this way the availability of the apparatus can determine the problem that is researched when, clearly, it should be the other way around. While no doubt a boy does find some items that really require pounding, many hammered items are satisfactory prior to a juvenile onslaught."

F.J. McGuigan, Experimental Psychology, Second Edition,
Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1968.

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Another characteristic of a good objective is that it refers to a factor in the marketing mix – and the mix is much deeper and wider than just the 4 Ps – product, price, place, promotion. It includes all the subcategories that relate to each of those main elements; the ones listed below, and more.

— Product	**— Distribution**
— Price	**— Positioning**
— Promotion	**— Competition**
— Package	**— Servicing**
— Advertising	**— Strategy(s)**

This thought concerning the marketing mix factor is a quick check. As you develop objectives, this should happen naturally, without force-fitting a marketing element into the objectives. But, if there is no marketing mix element in your objectives, you may still need research, but it is not MR by definition.

Sometimes a project is loaded down with too many objectives. It happens in all firms, but especially in those that do very little MR. Word gets out that a project is happening, and is being paid for by Marketing Group A. Marketing Group B would like this issue addressed – it will only add a couple questions, and Group B will pay the little incremental cost. Group C wants something else, as do groups D, E, and F. Sometimes there will be many, many objectives even with just one group in the act. It is wise to get as much as you can from your research, but you can overdo it.

How many objectives are too many? Hard to say. Like many, I prefer clean research – that addresses one or two main objectives and perhaps a few peripheral issues. Keeping research clean helps maintain focus. It is communicated to only those interested. It does not risk muddying the waters. In deciding how much is too much, I consider:

- concern about interview length or burden on the respondents,
- not adding anything that interferes with the highest priority objectives, and
- not adding anything that creates or is biased.

However, do not argue with someone who wants to add one objective which will add only a handful of questions and address a different issue at a lower cost than otherwise possible. At times, I have been the one suggesting the addition. On the other hand, when it is too much, I have successfully argued that the additions cannot be addressed in an unbiased manner because of the context. Also, I have used the rule that one can only ask respondents so much, and adding any more would be asking too much.

Chapter 8
People of Good Character

There are perils and pitfalls in the attempt to get to sound objectives. One is the nature of the end user – the client. In this writing, client = end user. When I worked as a MR Director, the client was internal – usually a brand manager. As a vendor, the client is usually external, an MR professional or Marketer.

How knowledgeable is he or she about using MR? If you can place the user on a continuum from "without a clue" to "research everything", you can get a feel for how you to deal with that person.

Without a Clue	**Perfect**	**Research Everything**

I have had the pleasure of working with all three of these types.

At one end, Mr. Research Everything wanted to conduct research to justify every decision. He was in my office all the time. His constant requests went from "clearly we need research." to "are you nuts?" For example, once he wanted to test television commercials to make sure they would be seen and were persuasive, etc. Good idea; no problem. But then he would also want to evaluate his brand's Hispanic radio ad airing in 4 markets. The cost of the <u>data</u> exceeded spending on the advertising – ridiculous. Often the question was legitimate, but out of normal proportion.

There are cost/benefit equations used to determine whether it is worth it to conduct a study or not. It is a difficult area. I have found it helpful to think about the cost of <u>not knowing</u>. What if the research is not completed? If spending $20,000,000 on national advertising, it makes sense to me that you would want to know whether people will see and remember your ad. Well worth $20,000-$25,000 for research.

In normal practice, there are levels of expectation. They may vary by industry, but in the areas familiar to me, they have been similar. If it is a $50,000 decision, do no research – just make the decision. If it is a $5,000,000 decision, you can justify $15,000 to $20,000. If it is a $50,000,000 decision, go up to $100,000 or $200,000, etc. If it could have a large impact on a billion dollar a year business, spend what you need to. What does it cost to NOT know?

So, when confronted with a request from Mr. Research Everything that could have a $300,000 impact, I developed a plan. First, explore past research for relevance, and if I could find anything that spoke to the issue, that would do it. Second, if that did not work, do nothing. If he returned and asked again, then I would proceed to step three, but that second step was total inaction. Many silly projects went away without comment.

“Do nothing” was not my normal mode of operation and was hard for me, but this situation demanded it. My normal mode was to move ASAP, given most marketers timing constraints.

Step three was to find the least expensive way to conduct research – 50 mall interviews, two local focus groups, etc. This would run about $7,500, but that was as low as was feasible. Sometimes that cost would kill the research, but if it did not, at least the expense was limited. It is hard to argue not to spend $7,500 on a $300,000 or $400,000 issue, but it is not typically done.

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The middle brand manager, Mr. Perfect, is relatively easy. The issues will be in making sure the research can address the issues – and sometimes the issues are quite challenging. That is another topic – the point is that this individual has a reasonable balance and only asks for projects when they will be impactful and appropriate.

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The other extreme – Mr. Without a Clue – is also hard to deal with, but not as hard as “Research Everything”. This person will leave you alone – you will never see him or her. Needed research on the brand will not be conducted, because he cannot see the benefit – often, the basic marketing question would not occur to him -- everything is “known” or is a matter of “judgment”. Since managers must use judgment, it was necessary to discuss from time to time how MR could help improve judgment.

The basic strategy was simple – stay in touch and aware. That way, when opportunity came, I could be proactive. Typically, this resulted in two or three projects a year. Mostly they were large projects, and mostly they led to immediate and clear decisions concerning the next year’s marketing plans – testing the key components of this year’s plan or of a proposed opportunity that might be included in next year’s. While some smaller opportunities were lost or ignored, this method of operation is not bad. At times, eventually, the client would initiate discussion of proposed projects, so being proactive became less and less necessary.

Chapter 9
Time won't let me.

Two other common barriers to establishing clear objectives – long lines of communication and time to communicate – are related. Taking the time to communicate delays research, and delays when information is available. For example, right now I am involved in a re-analysis of data to generate hypotheses.

- The proposal was written one month ago.
- The client wanted the project finished in two weeks.
- The proposal indicates the work will be completed last week
    – It would have been, IF approved within three working days.
- That was too fast for the client who needed it in two weeks.

No doubt that some of this three week delay was just due to the time it took him to communicate internally.

Long lines of communication not only take time, but also can distort the message. Suppose a brand group manager has an idea for research. He communicates to a brand manager, who then speaks to an MR manager, who speaks to an analyst who talks to a supplier. The research comes back in four weeks and the brand group manager is frustrated. It is close, but the information is not what he wanted.

There are solutions to this challenge, but only one that guarantees success. Cut out the middlemen, and let the supplier speak directly with the end user. This usually cannot happen because the requester is too busy – no time. The supplier would typically be thrilled to have the discussion, but won't be permitted to do so.

The only other solution is to make sure the end user reads a proposal outlining the project (discussed below). This rarely happens due to time constraints, but it is often the only reasonable solution. When it is really important and I am able, I have <u>forced</u> end users to read the proposal by sitting with them until they do, but this is not an option for a research supplier. Often, suppliers just have to ask what questions they can think of, and hope for the best.

When a client is very busy, and you are internal, it can create an interesting paradox. I once worked with a client who wanted the research completed quickly, but had no time to provide what was needed to get it done. So, he wanted it now and he was the roadblock. I had no easy solution in dealing with this person, because he would not return emails or voicemails, and was never in his office. Finally, I hit upon the solution of taking my work to his office and camping out. When he came in to grab what he needed for the next meeting, I would make him stop and provide input needed. Since our offices were close, this was practical, but this is not a solution that can always work. "Gentle harassment" via the user's assistant, email, or voicemail may be the most practical solutions.

Some clients are disorganized, and because they are disorganized they cannot find things and have no time. This is different than just being busy, but that will likely not be clear until they leave the position and someone else takes over. There is no solution to preventing misdirected research that a disorganized client orders. If the researcher listens carefully to others on the team, there may be clues that a project is not considered necessary by members of the team. If the context permits, this gives the researcher the right to ask stupid questions – such as why the research is needed from each person's point of view. Remember, the only stupid question is the one not asked.

III. Research Design

Chapter 10
Context:

Aside #10 – Wife or Mother-in-law?

> *As one trained to be an Experimental Psychologist, I read the history of Psychology, written in great detail by E.G. Boring. And he was. Later, I learned he was the first to publish the famous figure below. It is ambiguous. One can see either a young woman looking to her right or an old lady with her chin in her stole or coat.*

Every MR project occurs in a context, so it is important that everyone on the team has the same perspective.

I believe MR should speak with one voice, as clearly as possible. But it is not the only voice. Once I worked on a brand that came in a useful, attractive plastic container. The container was costly, and the brand manager was under a good deal of pressure to reduce cost of goods. He explored, and found a laminated cardboard container that would be less expensive and do the job. But he was worried that such a shift would impact consumer perception of the brand's quality. He decided to conduct research to see if the fear was real. The research justified his fear – the new packaging lowered perceived brand quality.

At that point, the MR job was done. It would not have been surprising, given the pressure, if the brand manager decided that the reduced quality perception was not <u>that</u>

bad, and opted for less expensive packaging. In this case, however, he did not. He did not run the risk of lowering the brand's perceived quality.

Around the same time, a colleague was testing four different print ads for another brand. Results came back, and the ad the advertising agency and the brand manager favored came in last – the worst ad tested. There were many discussions about the research design and quality, and much debate. Finally, the agency convinced the brand manager that because they could do more with the worst tested ad's concept, it was the one to use. The MR person was extremely frustrated – he wondered why they conducted the research at all – a good question.

There is no way to guarantee that all will be on the same page, but communicating is the best way to try to make sure. *You cannot over communicate!* "In person" is the best way, of course, but regardless of how, every project must have a written game plan. Given the nature of MR, occasionally the game plan is written while data are being collected, but that should be the exception rather than the rule.

The preferred format for a written game plan is straightforward, and similar to many I have seen with one important exception – a section describing the analysis.

Project Outline

Background

In the background section, repeat ("play back") the Marketing situation giving rise to the research in your own words. This verifies that you understand and gives the user a chance to clarify misunderstandings. The Background section is usually a paragraph or two, but in complex situations, it can become longer. It should be what it needs to be. Its length depends on the situation and how the research relates to it.

Objective

This section lists the main purpose of the research – what is being learned. If there are many objectives, they need to be prioritized. If there are many, many, many it would be good to re-think the need, or think about more than one project.

One other feature to add to the objective: what action will be taken? What decision is to be made that this research will help make? This is often not added, and Marketers even sometimes fight adding it, because it means they have to think through their options and talk about how they will decide, thus limiting their "flexibility". In this context, flexibility equates to ignoring the research and doing whatever I want.

Research Design

Typically, there is nothing after the Research Design topic heading. The Sample and Method sections that follow spell out the research design. But this section can be used to simplify, by stating an experimental design. "This is a test/control study with two test groups." "This is a conjoint study." "This is a continuous tracking study." Such statements communicate a lot, succinctly.

Sample

The sample section describes who is going to be interviewed in Ad Hoc research.

> Women, 18 to 55 who live in a free-standing dwelling and own it, singly or with a spouse.
>
> Anyone who has purchased a new car in the past year.
>
> Men over 50 who love baseball.
>
> People who have high cholesterol and are being treated by a physician.

Sometimes, the study will be Ad Hoc, but will involve the analysis of syndicated data. When this is the case, the sample section can be used to specify the database.

> All retail dollar sales and distribution percentages in Food Stores in Buffalo, NY, monthly for the past year, by brand.
>
> All dispensed New Prescriptions for the past 3 years by month for the Antibiotics category.

Method

The method section describes what will be done with the sample. Typically, with respondents, it includes a mention of how they will be interviewed, and what some of the questions will be. If they are split into different groups, the differences in questions to be asked of each group will be described, etc.

What are you going to do with these respondents? The more specific you can be, the better you communicate. You could be really specific and attach a questionnaire to the plan, but if you are in the design/discussion stage, a number of people will have input, and creating a questionnaire is a lot of work, so it is usually better to wait, and get more input from others after they read the plan.

If the project is an analysis of syndicated data or already-collected data, you specify the steps you will take in the analysis. For example: 1. run a correlation between the weekly unit sales and weekly brand awareness; 2. repeat, staggering the timeframes by one week; 3. by two weeks….etc.

Materials
This refers to things the MR needs to get the job done, but can't provide themselves. Usually, these are the stimuli – the products, ads, or concepts to be tested. The special mailers the manufacturer must provide.

Analysis

The analysis section is often not seen in proposals, though I have never understood why. In many ways, it is the most important section. As Eric Marder says, "Analyze your data before you have them."

In this section, describe how what is done in the Method section will be used to address the objectives. The analysis must be thought through when the study is designed, or it may not be possible to address the objective. (Kinda important, don'tcha think?) This is also the place to spell out the decision rules, if judgmental rules were created to address the key objectives. It is also a good place to point out any research assumptions or limitations.

Aside #11

The company had completed a huge, expensive study (sometimes referred to as "define the world" studies). Cost was $250,000+. A friend called me to ask for help with the analysis. They had tons of data concerning how consumers used all four types of products in their main product category. He wanted to know what they could do with it, what it meant.

I was stunned. What were your objectives, I asked. Why did you do the research? He told me it was because they did this research every two to two-and-a-half years. I gave them what I could, in terms of hunting for what the results implied for their marketing efforts, but I was shooting in the dark. It is always best to be clear upfront about what you are after.

The Analysis section is also the place to list any decision rules that will be followed, and to describe them. So, referring back the example about "preference to current", it was written in this section, prior to beginning the research.

Costs and Timing

Timing is always ASAP – As Soon As Possible. I used to ask if people wanted topline, but stopped doing that and just plan to provide it. I never had anyone say "no, I'll wait for the final results; don't give me topline." When the users are in a real hurry, I always rephrase their question, which is "can I have it by ______?" The correct question is "what can I have by ___________?"

Cost is cost. If it is part of the plan, the cost is cited here. If it is a proposal, provide several options (different base sizes, deliverables, etc.) and offer different budget levels. This gives the end users options, and opens discussion of possibilities that may prove helpful.

As a result of specifying decision rules, expectation is set. We expect one concept to be preferred to current, one ad to be better than the rest, one purchase intent score to be higher. That may not happen. I participated in two studies to name new cars. In the first, one of the 12 names tested was a clear winner, and that was the name selected. In the second, the top three names were positive, and similar by every measure. The recommendation was to use the one with the highest numbers, even though the three were not really different. I made that recommendation because I think the MR should speak with a clear voice to the Marketers. The advertising agency was convinced that more could be done to appeal with the third highest, so that name was selected instead. That was understandable and reasonable.

When a new line extension was launched, MR did a volume projection to help set the goal for the first year sales. With this knowledge, the goal was set. Initial sales, the first two or three months, were much higher than expected, so the first year goal was raised in the midst of this euphoria. The product sold almost exactly what was predicted. It was considered a failure. Expectation is very important. Just ask Wall Street.

More About Sampling

Chapter 11
E pluribus unum

My understanding of sampling is simplistic – get a big enough group that represents the population of interest. There are two main factors to take into account: quality and quantity.

When I first started writing this chapter, I was spewing facts – the science of sampling. But this book is about the art, not the science. So, if you want to learn the science of sampling, find a "normal" MR text, or a book on sampling. You will only find as much of that information here as needed to talk about the art.

<u>Quality</u>
Quality refers to the fact that the sample must be representative of the population, whatever it is. The biggest initial problem (an art, as it turns out) is defining the "population of interest". Suppose you wanted to interview people about yogurt. Fine.

Do you want to know how the world thinks about yogurt? Or, how U.S. public thinks about yogurt? Or, do you want to know how the <u>adult</u> U.S. public thinks about yogurt? Or, the adult U.S. public that buys yogurt? Or (similar but different), the adult U.S. population that <u>eats</u> yogurt? What do you mean by "buy"? Ever in their lives? My 85 year old mother-in-law bought yogurt once and did not like it. She never bought it again. Does she qualify as a yogurt buyer?

It can get worse. What is yogurt? Any yogurt product? Only plain yogurt? Only fruit and yogurt? Only frozen yogurt?

The answer to all of those questions is the same:

<u>It depends on the objectives of the research.</u>

Companies that do a lot of research in a category have usually answered these questions long ago, and the current Marketing Researchers are just sticking with the decisions made. We want U.S. yogurt users 18 to 65 years old who typically eat yogurt at least three times a month and who determine the brand/flavor purchased, whether they make the purchase themselves or not. Or, sometimes when women are the primary users and purchasers, the sample will be limited to <u>female</u> U.S. yogurt users 18 to 65 years old who typically eat yogurt at least three times a month and who determine the brand/flavor purchased, whether they make the purchase themselves or not.

One other interesting phenomenon can happen when a group of people try to determine the qualities a sample should have – determining the population of interest. There is a tendency to "overdefine". One can specify a sample to oblivion.

Suppose, for example, we kept going with the yogurt users.

Female U.S. yogurt users 18 to 65 years old who typically eat yogurt at least three times a month and who determine the brand/flavor purchased, whether they make the purchase themselves or not.

- Three is too little – make it 10+.

- All regular yogurt is too much – make it only yogurt with fruit.

- Oh. They can't add the fruit themselves. Make it prepackaged yogurt with fruit.

- Who cares about non-buyers? Make it only users who also buy.

- Who cares about old people? Make the upper age 45.

- We can't get our product in good distribution in rural areas. Make sure they live in one of the top 50 U.S. cities.

So, we would then have:

Female U.S. prepackaged yogurt with fruit eaters 18 to 45 living in one of the top 50 U.S. markets who also purchase their own prepackaged yogurt with fruit and who eat prepackaged yogurt with fruit 10 times a month or more.

You can see why Marketers love acronyms. After typing "prepackaged yogurt with fruit" three times, I was tempted to make it read PYWF. <u>Avoid</u> that tendency. Make life easier on the reader.

All of the changes may or may not be reasonable, based on the objectives, but there are consequences to narrowing the definition of the sample. The most obvious is that you are now speaking with members of a much smaller group of consumers. ("Narrowcasting", as opposed to "broadcasting".)

I have never worked on yogurt, but let's say the overall incidence of "female U.S. yogurt users 18 to 65 years old who typically eat yogurt at least three times a month and who determine the brand/flavor purchased, whether they make the purchase themselves or not" is 20%. When the researchers go out to find such people, it will not be that difficult.

If the 20% were accurate, what happens if the definition changes to "female U.S. prepackaged yogurt with fruit eaters 18 to 45 living in one of the top 50 U.S. markets who also purchase their own prepackaged yogurt with fruit and who eat prepackaged yogurt with fruit 10 times a month or more". The incidence does not go up. If about 75% of the population live in the top 50 markets, we are at 15% (75% of 20%) just based on that. The change to 10 times a month and the one to limit the top age will also drop incidence.

All Marketing Researchers should know:

> when hunting randomly, the lower the incidence, the higher the cost;
> at a certain point, the lower the incidence, the greater the tendency to cheat.

Cheat? There is cheating?!! If you are running a shopping mall interview service, and it is Wednesday, and you are told that you MUST finish interviewing 30 people at a 5% incidence by Friday, you know it is impossible. But you MUST.

Sometimes, we are our own worst enemy.

Aside #12

> <u>*Livers, Not Livers*</u>
> *Once, we needed to interview people with impaired livers –the lowest incidence group I have ever tried to find. We had four cells of 150 each in the study, so the goal was 600 people with impaired livers, in person (we had to show them something). Only problem was, most people with impaired livers are dead. Hard to interview them. I violated one of the "good research" rules – randomize to the cells, because I was worried that we would never get to 600. Normally, the first person in the door would go to Cell 1, the second to Cell 2, third to Cell 3, fourth to Cell 4, fifth to Cell 1, sixth to Cell 2, etc.*
>
> *We put everyone in the first two cells first, randomly assigned. As it turned out, this was a good move. In four months of trying, we found 150 total, and had 75 in each of two cells (instead of about 38) in each of four cells. Sometimes, you just do what you can. At least we could compare one of the concepts to our "control concept". Deciding not to randomize to four cells was "art", not science. The fact that we failed so badly added confidence that those we interviewed did really have impaired livers.*

Incidentally, dealing with a <u>very</u> low incidences can be handled a number of ways. You don't always have to pay a lot. Sometimes a panel has a significant number already available, so you don't have to hunt – you just have to be sure the panel is representative. If the need to interview this type of person happens all the time, you can start to "bank" them, either by asking a large panel one or two questions to determine if they fit, or by collecting them over time as you do other research with representative samples. And, of course, you can advertise, which is what the clinical researchers do.

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Practically, my perception of the quality of a sample runs along a continuum rather than being absolute.

Perfectly Representative -- **Convenience**

The only organization of which I'm aware that gets a true representative sample of the U. S. population – the highest level of quality – is the U. S. government. That is the only organization I know of that will spend $500,000 for a study most would do for $50,000.

If you randomly select 300 people to be interviewed from 250 million adult citizens, to make your sample representative in quality you <u>must</u> interview those 300. There are many, many reasons why this is impossible, even for the government. Sometimes, a person has died. Sometimes, they can't be contacted because of illness, natural disaster, travel, etc., etc., etc. Sometimes they refuse, and you can't force them. There are rules to let you replace these people, but making the multiple, multiple attempts and administering the strict replacement rules adds significantly to the cost. If you do all this, your sample is of the highest quality – truly as representative as possible.

The next level down is MR representivity. This varies in quality by the method used, but mail and phone may be the closest things to "true". Online is great, fast, and less expensive, but there is a concern with missing people who are not online, and with being certain that the person interviewed is who you think he/she is. In the U.S., nearly every household has a phone and an address. You still have concerns about nonresponse error – are the people who qualify but won't talk to us the same as those who qualify and will? But, you get good geographic and demographic representation.

The next level, used for in-person interviewing, is "generalizable". Obviously, if you are going to shopping malls or central locations you are not covering the whole nation. We try for geographic disparity – three or more cities, for example, but we are missing a lot. Sometimes, that is all the budget can stand, though. So, we try to make sure the sample at least looks demographically unbiased, though it is a "quota sample", not a true representative sample.

The lowest level of quality is the convenience sample. This can be really low quality – walk up and down the hall and ask co-workers what they think. Ask your grandmother – "granny surveys". Most qualitative research is a step or two above this – we typically go to two or three geographic locations, at least. Oddly, I have had clients try to add cities to make focus groups or one-on-ones representative, which is impossible. Not limiting yourself to one location is smart, but do not fool yourself into thinking your sample is representative. The sample is still a convenience sample, which is why qualitative research reports carry a caution that the research is not based on a large representative sample.

Quantity

Quantity boils down to math. The "Science of Sampling" book will tell you how to do the calculations. The big problem is the "art part", again. To do the math, you have to know what you are looking for FIRST.

Let's say you want to learn if Ad A differs significantly from Ad B, and you plan to interview two groups of the same types of people (yogurt eaters, perhaps), randomly assigning half to each group. A knowledgeable statistician will ask you "what size difference do you want to be able to detect as statistically significant?" "At what confidence level?" Most normal people, including many Marketing Researchers, answer with "huh?" If you want to know what those questions mean, go "science" and hit the stat books.

Practically, it's OK though, because in most quantitative MR the quantity question boils down to "how many can you afford?" Mostly, it is "the more, the merrier" – you want the biggest sample you can get. And you have a limited budget. Q.E.D.

If you want to save money for your company, you flip the question – what is the lowest sample size you can get away with? Any Marketing Researcher who has been around a while has answered this question for him or herself. For me, the magic number is N = 150. Why? Well, it is large enough that you can conceivably examine splits in the sample, depending on the size of the splits. It is a nice round base size that gets the sampling error to below +/- 10% -- about +/-8% in the worst case situation.

Have I violated N = 150? Sure, when budget did not permit. Especially when I interview doctors (which is expensive – you have to pay them a bunch), I have gone down to 100 or even 75 in a group. It was all we could afford, and better than not doing research. But go with 150 per cell if at all possible.

More About Methods

Chapter 12
Half the fun is getting there.

How do you pick the method you are going to use to contact respondents? Carefully. You want the least expensive method that will meet the objectives. Too often, we "knee jerk" the selection of a method based on what we are comfortable with or have used. For example, online has a number of advantages, including speed. But what if you are in the odd situation where you don't need speed? Or, what if your product or category has a significant base in the lower socioeconomic classes. Online will give you fast, but may eliminate people you most want to interview. Mail or phone may work better.

Thoughts on the selection of the method wander into the science as well as the art. This can't be helped. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. You can ask a series of questions, and these will lead you to the best method. What quality sample do you need? What is the budget? What is the timing? Regular mail is nearly always the least expensive method, but it is also the slowest. Marketers rarely have the time. Be sure to ask questions, though. Imagine being able to conduct the research for half the price via a mail panel, but using online because no one thought to ask if the Marketer could live with 12 weeks instead of three.

<u>Phone</u> is fast, more representative, reliable. You can ask unaided questions easily and ask "what else" until the respondent is nauseous. You can probe, and pick up a lot of qualitative data while conducting quantitative research. Phone is also relatively expensive. It has limits, too. It is hard to go more than 20-30 minutes, though people have. I worry about sample quality no matter what, but I especially wonder about people who stay on the phone for more than 20 minutes to finish an interview with a stranger. Are these normal people?

<u>Mail</u> is inexpensive, reliable, and representative. It can handle incredible lengths, done correctly. But it is slow, and we are mostly in a hurry. You can't probe. And, like online, you are never really sure who completes the interview.

<u>Online</u> is fast, cheap, accurate – they say. I once hired an analyst right out of college, a 22 year old single man, who told me he made a nice little extra income doing online surveys. He would be a female head of household, a 60+ single man (or woman) living alone, the mother of a preschooler – whatever the qualifications required. He sort of tainted my view of online. In general, it works fine – but it will be a long time before I am convinced that there is not an upscale bias in online surveys.

But don't get me wrong – in <u>every</u> survey I think there is some small percentage (2% or so) who are just messing around, and not taking the task seriously.

Aside #13

<u>How Old?</u>

> *I often wondered what would happen if you asked people for their exact age at the start and at the end of a phone survey that lasted at least 15 minutes. At one point, with a client's permission, I got the chance to find out. Of over 300 people, 6% changed ages in the 15-20 minutes. Fortunately, 4% stayed within a year – it was as if they forgot a recent birthday, or counted it too soon. The other 2% shifted a lot more. A few changed more than 30 years. So, some few respondents are likely "funnin' with us", regardless of the method. You just have to know what you are looking at.*

<u>In-person</u> quantitative is interesting. You can probe, administer very complex tasks, get people to taste and smell things, etc. It can be surprisingly fast, by going to many, many locations. Usually, it is shopping mall intercepts. Sometimes, if qualified respondents are hard to find, it is phone around and "pre-recruit".

Once, there was in-home. Very expensive to do today, as you might imagine. I have not seen an in-home interview in over 15 years, so my guess it that it is rare today, or falls into the "anthropological" MR area. The shopping mall suffices for most, but (as mentioned) beware of making the constraints so hard as to be impossible without cheating. You will still get data.

There are also tricks to make questioning smoother, and there are many combinations of methods. Being clever at creating tasks that get respondents to reveal how they think can be fun and interesting. Beyond the scope of this little book, though.

A Digression on Quality in General

Chapter 13
Zen and the Art of Marketing Research

We mentioned quality as one aspect of sampling, and whether a sample is representative is definitely a quality concern. But there are a host of quality concerns in the conduct of any MR project. Remember Sturgeon's Law?

When I train, I tell new project managers that there are thousands of things that make up every research project. Some can be fixed if they go wrong, and some can't. Make sure nothing goes wrong, but pay more attention to the things that can't be fixed.

<u>Ask</u> vendors what quality controls are in place. How do you know the interviews were really conducted? How does your vendor know? There are many quality controls in data collection and data tabulation that have been developed over the years to ensure data accuracy. These are very important in evaluating the end product. If you can, go see the vendor in their place of business. If interviewing is phone or in-person, go see it. If you can't, and it is possible, have interviewers tape some interviews. Any competent vendor will be happy to do this, thought they may have to charge you a minor fee to cover the added cost.

Aside #14 -- Dishonesty

> *Once upon a time, I heard the tale of a MR Director who had a heart attack and died. Someone needed to take over, and so a new acting Director stepped in. Everything looked kosher, except there was one vendor the new Director could not contact. After investigating, he learned that the old Director had set up a dummy company and awarded it projects. He wrote fake reports and sent them to himself. He paid himself. Anyone who has written analyses for a year or two could do that. When you can, go see the interviewing; stay involved!*

With respect to tabulation, there is one important planning detail. If you want data provided a certain way, with a certain set of cross-tabs (i.e., a banner) follow this advice:

Always put data tabulation requests in writing.

If possible, include a lot of redundancy. Include examples. Include anything you can think of to add clarity. Remember, you can't overcommunicate. It STILL may not be what you want, but you have increase the odds tremendously. The programmers usually appreciate the fact that you are clear, and they don't have to come back with 20 questions. Or re-do it all.

There are other quality concerns in tabulating data. Does the project director do a desk check of the data tables? Do the data add? What are the base sizes? Is the base described on Table A exactly the same as the base with the same description on Table F?

When you add Men + Women, do you get Total? If not, why not? If you add the bases on the four Age subgroups, do you get the Total? If not, why not? Etc., etc., etc.

Finally, there is one other little thing you can check.

Aside #15

<u>*Logic*</u>

By nature, I am a lousy proofreader and I am not a nit picker. Years in MR have obliterated this nature, but, early on, I struggled. Finally, there came a day when I "got it" and was bound and determined to make sure everything I did was correct.

We were working for a client with very odd and strict rules. We would get data tables and then recast the data into the format they demanded, and have them typed. (There were things called "typing pools" and "secretaries" back in those ancient times.)

I prepared a particularly important set of data and had it typed. Determined to be accurate, I made sure everything added correctly, every which way. I proofed the table, and then proofed it again. And again. I then proudly handed it to my boss, who took one look at it and said "it's wrong."

I assured her it had to be right. Everything added. It matched the computer output exactly, and the format was precisely as specified by the client. She pointed to three numbers. "This plus this should be bigger than this, but it is not. It is not logical."

Oh. You mean the data have to be logical, too? I added a new box to my checklist. Now, I LOOK at the data, too.

It is easy to get lost in the trees, and forget there is a forest.

As a confirmed curmudgeon, I get the impression MR people who hire vendors are so busy today that they have no time to ask about quality controls. Fortunately, most vendors are honest, and will knock themselves out to provide a quality product, so maybe this is OK. But I would ask, check, visit, etc., to the extent time permits. As Ronald Reagan said, "trust, but confirm".

IV. Analysis

Chapter 14
When you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.

> **Focus on the objectives.**
> **Plan ahead.**

There. Now you know the secrets to writing a good analysis.

The analysis addresses the objectives. If it does not, when do you? If you have described the analysis in the proposal, do it. It's as simple as that.

We generate a lot of data. Any given study can have 400-500 pages of data tables, two or three times, depending on the number of cross-tabs created. You could analyze one set forever. So know where you are going, or you will get lost.

I confess – I have spent many hours analyzing subgroups based on product usage, attitudes, or age, etc., because they were there. Sometimes, you want to do that because one objective is to explore. But often, if there is no hypothesis and no objective it relates to. It's a waste of time.

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Tools of the analyst: nights and weekends. When I started writing analyses, "nights and weekends" had a definite place in the list of tools. The rest included things like the ability to do stat tests, and various implements like calculator, ruler, scissors, etc. Most things on that list are not needed today, except a computer, nights, and weekends.

Few people who have not had to write an analysis understand how time-consuming it is, and wonder why it takes so long. I know of no way to tell them, but wish I could. I was once asked why a write-up of a fairly large study would take two weeks. The person asking was a very bright Marketer who knew when the data would be available and honestly did not understand why writing it up would take so long.

I answered as honestly as I could – it takes time to look at responses to 100 questions, format the data so it can be interpreted by anyone, and it was not the only thing on my plate. I did not mention the statistical aspects, many of which could not occur until all data collection ended.

Chapter 15
Figures lie and liars figger.

It is not hard to slant the meaning of numbers, which is why the "Figures lie and liars figger" saying came to mind. It is part of the reason "seeking the Truth" can be rough. As a simple example, suppose the numbers shown below are obtained by asking consumers if they like a new advertisement or not.

Table 1. Do you like this ad or not?

	#	%
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%

Based on this table, one can honestly report:

- 70% of consumers like the ad.
- 70% of consumers indicate that they like the ad.
- the majority like the ad.
- a strong majority like the ad.
- more than twice as many liked the ad as did not like it.

- nearly a third of consumers do not like the ad.
- nearly a third indicate they do not like the ad.
- a minority does not like the ad.
- a sizable minority does not like the ad.

- the sample size for those answering the question "do you like this ad or not?" is too low to draw any conclusions.

Of course, just like in many multiple choice questions, the longest option is the most accurate. Based on 10 people, it is hard to determine anything.

Aside #16

Even a low base size would not stop a lot of researchers, eager to please. I have seen focus groups reported in charts and graphs, and qualitative one-on-ones reported the same way. The researchers who produce these abominations carefully never show base sizes, so that no one looking at a chart or graph from the report can tell that 8 people are being analyzed to infinity and beyond. The practice is right up there with having those in a focus group press buttons, and showing their responses graphically immediately. No doubt statistically valid – if you were uncertain whether the "true number" was between 10% and 90%.

Base size can function oddly at the other extreme, too. Once there was a test to determine which method of promotion was best, having physicians called on by Sales Force A or by Sales Force B. This happened to occur after a merger, so the two pharmaceutical sales forces represented two formerly different companies. The test ran for six months, and showed that Sales Force A generated a significantly higher share for the product than did Sales Force B, at the 95% Confidence Level. Since the MR person was from the "A" company, she made much of this, running through the halls yelling about how "their" sales force beat "the other one".

Only problem was with the numbers. Sales Force A product share was 11%; the Sales Force B product share was 10.2.% -- less than one percentage point. The base was over 13,000 in each group. Almost any difference would have been "statistically significant at the 95% Confidence Level". Large base sizes act like a giant magnifying glass, making very small differences seem large (and significant). If you did not know that, the 0.8 percentage point difference would seem worth yelling about. Statistical significance does not equal substantive significance! Incidentally, the excited person was the head of the MR Department, demonstrating as a side note that even knowledgeable practitioners can be remarkably naïve, statistically. Common sense has a role to play, too.

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If you own a tool, there is a temptation to make the problem fit the tool. Remember the Law of the Hammer? Statistical testing is a tool, and must be interpreted. There is another, older, way to say it.

Aside #17 Procrustes

Procrustes was a monster in Greek mythology who had a strong desire for having things orderly. He lived by the side of a highway, and he would occasionally grab people who came by and put them in his bed. They had to fit exactly. If they were too tall, he cut off their legs until they fit exactly. If they were too short, he put them on a rack or pounded them with a hammer until they fit. He got his, though. The hero Theseus killed him.

Bullfinch's Mythology
Doubleday and Company, USA, 1968.

Chapter 16
Rules from The Art.

As I review what is written, I tried to pull out the most important elements of the Art.

A lot of what composes the art is not new. Where possible, I illustrate the point with Aesop's fables, that are about 25 centuries old.

<u>1. Be honest. Seek and tell the truth.</u>

Being honest in your judgment can be fun and exciting, when the results are positive and the news is good. That is why I tended to focus on the other side of the coin, when the results are negative, and no one will be happy you "rained on the parade". Hopefully, you work in an environment where you are allowed to be honest.

Aside #18

> *<u>Mercury and the Woodman</u>*
> *An honest, hard-working woodman was felling a tree on the bank of a deep river. In some way, his hand slipped and his ax fell into the water and immediately sank to the bottom. Being a poor man, who could ill afford to lose the tool by which he earned his livelihood he sat down and lamented his loss most bitterly.*
>
> *But Mercury, whose river it was, suddenly appeared on the scene. When he had learned of the woodman's misfortune, he offered to do what he could to help. Diving into the deep swift-flowing stream, he brought up an ax made of solid gold.*
>
> *"Could this be yours?" he asked.*
> *"Alas, I wish it were," replied the woodman sadly.*
>
> *Again Mercury dived into the icy-cold water and this time brought up an ax made of solid silver. But again the woodman shook his head and denied that the tool belonged to him. Mercury dived a third time and produced the identical ax which the man had lost.*
>
> *Naturally the owner was delighted to see his trusty ax once more, and so was Mercury.*
>
> *"You are an honest and a good man", said the messenger of the gods. "I want you to take the golden and the silver ax as a reward for telling me the truth."*
>
> *Thanking his benefactor, the woodman ran home to tell his wife of his good fortune. As the story spread, one of the neighbors rushed down to the same spot on the riverbank, threw his ax into the water, and began to moan and groan over his loss. Just as before, Mercury appeared, and learning what had occurred, dived into the water and fetched up a golden ax.*

"Is this the ax you lost, my friend?" he asked.

"Yes, yes, that's it," lied the man, greedily reaching for the golden ax in Mercury's hand. But just as he was about to grasp the ax of gold, Mercury said: "Not so fast, sir. You are lying, and to punish you for not being truthful, I am not only denying you this, but I am leaving your own ax at the bottom of the river."

The moral: Honesty is the best policy.

2. Know the context.

If MR is to speak clearly, it must speak in context. When you are in the context, everyone finds it easier to understand.

Aside #19

The Lion and the Bulls

A lion often prowled about a pasture where three bulls grazed together. He had tried without success to lure one or the other of them to the edge of the pasture. He had even attempted a direct attack, only to see them form a ring, so that from whatever direction he approached he was met by the horns of one of them.

Then a plan began to form in the lion's mind. Secretly he started spreading evil and slanderous reports of one bull against the other. The three bulls, distrustingly, began to avoid one another, and each withdrew to a different part of the pasture to graze. Of course, this was exactly what the lion wanted. One by one he fell upon the bulls, and so made easy prey of them all.

The moral: United we stand; divided we fall.

3. Plan.

Planning is key to much of the Art. In fact, just like you cannot overcommunicate, you can't overplan.

Aside #20

The Two Frogs

All summer long there had been no rain, and all the lakes and streams had dried up. Two frogs, looking for water, came upon a deep well. They sat down and argued as to whether they should dive in or not.

Said one frog: "My, but that water looks good down there! I think we should hop in without delay. Not only will we have plenty of good fresh water, but we'll have it all to ourselves."

"What you are saying may be true," said the second frog, "but suppose this well dries up too? Then where will we be – no water and no way of getting out either!"

The moral: Think twice before you leap!

4. Remember.

Since one of the questions you should answer is “do we have this already?” it is a good idea to take the 15 or 20 additional minutes to write abstracts as you move forward. Using them can help you determine whether you already have the answer or not. As abstracts accumulate, you will slowly and steadily become truly expert in the area.

Aside #21

The Hare and the Tortoise

A hare was continually poking fun at a tortoise because of the slowness of his pace. The tortoise tried not to be annoyed by the jeers of the hare, but one day in the presence of the other animals, he was goaded into challenging the hare to a foot race.

“Why, this is a joke,” said the hare. “You know that I can run circles around you.”

“Enough of your boasting,” said the tortoise. “Let’s get on with the race.”

So the course was set by the animals, and the fox was chosen as judge. He gave a sharp bark and the race was on. Almost before you could say “scat” the hare was out of sight. The tortoise plodded along at his usual unhurried pace.

After a time the hare stopped to wait for the tortoise to come along. He waited for a long, long time until he began to get sleepy. “I’ll just take a quick nap here in this soft grass, and then in the cool of the day I’ll finish the race.” So he lay down and closed his eyes.

Meanwhile, the tortoise plodded on. He passed the sleeping hare and was approaching the finish line when the hare awoke with a start. It was too late to save the race. Much ashamed, he crept away while all the animals at the finish line acclaimed the winner.

The moral: Slow and steady wins the race.

5. Pay attention to quality.

Aside #22 The Lioness

A great rivalry existed among the beasts of the forest over which could produce the largest litter. Some shamefacedly admitted having only two, while other boasted proudly of having a dozen.

At last the committee called upon the lioness.

"And to how many cubs do you give birth?" they asked the proud lioness.
"One, she replied sternly, "but that one is a lion."

The moral: Quality is more important than quantity

6. Be clever.

Aside #23

The Crow and the Pitcher

A crow, so thirsty that he could not even caw, came upon a pitcher which once had been full of water. But when he put is beak into the pitcher's mouth he found that only a little water was left in it. Strain and strive as he might he was not able to reach far enough down to get at it. He tried to break the pitcher, and then to overturn it, but his strength was not equal to the task.

Just as he was about to give up in despair a thought came to him. He picked up a pebble and dropped it into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher. One by one he kept dropping pebbles into the pitcher until the water mounted to the brim. Then perching himself upon the handle he drank and drank until his thirst was quenched.

The moral: Necessity is the mother of invention.

7. Get some guts.

To quote the immortal Stan Lee, 'Nuff said.

Aside #24

The Boy and the Nettle

A boy playing in the fields one day was stung in the hand by a nettle. Running home to his mother he cried: "See what the nasty weed did to me. I barely touched it when it buried its prickers in my hand."

"It was because you touched it lightly," replied the boy's mother, "that it stung you. The next time, dear son, that you play with a nettle, grasp it tightly, and it will do you no harm."

The moral: Do boldly what you do at all.

8. Be flexible.

Aside #25

The Oak and the Reed

A proud oak grew upon the bank of a stream. For a full hundred years it had withstood the buffeting of the winds, but one day there came a violent storm. The *great oak fell with a mighty crash into the swollen river and was carried down toward the sea.*

Later the oak tree came to rest on the shore where some reeds were growing. The tree was amazed to see the reeds standing upright.

"How ever did you manage to weather that terrible storm" he asked. "I have stood up against many a storm, but this one was too strong for me."
"That's just it," replied the reed. " All these years you have stubbornly pitted your great strength against the wind. You were too proud to yield a little. I, on the other hand, knowing my weakness, just bend and let the wind blow over me without trying to resist it. The harder the wind blows the more I humble myself, so here I am!"

The moral: It is better to bend than to break.

9. Use the right tool.

No moral to the story for this one. Just remember the Law of the Hammer.

10. Communicate.

It is true that you cannot overcommunicate. But be sure you are communicating what you think you are communicating. A sense of humor helps, too.

Aside #26

From Church Bulletins
Smile at someone who is hard to love. Say "hell" to someone who doesn't care much about you.

Don't let worry kill you off - let the Church help.

Miss Charlene Mason sang "I will not pass this way again," giving obvious pleasure to the congregation.

For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

The Rector will preach his farewell message after which the choir will sing "Break Forth into Joy."

Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on October 24 in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed, due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

Scouts are saving aluminum cans, bottles, and other items to be recycled. Proceeds will be used to cripple children.

The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hostility.

Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 P.M. - prayer and medication to follow.

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 PM. The Congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this little book will provide insights that are not normally available in the “Science of Marketing Research” texts, and I also hope that it will help improve the Marketing Research profession by providing a tool to show Marketers what MR could provide, if permitted.