

Listen to a market research consultant being interviewed about her job.

Optional exercise (The answers are at the bottom of the page).

Put the process that the consultant goes through with a new client into the correct order.

- a. I have to go back to the original proposal and analyse the results to see what corresponds with their objectives and to see if I can find anything they may not have thought of.
 - b. I then design a questionnaire.
 - c. I then speak to the data processing department about what the end tables should look like.
 - d. Once the final tables are ready I have to check them and organise a presentation.
 - e. Once the interviewers have been briefed, I send the client a schedule and then they get back to me with deadlines.
 - f. Together we decide on the methodology and the objectives of the research.
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Interviewer: How long have you been a Market Research Consultant?

Consultant: Well, I started straight after finishing university in 1997.

Interviewer: Did you study market research?

Consultant: Yeah, and it really helped me to get into the industry but I have to say that it's more important to get experience in different types of market research to find out exactly what you're interested in.

Interviewer: So what *are* you interested in?

Consultant: Well, at the moment I specialise in quantitative advertising research which means that I do two types of projects. Trackers, which are ongoing projects that look at trends or customer satisfaction over a long period of time. I then have to analyse the shifts in trends. The only problem with trackers is that it is very admin intensive and so takes up a lot of your time, but erm you do build up a good relationship with the client. I also do a couple of ad-hoc jobs which are much shorter projects.

Interviewer: What exactly do you mean by ad-hoc jobs?

Consultant: It's basically when companies need quick answers to their questions about their consumers' habits. They just ask for one questionnaire to be sent out for example so the time you spend on an ad-hoc project tends to be fairly short.

Interviewer: Which do you prefer, trackers or ad-hoc?

Consultant: I like doing both and in fact I need to do both at the same time to keep me sane. I need the variety.

Interviewer: So on a daily basis how much contact do you have with your clients?

Consultant: A lot, although it does depend on how live a project is?

Interviewer: What do you mean by 'live'?

Consultant: Some clients want a lot of data and so could be on the phone every other day wanting up-dates and new questionnaires.

Interviewer: Ok, so how exactly do you get the data they need?

Consultant: Well I'm in charge of designing the questionnaires, whether they be for the field department, which organises people to speak to people in the street, or the phones..., or we now do a lot of on-line questionnaires. Anyway, I then liaise with the operations department who book and brief interviewers about what they have to do.

Interviewer: Can you just explain what process you go through with a new client?

Consultant: Right, well erm together we decide on the methodology and the objectives of the research. I then design a questionnaire. Once the interviewers have been briefed, I send the client a schedule and then they get back to me with deadlines. I then speak to the data processing department about what the end tables should look like. Often the client will contact me for a 'Topline', which is a sample of the results after say three days of research. Once the final tables are ready I have to check them and organise a presentation. I have to go back to the original proposal and analyse the results to see what corresponds with their objectives and erm to see if I can find anything they may not have thought of.

Interviewer: Finally, what do you like and dislike about your job?

Consultant: As I said, variety is important and as for what I don't like, it has to be the table checking!

Answers: 1 f, 2 b, 3 e, 4 c, 5 d, 6 a

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