



UNTAPPED
INNOVATION
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SNAPSHOT

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Setting Up Research For Success

There is increasing pressure on brands to unearth new powerful insight with research that goes deeper, yet budget and time constraints present a challenge. Research methodologies are continually evolving to reveal deeper insight with greater agility, so how can clients best plan for success, avoid cutting corners on the planning, briefing and design stages of the research and get the best return on their research spend?

We have collaborated with highly experienced research and innovation expert, Heather Newton as well as Global Insights Lead for the Innovation C of E at Reckitt, Lucy Lindsley, to share our combined thoughts. Here are 5 steps we would like to share that reflect our thoughts on setting up your research for success:

Invest time upfront

Pulling together a brief can feel like a daunting task that's hard to start, but we all know that taking the time to get clear on a strategy upfront will prevent conflicting opinions later on, saving time and money. You can buy cutting edge hiking gear, but if you don't know your destination you can easily end up lost in the jungle.

Articulate your business question

In a recent Ipsos Mori report on 'The Role of Insights in the Data Era', former EVP, CMI Unilever, Stan Sthanunathan quotes "Insight functions have moved on from the 'what', i.e. focusing on tools and techniques to the 'so what', i.e. providing insights that provoke growth-driving actions."

However, I am still sometimes asked to 'run a couple of focus groups to learn about topic x', but we'll never get to the 'so what' if we don't start with the why and lead with a business question. In order to do this, we first need to articulate the business issue. This might be big picture or very specific, but it should feel ripe for a response. An example is shown below:

Business Issue	Business Question	Research Objective	Actions Enabled
Our previous launches have failed to deliver as expected, meaning we aren't meeting our growth targets. We think we've spotted a new opportunity, but can't risk another failure.	How can we determine whether we should go for opportunity X, and if so, how can we best ensure success?		

Plan to enable action

Before starting to capture what you would like to know (an easy list to write), consider what actions you want the research to enable. These should relate back to your business issue and question. E.G:

Business Issue	Business Question	Research Objective	Actions Enabled
Our previous launches have failed to deliver as expected, meaning we aren't meeting our growth targets. We think we've spotted a new opportunity, but can't risk another failure.	How can we determine whether we should go for opportunity X, and if so, how can we best ensure success?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence to decide whether or not to go for the opportunity Can make a compelling case for investment (combating internal nervousness) Opportunity and have stimulus / guardrails to shape our response



Bridge the gap with research objectives

Research is like catnip to insight, marketing, R&D and innovation teams, so you can quickly end up with a huge list of things everyone wants to explore in the research. But the more focused your objectives, the more focused your result. Your research objectives should act as the bridge between your business question and the actions you want the research to enable. Taking our example:

Business Issue	Business Question	Research Objective	Actions Enabled
Our previous launches have failed to deliver as expected, meaning we aren't meeting our growth targets. We think we've spotted a new opportunity, but can't risk another failure.	How can we determine whether we should go for opportunity X, and if so, how can we best ensure success?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify why previous launches have failed Uncover consumer needs and frustrations in the opportunity area Benchmark how existing brands and products are performing in this area Determine if / how our brands can play Estimate the size of the opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidence to decide whether or not to go for the opportunity Can make a compelling case for investment (combating internal nervousness) Opportunity and have stimulus / guardrails to shape our response

You will likely be sitting on a gold mine of research. In order to maximise the return on investment of existing research, take the time to review it and determine a) what you have already learned so you don't repeat anything and b) what your knowledge gaps are. We also call this asset mining.

Final stakeholder check-in

We find that the framework in steps 1-4 is useful to help clarify your own thinking, but it's also valuable as a prompt for discussion with stakeholders through the whole process. As a fifth step, it's a good idea to have a final check-in with them, especially since time may have lapsed and business objective may no longer be relevant or actions they planned to take may no longer be actionable!

However, beware of asking stakeholders if anything is missing, since you'll likely end up with a long list of builds that may not be core to addressing the business challenge. Invite input to help get a full picture of the business issue and sense-check whether answering the business question as articulated will really address the problem. Asking what success looks like to them is a useful prompt to identify any hidden expectations.

A great brief can evolve over time, but the end result should feel like a coherent whole with a central thread running through all elements. At this stage you will want to get your agency or research partners involved. Turn over to see how to jointly design the best research to deliver against these steps.

How To Get The Most Out Of Your Research Agency

With strong brief foundations in place that reflect clear business needs and where each research objective has an actionable outcome, let's now consider how a client team can get the most out of an agency or research partner.

Engaging and empowering an agency is an investment, but this can deliver a lot of value if the agency:

- 1 **is treated as a strategic, problem solving partner (not just a supplier to outsource delivery to)** and
- 2 **receives a brief that informs and inspires them, leaving space for iterative co-creation.**

As Lucy described in our webinar last month, **"It's all about value creation with the amount you have to spend."**

A brief is a dialogue

Committing your thoughts to paper is hugely valuable, but your brief doesn't have to be complete before you share it with your agency. Expect and plan for your brief to evolve through dialogue. Where you have trusted agencies, go to them early and talk through your emerging thinking, so you can tackle the business problem as partners. If you have done the robust upfront strategic thinking and stakeholder alignment we have previously described, some agencies are happy to work from a verbal brief or may even offer to write your brief for you. However this verbal briefing must not leave any room for false agency assumptions and to get the most from your agency, you should expect them to probe deeply into your own assumptions.

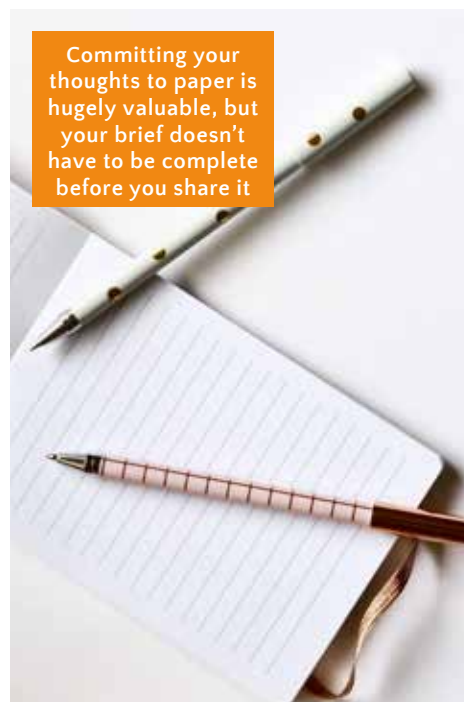
you don't need to know the how

Lucy talked about the challenges clients face keeping up with an ever-growing



plethora of new methodologies. "Gone are the days where you have a handful of techniques to choose from. You can create a jigsaw puzzle of solutions and look to agencies to make these suggestions to stretch your thinking." When briefing your agency, you aren't expected to place an order off a set research menu. Sometimes the most exciting briefs that an agency receives are the ones that at first glance

seem the most impossible or require a new approach. Of course, you may have thoughts on methodologies that you've seen work well against an objective in the past or your company may have certain benchmarks or gates to pass before an idea can move forwards, so it's important to state these. But you'll drive efficiency and grow your own expertise by looking to your agency to do the heavy lifting on introducing new techniques.



Committing your thoughts to paper is hugely valuable, but your brief doesn't have to be complete before you share it

Extracting value from existing research?

As a starting point after you have defined your research objectives, it often helps to have an external pair of eyes scour your existing and historical research summaries through the lens of your business question to mine it for valuable insight. You'll likely find that some of the research objectives have partly been answered. You can then revisit your research objectives to avoid any rework and build from your existing assets. Connections can often be made from a variety of insight, e.g. what's needed (human insight and pain points, future or cultural insight) vs. what's possible (technical or product insight). At Untapped, we call this "Asset Mining" and our clients find it delivers a huge return on their research investment.

In summary, in Lucy's words, **"Agencies should be part of the team. We should leverage their expertise to get the most out of this strategic partnership."**

As agencies, the onus is on us to fully understand the needs of each of our clients, offer and deliver research techniques with excellence that create value for the client and to support them as trusted partners.

If you would like to learn more about innovation from Untapped, please get in touch and check out our Innovation Gym brochure. **Sally Kemkers**



Andrex 3D Wave - How To Get A Great Idea To Market

Look out for the next instalment of our webinar series, where we uncover how to create A Product Of The Year with some of the Andrex 3-D Wave R&D team, Nuala Donnelly and Federico Pasquini





The best of what we've been listening to...



Female Founder World with Jasmine Garnsworthy
She Pivoted from Scientist to Startup Founder to Launch a

First-Of-Its-Kind Fertility Tracker
Dr. Amy Divaraniya is the CEO and Founder of Oova, a tech-led women's health business that measures multiple hormones through urine samples and provides personalized results and insights on a woman's fertility. She comes to entrepreneurship from a heavy science background and in this episode shares how she built up her business acumen, invented a medical product with a team of two and the challenges and joys of pivoting from science to startup life.



Dare to Lead with Brené Brown
Atomic Habits, Part 1 of 2 with James Clear
James Clear's Atomic Habits has sold more

than 5 million copies worldwide and been translated into more than 50 languages. This episode covers developing identity-based habits and how we can become the architects of those habits, not the victims of them. They also look at how our mindsets and our systems can set us up for success the importance of consistency over intensity when it comes to forming habits that last.



Wondery: The Next Big Idea
Loonshots: The Science of Generating Crazy Ideas with Safi Bahcall and Daniel Pink

What if the fates of careers, companies, even entire industries depend on nurturing crazy ideas? In "Loonshots," physicist turned biotech entrepreneur Safi Bahcall pulls back the curtain on history's greatest scientific, technological, and entrepreneurial breakthroughs, introducing us to a cast of colorful characters with much to teach us about how innovation really happens.

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At Untapped we are extremely lucky to have access to a diverse range of amazing women in STEM. As a result, we have chartered a podcast series dedicated to matching under-represented girls with a STEM role model of their choice.

The podcasts will be shared throughout the UK in order to ensure that student interviewers and listeners can hear engaging and informative advice, from inspirational women with a variety of careers in STEM.

How can you help?

We would love for you to help us to scale this podcast program and reach more girls, giving them the critical STEM role models they need, in either, or both, of these ways:

1. Sponsor a podcast
2. Suggest female STEM role models from your organisation to appear in the podcast interviews. Email izzy.fraser@untappedinnovation.com to sign up



Showing the boundless possibilities of a career in STEM

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