



# Advanced Moderation

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**Dimensions**  
Research & Marketing Consultancy

**Empowerment through knowledge**

# Training Objective



- ◆ Principles of moderation
- ◆ Moderator's responsibilities
  - Essentials of organising and executing a successful focus group
- ◆ Projective techniques
- ◆ Diagnostic techniques
- ◆ Who is a good moderator
- ◆ Group Management
  - Body Language
- ◆ Difference between large focus group, mini group, paired interview and in-depth interview.

# Principle of Moderation



- ◆ Moderation is an art that is acquired by practice.
- ◆ Some people are natural moderators and it comes to them without practice.
- ◆ People with following personality are likely to be better moderators:
  - Extroverts
  - Good listeners
  - Keen observers
  - People with high EQ
  - Informed/ Educated
  - Culturally aware
- ◆ The aim of moderation is to extract the required information from the respondent through any means.
- ◆ Any method or psychological technique can be used to achieve the aim of moderation as long as it is:
  - Ethically and socially acceptable
  - Not disrespectful towards the respondents.
- ◆ Moderation is a casual exercise aim at making the respondent relaxed. The language that is most comfortable for the respondent should be used.

# Moderator's responsibilities



- ◆ Read and understand the research objectives.
- ◆ Check and evaluate the respondent recruitment and selection criteria.
- ◆ Be present in the briefing of the recruiters.
- ◆ Make a note of the date, time and venue of group.
- ◆ Be present at the venue ½ an hour before the group starts.
- ◆ Speak to the client to gain extra insights into his research objectives before the group starts.
- ◆ Ask for the recruitment questionnaire from the recruiter/ supervisor and check the eligibility criteria.
- ◆ Check the audio and visual equipment. They should be working.
- ◆ Check if all the recorders have news audio cassettes and batteries.
- ◆ Cassettes should be labelled and all the information of the group should be on the labels.
- ◆ Record the information about the group in the beginning and play back and listen to it.
- ◆ Recording of the focus group should start after the group information you have recorded.
- ◆ Check if appropriate gifts are available and they are correct in numbers.
- ◆ Check that you have the discussion guide in the language that you are going to moderate in.

# Moderator's responsibilities



- ◆ Check that you have all the stimulus material that you have to show in the group.
- ◆ Start the focus group on time. If not then inform the respondents about the delay.
- ◆ Start with self introduction
- ◆ Inform estimated amount of time required to complete the discussion.
- ◆ Mention free airing of opinion and that there are no right or wrong answers.
- ◆ Every person has the right to his own opinion.
- ◆ Always ask respondents to introduce themselves to each other and share some personal information.
- ◆ Identify group leader in the introduction and mark him mentally. You will have to suppress him during the group and give others equal opportunity to speak.
- ◆ Keep the discussion guide in front of you, but don't read from it like a news caster.
- ◆ Keep track of time and try to complete sections within the timeframe allocated.
- ◆ Half way through the discussion evaluate if you have covered the objective of each section.
- ◆ Always ask 'why', but don't over do it!
- ◆ Don't forget to change the side of the cassette and don't re-record on side A again.

# Qualitative analysis techniques



- ◆ Projective Techniques: Allow researchers and decision-makers to go beyond people's surface cognitions or rational explanations for their attitudes or behaviour. There are several types of projective techniques.
- ◆ Personification: Requires respondents to convert a product, brand, or organization into a person with a full range of personality, psychographic, demographic, and behavioural dimensions. The results can be used as input in all types of strategic planning where a thorough understanding of image dimensions and drivers are important.
- ◆ Category Sculpting/ brand mapping: Explores the image dimensions as well as the relative strengths and weaknesses of competitors in a category by asking respondents to identify competitive brands as members of a family. Each position within the family is then explored for a full range of image dimensions and its relationship to other brands in the family.
- ◆ Thematic Appreciation Test (TAT)/ Picture Interpretation Technique: Are based on the interviewing procedures used in psychological research in which neutral or abstract visual stimuli are used as springboards for attributions for behaviour. They are used to help people describe thoughts and feelings that would not otherwise emerge.

# Qualitative analysis techniques



- ◆ Collages: Allow respondents to compose visual representations of their thoughts or feelings. This technique allow people to move beyond the boundaries of language to more accurately and completely communicate their opinions.
- ◆ Fantasy Excursions: Projects respondents into fantasy areas to help them explore their images, wants, and needs concerning products and services. This technique is particularly helpful in helping respondents to move beyond the every day explanations for their thoughts and feelings.
- ◆ Sensory Immersion: Is a tool in which respondents are engaged in exercises using each of their senses (sight, taste, smell, touch, and sound) to define and elaborate concepts or ideas. These characteristics are then projected into product or category specific descriptions. For example product tests.

# Projective techniques



## Word Association Test

There are a number of ways of using *word association* tests:

- ◆ A list of words or phrases can be presented in random order to respondents, who are requested to state or write the word or phrase that pops into their mind;
- ◆ Respondents are asked for what word or phrase comes to mind immediately upon hearing certain brand names;
- ◆ Similarly, respondents can be asked about slogans and what they suggest;
- ◆ Respondents are asked to describe an inanimate object or product by giving it "human characteristics" or associating descriptive adjectives with it.
- ◆ For example, a group of tourism professionals working on establishing a strategic marketing plan for their community were asked to come up with personality traits or "human characteristics" for the villages as well as the cities within their area:
  - ◆ Villages
    - ➔ Serene, Conservative , Quaint , Friendly , Accessible , Reliable
  - ◆ Cities
    - ➔ Brash , Rushed , Liberal , Modern , Cold
- ◆ Most of the tourism industry representatives came from the cities and had strongly argued that the urban areas had historically been neglected in promotional campaigns. As a result of this and other exercises, they came to the realization that the rural areas were a strong feature of the overall attractiveness of the destination and needed to be featured as key elements in any marketing campaign.

# Projective techniques



## Sentence Completion Test

- ◆ In the *sentence completion* method, respondents are given incomplete sentences and asked to complete the thought. These sentences are usually in the third person and tend to be somewhat ambiguous. For example, the following sentences would provide striking differences in how they were completed depending on the personality of the respondent:
  - "A beach vacation is....."
  - "Taking a holiday in the mountains is...."
  - "Golfing is for..."
  - "The average person considers skiing....."
  - "People who visit museums are....."
- ◆ Generally speaking, sentence completion tests are easier to interpret since the answers provided will be more detailed than in a word association test. However, their intent is also more obvious to the respondent, and could possibly result in less honest replies.
- ◆ A variant of this method is the story completion test. A story in words or pictures is given to the respondent who is then asked to complete it in his/her own words.

# Projective techniques



## Thematic Apperception Test (TAT)

- ◆ In the *Thematic Apperception Test* (TAT), the respondents are shown one or more pictures and asked to describe what is happening, what dialogue might be carried on between characters and/or how the "story" might continue. For this reason, TAT is also known as the picture interpretation technique.
- ◆ Although the picture, illustration, drawing or cartoon that is used must be interesting enough to encourage discussion, it should be vague enough not to immediately give away what the project is about.
- ◆ TAT can be used in a variety of ways, from eliciting qualities associated with different products to perceptions about the kind of people that might use certain products or services.
- ◆ For instance, respondents were shown a schematic logo and asked what type of destination would have such a logo, and what a visitor might expect to find. Some of the comments were:
  - ◆ That makes me think of the garden.
  - ◆ It is the city in the country, very much so.
  - ◆ It looks like New York, with the Empire State Building right there.
  - ◆ Calming, relaxing. There's a tree there so you can see the country-side and you've got the background with the city and the buildings, so it's a regional focus.

# Projective techniques



## Third-Person Technique

- ♦ The *third-person technique*, more than any other projective technique, is used to elicit deep seated feelings and opinions held by respondents, that might be perceived as reflecting negatively upon the individual. For instance, when asked why they might choose to go on an Alaskan cruise, the response might be because of the quality of the scenery, the opportunity to meet interesting people and learn about a different culture. But when the same question is asked as to why a neighbour might go on such a cruise, the response could very well be because of 'brag appeal' or to show off.
- ♦ By providing respondents with the opportunity to talk about someone else, such as a neighbour, a relative or a friend, they can talk freely about attitudes that they would not necessarily admit to holding themselves.
- ♦ The third-person technique can be rendered more dynamic by incorporating role playing or rehearsal. In this case, the respondent is asked to act out the behaviour or express the feelings of the third person. Particularly when conducting research with children, this approach can prove to be very helpful since they "know" how others would act but cannot necessarily express it in words.



# Projective techniques



## Chinese Whisper

- ◆ Each respondent says an attribute, whispers to person adjacent
- ◆ Respondents are then asked to repeat what they said and explain the reason why.
- ◆ Evaluate final statement, and reasons for the same changing in between.



# Projective techniques



## World view/ Planet description

- ◆ What will the world be like, the people, atmosphere, smell, feel, see etc.

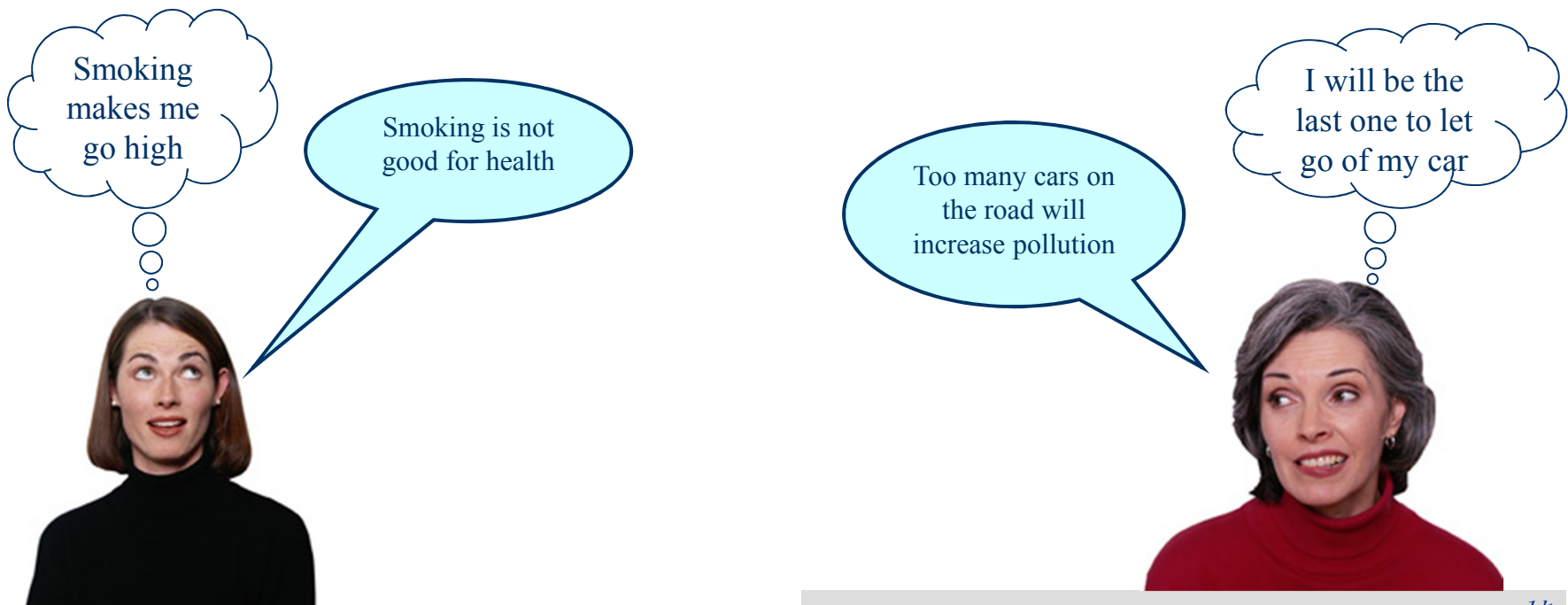


# Projective techniques



## Bubble Technique

- ◆ Respondents are given the picture below and asked to create a discussion between the two characters on the topic at hand. This brings out deep rooted feelings that respondent does not feel comfortable saying in front of others.
- ◆ This helps in bringing out individual feelings on sensitive topics.



# Projective techniques



## Crystal Gazing

- ◆ Respondent is asked to imagine looking into a crystal and asked to describe future as he/she sees it.
- ◆ This technique reveals what respondents desire to have or see in the future.
- ◆ Questions such as where would the brand be, and whether they would still be loyal to it can be asked to understand future loyalty.

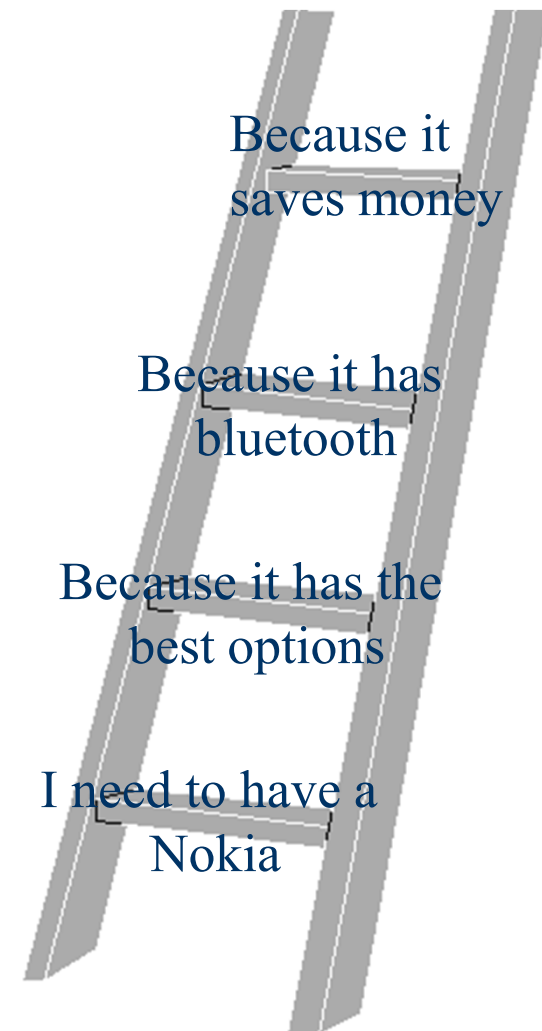


# Projective techniques



## Laddering

- ◆ Respondents are asked a question and further questions are generated from the response to the first question.
- ◆ The objective of this exercise is to reach the subconscious motive behind consumer's behaviour towards a product or a service.
- ◆ These are the motives that respondent knows but is not conscious about them.

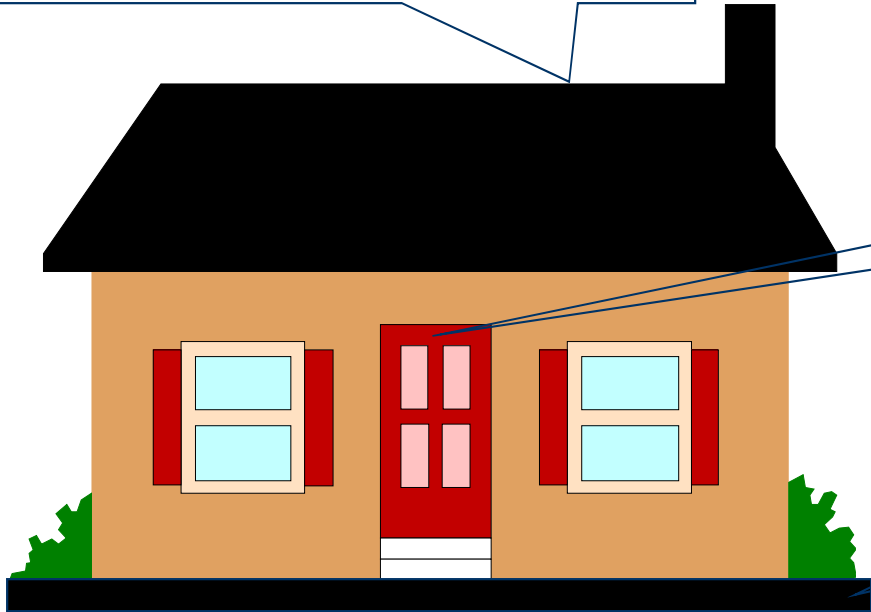


# Projective techniques



## House building

- ◆ Respondents are asked to imagine the brand as a house and then they are asked to define the brand characteristics as the parts of the house.
- ◆ This is a difficult exercise for respondents as many people will have different reasons for different parts of the house which they might not agree to.



Brand name is the roof because it provides protection to every thing in the brand

The sales force/ dealer is the door, who encourages the customer to buy the brand, if it is closed customers will not know where to get the brand from.

The core functional benefit of this brand is the Foundation, because without it customers will not buy it.

# Projective techniques



## Role Playing

- ◆ Respondents are asked to play the role of another person/ team, such as manufacturer or sales person, etc. This help bring out customer preferences related to product or service or price or promotion, etc.
- ◆ This technique is also used for idea generation. Ideas that are more acceptable to the market come out.
- ◆ Such exercise usually takes time and can only be done in extended focus groups.



# Diagnostic techniques



- ◆ Enterprise Interviews: Extensive detailed interviews conducted in visits at customer and non-customer sites, with the active and personal involvement of your entire team. These give you a clear, common and cohesive understanding of your customers' needs, and the long-term strategic direction of your business.
- ◆ Ethnography & Observational Research: Allows researchers to understand the culture and environment in which products are purchased, used, and evaluated. It helps to overcome some of the inaccuracies and omissions in self reported data on attitudes and behaviours.
- ◆ Idea Generation/Creative Sessions: In these highly energized and focused sessions, our expert consultants employ a variety of techniques to encourage respondents to generate innovative ideas and solve problems creatively. This information can then be used for new product development, strategic directions for advertising or marketing communications and process improvements.  
Laddering/Means-end Chaining: is an in-depth, one-on-one exploration of how consumers translate product attributes into personal values and underlying psychological motivations. Used extensively for customer segmentation, brand and product image assessment, and development of advertising or market strategies.

# Diagnostic techniques



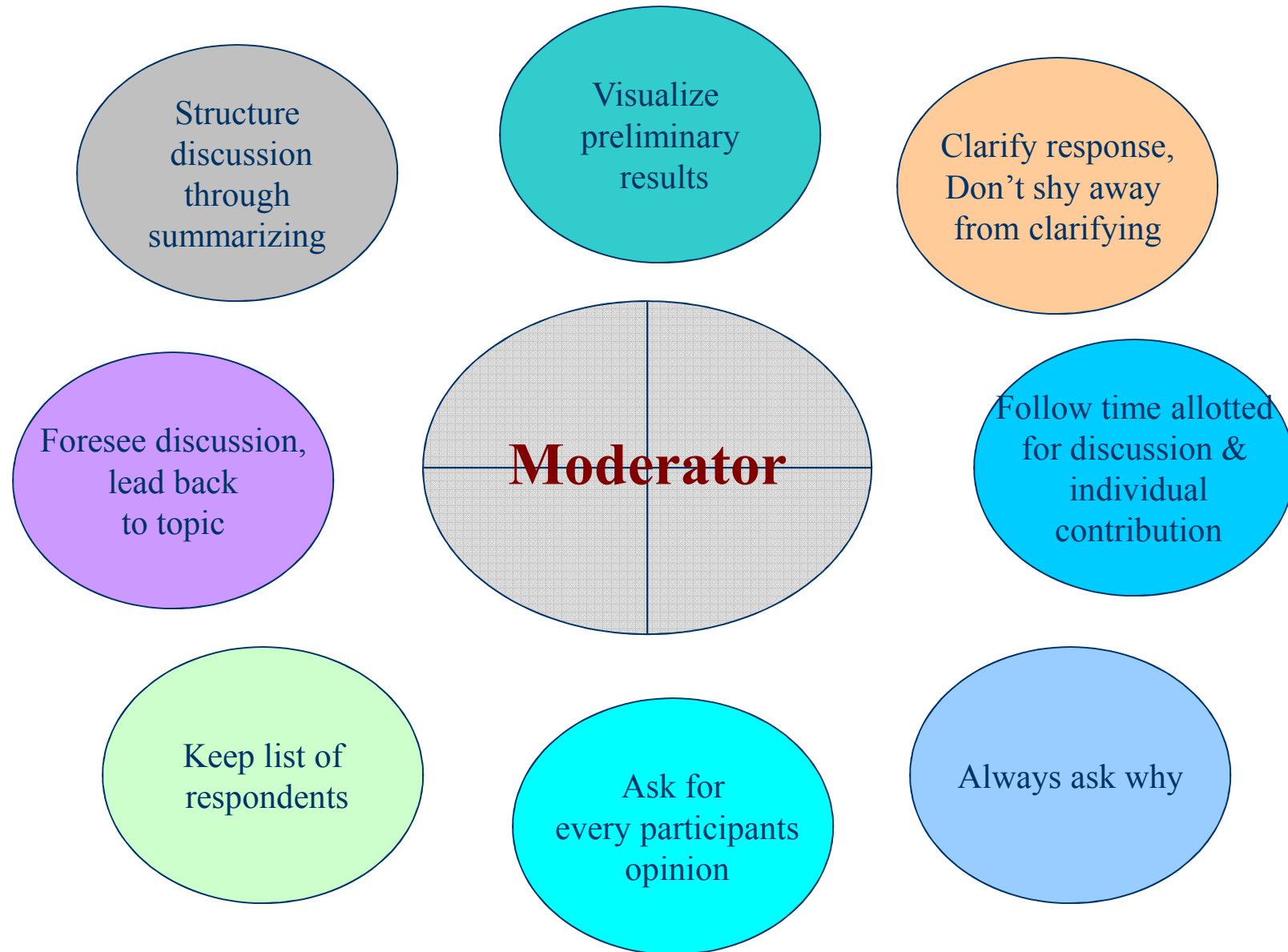
- ◆ Scripting/Cognitive Process Interviews: Used to explore the step-by-step process or logic in customer decision making or behaviour. This technique focuses on how individuals think or behave in order to determine critical turning points and influences that shape decisions and behaviour.
- ◆ Repertory Grids & Sorting Procedures: Determine how individuals differentiate and categorize key features and benefits of your products or services. These are particularly useful when you need to develop the full array of attributes that may be considered in selecting or evaluating products.

# Who is a good moderator



- ◆ Dynamic : in terms of personality & character
- ◆ Vocal: in terms of convincing
- ◆ Possessive: in terms his responsibilities and environment
- ◆ Good listener: providing space for all to express their ideas & ready to absorb ideas.
- ◆ Sharp minded: attentive, aware & vigilant of environment.
- ◆ Focused: on the task at hand. On the subject.
- ◆ Professional: in terms of ethics & opinion, language and appearance.
- ◆ Open minded: ready to learn new things and accept new ideas.
- ◆ Innovative: ready to experiment with new techniques and methods.
- ◆ Up-to-date: with new emerging technology, learning techniques & research methods.

# Who is a good moderator



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## The journal of Marketing Research Society (1998) defines a moderator

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They must have intellectual abilities, yet show common sense and be down to earth. They must show imagination, yet be logical. While an eye for detail is essential, they must show “instant” empathy, yet project themselves neutrally. They must be able to identify the typical, yet think beyond stereotypes. They must be articulate, but also good listeners. The ability to summarize concisely is essential, but a literary flair or style is needed. While thinking analytically, they must tolerate disorder.

# Group Management



## Body Language



Suspicious/ angry



Very interested



Thinking/beginning  
to accept



You are suffocating me



Does not trust



Simply happy



Apologetic



Serious consideration/  
Brain storming



Not accepting your view



Fed up



Serious consideration/  
Brain storming

## Difference between large focus group, mini group, paired interview & in-depth interview



	Large focus group	Mini Group	Paired/ peer interview	Single/ In-depth interview
Time	3 + hours	2 ½ to 3 hours	2 hours	1 ½ hour
Number of respondents	8	5	2	1
Venue	Hotel board room House Office room	Hotel board room House Office room	House Office room Restaurant	Office room Restaurant
Nationality	Homogeneous	Homogeneous	Homogeneous	N.A
Age	Maximum of 5-6 years of gap	Maximum of 5-6 years of gap	Maximum of 3-4 years of gap	N.A
Income	Should broadly be in the same income group			



**End of presentation**

