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MOTIVATION RESEARCH

MOTIVATION RESEARCH

Its Practice and Uses for Advertising, Marketing, and other Business Purposes

By

HARRY HENRY

1963

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To

my erstwhile colleagues of McCann-Erickson

in London, New York, Brussels, Paris, and Germany

this book is dedicated

with affectionate thanks for that discussion and disputation

without which it could not have been written

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

MOTIVATION Research, as it is dealt with in this book, is a tool of management, designed to help the manufacturer or advertiser to sell more goods. It aims to *expose* the market situation, to *explain* it, and in consequence to *suggest* courses of action which will lead to desired *changes*, and it does this by making use of research methods and approaches which are relatively new in the commercial sphere.

In addition to being a new tool, Motivation Research is both a sharp and a powerful one, but a new tool is always liable to be used at first as an amusing plaything. Only after the purchaser has wasted a lot of time and material, and possibly cut himself badly once or twice, does the novelty wear off. At this stage it will either be left to rust in a corner of the workshop or—if its owner is an intelligent man—be used, as and when the occasion requires, for the purposes for which it was originally devised.

This analogy cannot be pushed too far. A new carpentry or engineering tool usually arrives with a handbook of instructions, and the purchaser can make a fool of himself in his own way and in private. Motivation Research has as yet provided no such handbook for the ultimate purchaser, and since it is something which that purchaser cannot normally operate on his own account, but must entrust to the conduct of an outside expert, the field has been left rather too widely open to the charlatan or the humbug. A glib line in sales-talk, together with a smattering of psycho-analytical jargon (particularly that jargon concerned with sex) and a shrewd appreciation of what the traffic will bear,

have frequently been all that was necessary to sell a bill of goods—sometimes with disastrous results.

This is a great pity. For Motivation Research has enormous potentialities and, properly used, can be of the greatest value in the fields of production, packaging, marketing, and advertising. Since it involves complex techniques, the manufacturer who needs it cannot normally carry it out himself, and may not even be fully conversant with all the technical details. But he should at least have some idea of what it is he is buying, what his expert consultants and advisers are trying to do, and why they are tackling the problem in a particular way.

It is because of this that the present volume is intended to fill a double role. For the market-research practitioner and executive, and for the student, it outlines the nature and purpose of Motivation Research, describes the techniques commonly used, illustrates the various ways in which it can be applied, and points out some of the most likely pitfalls involved in this the most fruitful and at the same time most perilous of all consumer research techniques. It would, of course, be extravagant to claim that with this volume in hand any market research worker can immediately become a Motivation Research expert: the matter is far too complex for that, and of far too recent development—and far too controversial—for any one book to claim to be the final word on the subject. Further, the correct application of some at least of the major techniques used requires the services of trained specialists drawn from outside, and is likely to continue to do so until research organizations have had the opportunity of training up their own. None the less, since Motivation Research is much more *a way of looking at a problem* rather than a collection of specialist techniques, it can perfectly well take its place alongside other market research methods as one of the tools for the solution of marketing problems: as such, its methods, uses, and limitations should be known to all market research workers.

But this book is also addressed to the manufacturer, his sales

director and advertising director, and to their opposite numbers in the advertising agency—to those executives who feel that Motivation Research may contribute to the solution of some of their problems and who can profit from a broad description of just what it is, how it works, and what part it can play in the essential operations of manufacturing and selling. These are the people who commission Motivation Research: these are the people who must take executive decisions on the basis of its findings. And it is for this reason that—so far as possible—technical jargon has been avoided in the pages which follow, and technical argument and controversy confined to narrow limits.

Motivation Research is concerned with the question of *why* people behave as they do. This is not a definition: it is a description, and one which is shared by many of the social sciences. It is, indeed, from these social sciences that Motivation Research has drawn many of its methods and techniques (particularly from psychology and sociology), but it differs from them in one most fundamental respect. Motivation Research uses such methods and techniques for the severely practical ends of marketing and advertising: it is not—or should not be—an academic exercise conducted for its own sake. Unless the findings of a particular Motivation Research project can be translated into immediate executive action, or used as a basis for policy decisions, it cannot be regarded as having justified either itself or the quite considerable cost which it has almost certainly involved.

But the range of business activities in which it can be of use is very wide indeed. Much of its development has been in the field of advertising, and certainly this field offers a very great potential. But it can also help in the formulation of production policy—the decision as to whether there is a market for a new product, as to how that product should be made, for what sort of customers, at what price-levels, in what shapes and sizes, with what constituents and qualities, and so on. It can help with the problem of packaging (a problem so close to that of production that the

wise manufacturer will rarely consider the two separately) by examining the likely effects on consumer choice of different shapes, colours, designs, and labels, of glass or polythene, foil or parchment, paper or cellophane. And in the marketing operation, the opportunity which it provides of understanding the purchasing situation makes it possible not only to arrive at the most suitable distribution policy but also, through a study of the extent to which purchases are 'pre-meditated' or 'impulse', to arrive at a correct balance between pre-selling by advertising on the one hand and concentration on point-of-sale effort on the other.

Examples of the way in which Motivation Research can be used to help solve problems in all these fields are given in later chapters, but it is in the field of advertising, in its narrower sense, that the greatest multiplicity of uses is currently found. While it would be absurd to suggest that effective advertising can never be executed without Motivation Research, it is none the less true that these new methods of gaining deeper insight into why people behave as they do, and how best they can be persuaded to behave differently, make it possible to plan campaigns with considerably more precision, and with a far greater assurance that effort is being exerted in the right direction, than has been the case hitherto. It is for this reason that considerable sections of this book are devoted to a description of the various ways in which Motivation Research can be used towards the solution of advertising problems.

This last phrase—'used towards the solution of problems'—is one which it is very necessary to bear in mind. Motivation Research is not a magic wand which has to be merely waved around for everything to turn immediately into gold. It is a technique for discovering basic facts on which action may be based, for suggesting what ought to be done to produce a certain effect. To judge from some of the earlier and more extravagant case-histories, it might be imagined that, once an unemployed psycho-analyst has 'laid bare the secrets of the human soul' by

giving ten or twelve people a two-hour interview each, the only remaining problem is how to avoid Excess Profits Tax.

This, of course, is nonsense, and all the more nonsense because the scientific validity of some of these early studies is extremely doubtful—they may have been directed along the right lines, but the answers were frequently wide of the mark. (As will be explained in later chapters, it is extremely easy to misinterpret the results of Motivation Research unless elaborate cross-bearings are included as essential elements in the design of the enquiry.) But, even apart from this, it must be realized that the Motivation Research findings are only the *beginning* of a process of product-design, packaging, marketing, or advertising, or all of them together, which calls for all the normal technical skills of the manufacturer's organization and that of his advertising agency, and which cannot operate without those special skills.

Such findings help to provide a background of sound and reliable facts against which executive decisions can be taken and in the light of which executive action can be framed. The phrase so often used in case-histories—'these findings were incorporated in the company's policy, with highly successful results', while it may in itself be true, is liable to be misleading in its simplicity, as if one were to describe the erection of a new building by saying simply, 'The Mayor laid the foundation-stone.'

None the less, unless the foundations are properly laid the building is liable to be shaky, and it is in this context that Motivation Research, properly conceived, properly conducted, and properly interpreted, can prove such an extremely powerful tool. Despite its early extravagances, it is here to stay, and it is the purpose of this book to explain some of the ways in which it can profitably be used.

* * * * *

A word might be added here about the way in which this volume is presented, and particularly about the absence of footnotes and references. This is a practical handbook, not a

doctorial thesis: its aims are vulgarly commercial rather than scholarly. Of writings about Motivation Research there is no end, and although these are discussed under the general heading 'The Literature of the Subject' in the Appendix at the end of this volume, and although anybody who presumes to write a book on the subject must necessarily be acquainted with them, it has not been judged necessary to refer to them continuously throughout the text. Where a direct quotation has been made, the source is acknowledged[1]: otherwise the seeker after deeper wisdom than is contained within these pages is referred to the details of the Appendix.

Something must also be said about the 'case histories' which are used throughout the following pages to illustrate the methods or uses of Motivation Research. The reader who already has a nodding acquaintance with the subject will find a marked absence of most of the well-worn examples which have been doing duty for so long: although 'instant coffee' was unavoidable, no reference is made to spaghetti, or airlines, or teapots, or prunes. This is because a writer on Motivation Research should not quote examples unless he himself is satisfied as to their validity —which normally means unless he has had some opportunity of studying the detailed findings. For most of the well-known examples these are not available, the examples being quoted only in speeches or popular magazine articles, which may or may not have presented the facts satisfactorily.

For this reason the examples quoted in this book are taken for the most part from studies with which the author himself is personally familiar, and from those which have been conducted under his own direction or that of his colleagues. In other cases, where considerations of commercial secrecy make it impossible to quote a real case, imaginary cases have been devised to illustrate the points in question. The majority of the examples derive from British studies: some are American, and two or three relate to enquiries carried out in other European countries.

[1] With one exception (see page 27).

CHAPTER TWO

WHY MOTIVATION RESEARCH?

IT is now about twenty-five years since the standard type of market research, as at present defined (that is, research into distribution and consumer behaviour based on sample surveys), first began to be developed for marketing and advertising purposes.

A word may be said here about this definition, which it might be argued is much too narrow. Surely, say the people who hold this view, the study and analysis for marketing purposes of official and semi-official statistics, the interpretation and processing of market trends, the study of sales reports and market intelligence, and so on—surely all this is market research equally? And logically this is true. But it so happens that—in Britain at least—the particular phrase 'market research' has come to be applied *only* to research based on sample surveys, and has even extended to research which has nothing to do with markets at all (such as that of the Audience Research Division of the B.B.C. or the Social Surveys Division of the Government's Central Office of Information), provided such research makes use of sampling techniques! To cover the wider field the term 'marketing research' is normally used in contradistinction, though it must be admitted that the similarity of the two names is a fruitful source of confusion. But since they are the terms in current use, they are best accepted, and no disparagement of what is sometimes described as 'desk research' is implied by pointing out that what is being discussed here is market research in the narrower sense.

During these twenty-five years or so it has gradually come to be realized that satisfactory production, marketing, and advertising policies cannot be formulated in the absence of adequate

information about the basic facts of the market, and that a manufacturer who plunges into a production operation or promotional campaign with nothing to guide him except a few bright ideas runs totally unnecessary risks for which there can be no corresponding increase in profitability. There are isolated examples, of course, of 'hunch merchants' who hit on successful ideas with enormous success, and finish up as classic case-histories, but no case-histories are written of the ninety-nine equally self-confident but not so lucky venturers whose only spell of glory is in a brief trip to the bankruptcy courts.

To the realization of this necessity for *knowledge* is due the almost meteoric rise of market research as a tool of manufacturing, marketing, and advertising, and the development of market research techniques concurrently over practically the whole of the western world.

It is, after all, not particularly difficult to discover the main basic facts of any particular market—what is its total size and value, what brands compete for it and what shares they have, what sort of people use them, what they use them for, where they buy them, how often, in what quantities, and so on. A variety of tried and tested methods now exist for getting at this sort of information, for details of which the reader is referred to any one of the many excellent text-books on market research which have been published of recent years on both sides of the Atlantic. This present work is not concerned to discuss these in detail, but it *is* necessary to consider some of the basic principles involved.

Investigations designed to uncover the basic facts of any particular market can work at two levels—the retail level, or the consumer level. A good deal of information which can be produced is common to both levels, and in both cases the fundamental laws of sample enquiries must be observed—samples must be adequate in size, properly representative and unbiased, and so on. But the essential difference between the two is that market research at the retail level is concerned with *products*, while market

research at the consumer level is concerned with the *people who buy* those products.

The epitome of market research at the retail level is the Retail Store Audit, and most of the other forms it can take are either variations of this or substitutes for it. Essentially this type of operation (of which the A. C. Nielsen Company's Food and Drug Indexes are the best-known examples) measures the movement into retail shops of goods from manufacturer and wholesaler, and the level of stocks at particular moments of time. From this basic material it is possible to extract an enormous volume of information: the total value of the market for a particular product-group, the way in which it is divided between different brands, different pack-sizes, different regions of the country, different types of shop, and so on. At the same time it can measure the extent of the distribution of particular brands, their stock-levels and weaknesses, again analysed by different regions, shop-types, and so on. And by carrying on this operation on a *continuing* basis it is possible to establish long-term and short-term trends in all these things.

Obviously, this sort of information is of the utmost value, particularly as a tool of Sales Management. But though (thanks to the use of very ingenious and subtle statistical sampling techniques) the Retail Store Audit can paint a very accurate picture of what is happening to *goods*, it can tell us nothing at all about the *people* who are purchasing those goods, except in what part of the country they live. Indeed, no reliable information at all about the *consumer* can be ever obtained at the retail level, and though attempts are sometimes made (in the interests of a cheese-paring economy) to collect data relating to the consumer by asking questions of retailers, such attempts are invariably fore-doomed to failure.

Information about the consumer is, however, essential for the intelligent planning of any production, marketing, or promotional operation. And such information can be collected only by means of sample surveys at the consumer level.

There are a number of standard methods suitable for this sort of survey and (as has already been suggested) these can be studied in any good text-book on Market Research. Essentially, however, they all work in the same way. A properly representative cross-sample of the population (or of such parts of the population as are relevant) is selected by an appropriate statistical method, and information collected from the members of that sample about their purchase and use of particular goods. Sometimes the information is collected simply by questioning, sometimes by observation (as in the 'pantry-check'), and sometimes by both: sometimes, again, a *continuous* flow of information is provided by getting informants to join, for example, a 'housewife panel', and report their purchases regularly—usually in diary form. From all this data emerge the various patterns of purchase and usage, which can be studied in relation to the various social classes and age-groups, people living in different parts of the country and in different types of communities, or any other categories which may seem relevant to the problem.

The large number of well-developed techniques for what may be called traditional market research which now exist result in a situation where it is not particularly difficult to find out the main basic facts of any particular market—what sort of people use what products, what they use them for, where they buy them, how often, in what quantities, and so on. Nor, on the whole, are such methods particularly expensive when considered in the light of the manufacturing, marketing, and promotional operations which they are designed to steer. And while it is true that there still exist a number of short-sighted manufacturers who will cheerfully authorize a manufacturing and promotional budget of half a million pounds or so, and yet develop an excruciating cramp in the pocket-book at the suggestion that two or three thousand should first be spent in checking that the whole effort is being made in the right direction, the majority of successful manufacturers now accept the fact—with resignation if not with joy—

that between 2% and 3% of any promotional budget *must* be spent in what military language calls 'intelligence'.

Yet parallel with the development of market research has grown up a gradual realization that the basic facts of the market situation are usually not, by themselves, sufficient to *explain* that situation, or to indicate the most fruitful lines for production, marketing, and advertising activity. It is essential that these basic facts should be known, but they do not provide the whole answer. Indeed, it may truly be said that, in the fields of marketing and advertising, statistics are like bikinis—they reveal a good deal that is both interesting and instructive, but they usually concea what is really vital.

And what is vital in the study of a market is to know not only *what* the pattern is, but also *why*—since only with this supplementary knowledge is it possible for an individual manufacturer to be quite sure of being able to change the pattern.

In other words, questions of motive and reason have now become, and are becoming recognized as, of prime importance in any marketing operation. It is not sufficient to know what proportions of the population use particular products, and who those users are: valuable as this information is, it is only a beginning. What has to be known in addition is what are the motives which lead people to use one product rather than another, to behave in one way rather than another, to choose one brand rather than another. And it is also essential to be able to measure the effectiveness of various methods of affecting those motives, or of acting on them. And this knowledge can only arise from a study of the *reasons* underlying the existing patterns of purchase and usage.

Sometimes, of course, the reason for a particular market-pattern is clear (or at least can be inferred) from the pattern itself: sometimes it seems so at first sight, but proves otherwise, and sometimes no reason for it can be seen at all. An analysis by socio-economic group, for example, of private motorists who have bought new cars during the previous year would reveal that

virtually all purchasers of new Rolls Royce cars were drawn from the very wealthy classes, and it might reasonably be inferred that the high price of a Rolls Royce is one of the main reasons why the great mass of the population buys other makes! But this tells us nothing about the reason why some of the very wealthy chose a Rolls Royce instead of an equally expensive Daimler, or why the Daimler purchasers did not buy Rolls Royces.

In any case, patterns are rarely as clear-cut as this. Consider, for example, an imaginary market for a product of which 100,000 packets are sold a week and of which there are only two brands:

WEEKLY SALES

	SALES OF BRAND A	SALES OF BRAND B	TOTAL SALES
Bought by the upper and middle classes	20,000	8,000	28,000
Bought by the working classes .	60,000	12,000	72,000
TOTALS	80,000	20,000	100,000

This sort of information, incidentally, is not usually presented in this form in a market research report. The results are commonly shown either as:

	UPPER AND MIDDLE-CLASS PURCHASERS	WORKING-CLASS PURCHASERS	ALL PURCHASERS
	%	%	%
Percentage buying:			
BRAND A . . .	71	83	80
BRAND B . . .	29	17	20
TOTALS . . .	100	100	100

or, alternatively, percentaged the other way round, as follows:

	SALES OF BRAND A	SALES OF BRAND B	TOTAL SALES
	%	%	%
Percentage bought by:			
Upper and middle classes . .	25	40	28
Working classes . . .	75	60	72
TOTALS	100	100	100

Whichever way the figures are looked at, the salient pattern of this market is clear: Brand A has the major share of the market, but Brand B finds a much higher proportion of its total sales among the upper and middle classes than is the case with Brand A. What is not clear, however, is the reason for this pattern. Of course, if Brand B is much more expensive than Brand A, price may reasonably be inferred as a factor, though this does not explain why the majority of the upper and middle classes, at whom the dearer product is aimed, still buy the cheaper, or why the majority of the purchasers of Brand B, the more expensive product, are still found among the working classes.

But this sort of pattern is very frequently found where the two brands cost the same, so that price is obviously *not* a factor. And this is the point at which anybody who is interested in the welfare of Brand B must ask a lot of further questions. What is it about Brand B that makes it less acceptable than Brand A to the better-off classes, even though these classes think rather more highly of it than do the working classes? In other words, what is it they look for in this sort of product that Brand B fails to offer, or offers less efficiently than Brand A? Or, from another point of view, how do the working-class purchasers of Brand B differ in their needs and desires from the great majority of the working class, who buy Brand A? And—the crucial question—what can be *done* for Brand B to make it more acceptable all along the line?

Of course, a number of factors affecting the market pattern may exist and be known without the need for specific study by market research. Price has already been mentioned: others are such things as imperfect distribution, an inferior product-performance, and so on (neither of these last two factors, incidentally, would account for the market pattern of Brand B shown above). Obviously, factors of this sort—and all other relevant factors—have to be taken into account. But even when all the information available at the manufacturer's end has been brought into the picture, the market pattern may still remain inexplicable without knowledge, at the consumer end, of why people think and behave the way they do in relation to the purchase and use of one brand rather than another.

Furthermore, the information available at the manufacturer's end may not always correspond with the information deriving from the consumer end—particularly as regards product-performance. It is normal enough for a manufacturer to claim that his product is the best on the market: it is perhaps inevitable, human nature being what it is, that he should in many cases himself believe this. Product-performance is rarely so simple a matter that it can be measured in one objective test: subjective judgements nearly always enter into the picture, especially where total product-performance arises from a number of different characteristics, some of which vary inversely with each other. For example, a brand of petrol may be designed to give certain levels of speed and power, economy, startability, and engine-protection, and it may not be possible to maximize *all* of these—if the speed and power level is increased, it may be that the levels of economy and engine-protection *must* fall. The particular combination of levels (at a given price) which will give the 'best' overall product-performance is something about which the manufacturer must make a subjective judgement, however skilful his laboratories may be, and it is always possible that the consuming public will not be of the same opinion.

This problem becomes particularly acute where matters of taste are concerned, especially with products such as tea and tobacco where manufacturers normally maintain staffs of expert tasters who can tell in a moment not only the source of any particular sample but also the part of the bush from which it was picked, the month in which it was planted and—almost—whether it was picked by a man or a woman. Combined with these life-long skills, however, there are usually a number of very firmly held traditional conceptions as to what is 'good' and what is 'poor', and it not infrequently happens that the purchasing public has the poor taste to prefer what is technically regarded as the inferior product. For example, in a test carried out by the British Baking Industries Research Association in 1952 it was found on 'blind-test' that people preferred a cake made with cooking-fat and dried egg to one made with butter and fresh egg —where they could discriminate at all, which most of them could not! Of course, had they been *told* what the various ingredients were they would undoubtedly have preferred the traditionally 'better' product, but this is something which will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Six.

It may, indeed, reasonably be said that 'whilst it is true that it is always desirable to make a better mouse-trap, it is nevertheless the case that the judgement that it *is* a better mouse-trap must to some extent be based on the reactions of the mice as well as on the technical construction of the trap'.[1] And where a difference of opinion exists between the mice and the mouse-trap-maker, it is obviously of supreme importance that it should be isolated and understood at the earliest possible moment. Whether the maker will then decide to please himself or the mice is another matter.

As has been shown earlier in this chapter, the technical problems involved in ascertaining what a particular market pattern *is* are

[1] J. S. Downham and J. A. P. Treasure, 'Market Research and Consumer Durables' (*Incorporated Statistician*, December 1956).

not very great. And the necessity for ascertaining that pattern can usually be very easily justified. When a manufacturer of automotive accessories—batteries, tyres, even oil and petrol—declares that he wants to confine his advertising to upper-class media, because all his friends have cars whereas a very small proportion of the few working-class people with whom he comes into contact possess one, it is simple enough to show him that although nine out of every ten upper and middle-class families have a car, and only one in every seven lower-middle and working-class families have one, in fact the distribution of the population is such that out of every twenty private cars on the road no less than eleven are owned by lower-middle and working-class families, so that if he does not want to bow himself out of business he will be well advised to use the mass media as well. In such a case he is normally willing to admit that his personal observation may not be an entirely reliable technique for ascertaining the market pattern.

When it comes, however, to determining people's *attitudes*, to the investigation of *why* people think and behave as they do in relation to the purchase and use of one product rather than another, one brand rather than another, and to the assessment of the likely *efficacy* of various methods of attempting to change their attitudes and habits, the need for systematic and scientific research operations is by no means so generally accepted. When, in response to a 'help wanted' advertisement, an applicant writes: 'I have seen your advertisement for a Motivation Research executive with psychological qualifications and research experience. I have a degree in law, and though I have no specifically psychological qualifications I think I can fairly claim to understand human nature', he is simply giving expression to the widely-held belief that the ability to understand one's fellow-man, individually or in the mass, is, like a sense of humour, part of everyone's birth-right.

This book is not concerned with the individual, but with the

mass. Nor is it necessary here to speculate as to how far a group of middle-aged and elderly men sitting round a board-room table (whether in a factory or an advertising agency) are capable of appreciating, and assessing at their relative significances, the attitudes, needs, and desires of a factory girl in Hounslow, a baker's roundsman in Galashiels, a coal-miner in the Rhondda Valley, the wife of a bank-clerk in Tunbridge Wells, an engineering apprentice in Coventry, and the thousands of other types who make up Great Britain's fifty million population, or of judging how far propositions which will appeal to one group will also appeal, or fail to appeal, to others. It is assumed that people who believe themselves to have not only an innate perception of the varieties of human personality but also a brain capable, like an electronic computor, of instantaneous statistical assessment and calculation, will not bother to read a book on Motivation Research, and this present volume therefore addresses itself only to those who think that the task of understanding *why* a particular market pattern takes the shape it does, and of deciding how best it may be changed, calls for systematic research along reasonably scientific lines.

As was described rather earlier in this chapter, this need to know not only *what* people do but also *why* they do it has been manifested only over the last few years. And at one stage in the development of market research it was thought that this second question could be answered as easily as the first, simply by asking. Faced with the question 'What brands of cigarette do people smoke?' the market research expert could justifiably answer 'Easy enough—we will go out and ask them,' and when handed the second question—'Why?' he was inclined to return the same answer.

The procedures this led to were very simple. They involved ascertaining the brand currently in use, and then asking a simple question in the form of 'Why do you use this brand?' The answers thus obtained were then tabulated in some convenient way and

presented as a reasoned account of the motives which actuated purchasers of the different brands.

There are advantages in this method, of course. It requires no skill, no technical knowledge, no special training: it occupies very little time in an interview, and is moreover so simple that there is no need to trouble to train or supervise investigators (they can even be briefed by post); the analytical procedures are simple and quick, and such that anybody, however senior, can understand.

There is only one disadvantage—it produces a picture which is usually false, and frequently dangerously misleading.

People's reasons for their actions, in fact, cannot normally be ascertained by asking point-blank questions. They usually do not know what their real reasons are, and frequently, even if they do know, they are not prepared to give them in answer to a formal question. Even when they do know something of their own motives, and are prepared to confess them, they are for the most part quite incapable of assessing the relative importance of the various interlocking motives which normally go to make up a particular behaviour pattern.

The number of women who are prepared to admit, even to themselves, that they use Lux Toilet Soap because they feel it will, in some magical way, perform its implied advertising promise and make them as beautiful as film-stars, is relatively small: the number who are prepared to admit it to anybody else is even smaller. In consequence, they fall back, when asked the direct question as to why they use this brand, on the 'conventional' or 'expected' answer—they praise its colour, its perfume, its lathering qualities.

In the same way, conventional enquiries over many years have always indicated that a considerable proportion of such dislike as was expressed for Lifebuoy Toilet Soap was attributed to its smell. To some extent this might have been genuine, but the same hostility did not arise in the case of other toilet soaps with

similar perfume, and the unknown factor here is how far the dislike of Lifebuoy is a genuine disliking of the perfume as such and how far it is a dislike of the soap's 'personality'—a result of the 'body-odour' story (either in its original pre-war form or in its post-war indirect form) and of the feeling that only evil-smelling people would need such a product. Such attitudes and feelings are, for the most part, subconscious or unconscious, and will not emerge in answer to direct questioning. Incidentally, though a considerable proportion of those people who *like* the product say they do so because of its smell, here again it is impossible to judge how far this is due simply to the olfactory sensation *per se* and how far to the 'image' of the product as offering an antiseptic cleanliness guaranteeing against social disapproval, the distinctive perfume being the easiest quality to talk about.

In this example, of course, one cannot be *certain* that the answers given to the 'why' question are nonsense: it may be inferred from the internal evidence, but that is all. Other examples, however, are more clear-cut. In a survey concerned with baby-cereals, women were asked (in respect of each brand they had ever used), 'How did you first come to try this brand?' The answers given, for the five leading brands, were as follows:

	BRAND A	BRANDS B AND C	BRANDS D AND E
	%	%	%
Recommended by:			
Welfare centre . . .	48	38	20
Pharmacist, doctor or nurse .	13	17	13
Relative or friend . . .	18	15	25
Advertising	5	5	4
Other reasons	16	25	38
TOTALS	100	100	100

Now these figures were found surprising. Brands D and E were old-fashioned products, largely disapproved of by the experts who are responsible for running welfare centres and by the young doctors and nurses who staff them: the figure of 20% here seemed unreasonably high. Brand A was a product which had been on the market for many years: while it was approved of by the dietetic experts, it also had so dominant a share of the market that the effect of 'public opinion' on the young mother was expected to have been considerable. Brands B and C, on the other hand, were relatively new products, for which the main promotional effort had been through the welfare centres: to find a lower proportion of the users of these brands quoting the welfare centres than was the case with Brand A was alarming! Further, considering the short time Brands B and C had been available, the fact that nearly as many of their users quoted 'relative or friend' as was the case with the solidly established Brand A was also found surprising.

Fortunately, during the course of the enquiry it had also been ascertained which of the informants were in the habit of attending welfare centres, so that it was possible to study the usage of the various brands in the light of this factor. The following table emerged:

	AMONG THOSE WOMEN WHO	
	Attended Welfare Centres	Did not attend
	%	%
Percentage using:		
Brand A	45	43
Brands B and C . .	20	2
Brands D and E . .	10	17

and the conclusions are obvious: attendance at the welfare centre made little difference to the use of the dominant Brand A, and

worked *against* Brands D and E: in the case of Brands B and C, however, recommendations from the welfare centre was clearly the overwhelmingly important factor.

The reasons for the unreliability of the original question are simple. Where a variety of brands are referred to (or sold) in welfare centres, are seen in friends' houses, are displayed on pharmacists' counters, are advertised in the Press, or are discussed with mothers, aunts, and grandmothers, it is not possible for an individual to pin-point which of the factors was ultimately responsible for her behaviour. The answers given therefore reflect, *after* the event, the importance which the various factors seem to have for the average woman, which is why we get a pattern of responses which is very much the same whatever the brand concerned. Indeed, there is a very real sense in which it might be said that a silly question got a silly answer, though the matter should not be dismissed as lightly as this: questions of this type are very frequently asked in consumer surveys, and not uncommonly important marketing decisions are taken on the strength of the answers.

But a direct question can get a nonsense answer even when it is in fact quite a reasonable question. In the infant cereal enquiry just mentioned it was found that the majority of those mothers who had once used Brand B but had ceased to do so, had switched to Brand A. Now a packet of Brand B was both smaller and more expensive than Brand A, but when women were asked 'Why did you give up using Brand B?' less than 1% of those who had done so mentioned the price. Could it be reliably supposed that price was an insignificant factor in this market?

The technicians who worked on this enquiry, and who mistrusted this particular question (which was included at the insistence of the manufacturer, who said 'Can't you just ask 'em why they changed?'), took the precaution of inserting in the questionnaire (at a remote point) a series of questions designed to measure how far informants really knew what was the weight/price

relationship of Brand A and Brand B. This information was analysed separately for those women who were currently using, and those who had ceased to use, Brand B: as a control, a similar analysis was performed in respect of Brand A. The results were:

	BRAND A		BRAND B	
	Current Users	Past Users	Current Users	Past Users
	%	%	%	%
Knew that Brand A had the advantage (CORRECT) . .	19	21	37	46
Thought that Brand B had the advantage (WRONG) . .	5	7	23	8
UNCERTAIN	76	72	40	46
TOTALS	100	100	100	100

Those mothers who had ceased to use Brand B were better aware of its unfavourable price/weight relationship to Brand A to the extent of 24 percentage points than those who were still using it, whereas the control analysis of Brand A showed, as might have been expected, no difference of this sort. It could only be deduced from this that price was, in fact, a very important factor in the decision to give up using Brand B, and the fact that practically none of the informants themselves quoted the price as a reason for doing so was simply a result of their reluctance to admit (possibly to admit even to themselves) that they would allow a paltry price-difference to affect so vital a matter as their baby's welfare.

These inferential proofs of the inadequacy of the direct 'why' question can be multiplied indefinitely. More rigid proof can be found, however, in a controlled experimental situation, such as the following. In a test carried out shortly before the introduction of chlorophyll toothpastes in Britain, informants were asked

to choose between two 'blind' samples—one of a leading brand, and the other of exactly the same product coloured green with a tasteless, odourless, functionless dye. Informants much preferred the white sample, and said it tasted better in use, and left a better after-taste in the mouth—all of which was nonsense. Furthermore (an even greater nonsense) they said it foamed better! And all of this arose from what is called the 'halo effect' of an attitude towards green as a colour for toothpaste.

Even clearer-cut examples can be drawn from examples of one of the most reliable of the techniques which can be used for pack-testing. In this method, which is designed to measure the relative appeal of two packs or wrappings, informants are deliberately misled as to the purpose of the test. They are *told* that they are required to test two different *products*, which are wrapped differently simply for purposes of identification, and are asked to state which of the two products *tastes* better. In fact, the two products are absolutely identical: the only difference is in the wrappers which are under test.

Now the sort of results which emerge from a test of this type (the actual example relates to one carried out on chocolate biscuits) are:

Prefer the ones in the red wrapper . . .	20%
Prefer the ones in the brown wrapper . .	13%
No preference	67%
TOTAL	100%

The conclusion from this test, which can be very important from a marketing point of view, is that the manufacturer can get a 7% swing in preference by putting the product in a red wrapper rather than a brown one. (Incidentally, this technique will be studied in rather greater detail in Chapter Seven, when we come to deal with pack-testing specifically.) But what happens when the 33% of informants who gave a positive answer are asked 'Why do you prefer this one?' In fact, none of them give what is

known to be the *only* true reason—that is, that they unconsciously prefer the colour of the wrapper put on for identification purposes. The reasons they actually give are that the one they prefer is sweeter, or not so sweet, creamier, more nourishing, less indigestible, and so on and so on, than the other one—which is in reality absolutely the same.

Of course, when this 'why' question is asked outside the specifically experimental situation, the answers cannot be so clearly *seen* to be complete nonsense. But the chances are that they will be nonsense none the less.

Examples of the sort quoted in the previous few pages finally led the more discerning and sophisticated market research experts to the conclusion that the reasons why people behave as they do cannot be ascertained by using the over-simple technique of asking them in so many words. And the search for techniques which *would* uncover these reasons naturally led to the field of psychology, a science which from its beginnings has been concerned with the motives and drives underlying behaviour-patterns, and which has consequently developed a wide variety of techniques for the purpose.

Naturally enough, not all the psychologist's techniques were appropriate to commercial problems, and many of those that were required a good deal of adaptation. Furthermore, as the infant study (which acquired the name of Motivation Research) started to grow up, it also started to develop techniques and methods of its own, to fit its own particular requirements, and these in turn opened up fields of opportunity not previously envisaged. Fundamentally, however, Motivation Research exists to answer the questions 'Why are market patterns the shape they are, and what can we do to change them?' which, as this chapter has shown, cannot be satisfactorily answered by the standard techniques of traditional market research.

CHAPTER THREE

WHAT IS MOTIVATION RESEARCH?

MOTIVATION Research is concerned with the problem of finding out 'why'—specifically, *why* people behave so that market patterns take the shape they do.

This description of the intention of Motivation Research will not, however, serve as a definition, since it does not discriminate between the crude techniques of asking the public 'Why do you do this?' which have been shown in the previous chapter to produce unreliable and misleading answers, and the more subtle and valid techniques which have been developed of recent years. Motivation Research, in fact, can only really be defined in terms of the methods it uses.

It is possible, indeed, to produce definitions of Motivation Research in very large numbers. Some of these are only half-true, as 'Motivation Research means psychological research'—as it does, in a way, if you define what you mean by psychological research. Others concentrate on one only of the many tools used in Motivation Research, and define it solely in terms of 'depth interviews'. Others, again, are highly technical: 'Motivation Research is the study of motivators, a motivator being any factor or any variable which is likely to have a fairly direct functional relationship with consumer behaviour.' [1] And possibly the most satisfactory definition of all—'Motivation Research is the study of the relationship between the personality of the consumer and the personality of the product' is so admirable in its economy of words that its meaning is unlikely to

[1] Don Melvin, 'Motivation Research: A New Development' (Speech to the British Psychological Society).

be clear to anybody who is not already well acquainted with the subject!

As has already been suggested, Motivation Research can only really be defined in terms of methods. It is, in fact, a methodological *attitude*, and can be described as the use of research techniques designed to *penetrate below the surface*, and particularly of techniques borrowed and adapted from psychology, in conjunction with the standard techniques of consumer research of the 'behaviourist' type.

Two points, however, need to be borne continually in mind in amplification of this definition. In the first place, Motivation Research uses psychological techniques not because it is itself a branch of psychology, but because these techniques frequently (but by no means invariably) provide the only possible way of getting 'below the surface'. And in the second place, constructive and useful Motivation Research is concerned only with getting *sufficiently* below the surface to do the necessary job—there is usually no need to plumb right down to the depths of the human soul!

This second point is of extreme importance, more particularly since its neglect was responsible for a good deal of the charlatanry and gobbledegook which flourished during the early days of Motivation Research.

When, as a consequence of the considerations which have been described in the previous chapter, the more critically minded market research people on both sides of the Atlantic started examining the basic principles involved in the study of human motivation, they came to the conclusion that market research must call in the aid of some of the other social sciences—notably psychology, and more particularly social psychology.

The first result of this was, as might have been expected, a good deal of thrashing-out wildly in all directions at once. A number of extremely unprofitable avenues were explored (unprofitable, that is, to the people who paid the bills) and a lot of quite un-

necessary complexities introduced. There was a tendency to enlist the aid of a 'psychologist' without much reference to whether or not he was the right *sort* of psychologist, and to bring over, without any adaptation, techniques whose validity was doubtful even in the mental hospitals where they had originated.

It was perhaps unfortunate that so much of the early application of psychology to problems of marketing and advertising should have been carried out by people drawn from the fields of psycho-analysis and psychiatry, whose training and experience was mainly concerned with the mentally sick, rather than by people trained in social, educational, or industrial psychology, who are more concerned with the behaviour of large groups of normal people. But much of the blame for this must rest on the manufacturers and advertisers who commissioned this work. The techniques used by the social psychologist and the industrial psychologist lack glamour: they can frequently be explained in quite simple language and without the use of great masses of jargon. By contrast, the psycho-analyst (particularly the Freudian variety) is far better fitted for the role of benevolent witch-doctor, with his prattle of repressions, masturbation, phallic symbols, and the like, and a good deal of the early extravagances which were associated with Motivation Research arose from excessive concentration on these fascinating gimmicks.

It is difficult, for example, to see just what use a cigarette manufacturer could make of a statement such as the following:

> 'The ceremonial nature of smoking is usually explained as a continuation of, or regression to, infantile forms of auto-eroticism (such as thumb-sucking, masturbation, etc.). The nearest to such a case that I observed was Mrs. M., who smoked heavily at weekly meetings of some Lesbians, at which "free fights" took place between the women present.'

This sort of case-history makes fascinating reading, for a time. But sooner or later the profit-conscious business-man is bound to ask himself what guidance this gives him for the formulation of

manufacturing, marketing, or advertising policies. And it is for this reason that, as has already been pointed out, constructive and useful Motivation Research is concerned only with getting *sufficiently* below the surface to do the necessary job.

For example, it has been found that the right sort of woman to act as demonstrator or 'sponsor' of a range of food products is a 'motherly'-looking woman of about 40. Her authority is accepted where that of a younger woman is not: more surprisingly, perhaps, it is accepted in preference to that of an *older* woman, and it is accepted equally by women of all ages. Now the psychologist can demonstrate, if necessary, that this arises from the fact that an adolescent girl, at the difficult age of 15 or 16, is particularly conscious of her mother's household skills because she herself is chafing under her mother's authority and aware that her own household skills are very much inferior. Consequently, her mental image of the 'skilful mother' is fixed at that time, when her mother is about 40, and this mental image persists through life —even to the time when she herself is 60!

This kind of detailed explanation is extremely interesting. But it is usually unnecessary, and often quite irrelevant. Once it has been discovered *what* sort of person is acceptable—a woman of 40—and *why*—because she is 'motherly'—there is no need to write an elaborate psychological thesis on the subject. Of course, if the basic roots originating back in adolescence can be inferred in the light of existing psychological theories, then it is a good thing that they should be mentioned—the more information which is available on any subject, the better. But there is little real need to go chasing after them, or to devote to their investigation the main resources allocated to a particular enquiry.

At first sight this might seem an uncalled-for limitation set to the search for knowledge. If this sort of information can be obtained, it may be argued, why not obtain it? And, indeed, if time and expense were no object, there would be a good deal to be said for this point of view. But in the fields of production,

marketing, and advertising in which Motivation Research operates, both time and expense are frequently very important objects, and the reasons against researching *too* profoundly arise from these.

For psychological research requires different methods of enquiry to be used at different levels of profundity. In the case just quoted, the problem of finding out what sort of 'sponsor' is regarded as acceptable, and what sort of characteristics in her lead to this acceptability, can be solved by the use of relatively simple methods (these will be discussed in a later chapter). In consequence the enquiry can be spread over an adequately large sample of people, properly representative of the population as a whole, and capable of being sub-analysed to show whether the findings are equally true for women in the various social classes, in different age-groups, in different areas of the country, and so on, and even what the differences are in the attitudes held by women who are already users of the type of product concerned, women who are potential users, and women who are never likely to use it at all.

But if we wish to go further, and find out just why it is that women of all ages regard a woman of 40 as 'motherly', and how this pattern of thinking has been set by their adolescent strivings and difficulties, we are obliged to use not the methods of social psychology (which are devised for large-scale work) but the methods of psycho-analysis and psychiatry, which are devised for the study of individual cases. Now these methods are extremely cumbersome to use for samples of any appreciable size, and, though it is theoretically *possible* to aggregate them in this way, the factors working against such a procedure include not only the tremendous costs involved but also the time factor: it is usually just not within the bounds of possibility to do this sort of thing in the interval which normally exists in business activities between the date when a problem arises and the date when a positive solution must be found.

There are a number of ways of getting round this sort of difficulty—some satisfactory, and some specious, as will be discussed in subsequent pages. But before constructing elaborate procedures to answer profound questions of this sort, it is just as well to ask the question 'Why do we want to know—what good will it do us?' And if, as in the example quoted, the simpler analysis will provide all the necessary answers to the packaging, marketing, and advertising questions, the diversion of resources to the study of supplementary questions which are of theoretical and academic interest only can really hardly be justified.

It is sometimes said that Motivation Research is the study of 'what makes people tick', and the panacea this offers for all marketing ills is so attractive that the ineffable arrogance of the claim is frequently overlooked. It is, after all, something with which philosophers and scientists have been concerning themselves for the last five thousand years, without any conspicuous success so far as practical results are concerned. And therefore when a motivation researcher declares, with a wealth of psychological jargon, his ability to uncover the secrets of the human soul in a series of twenty 'depth interviews' lasting an hour or two each, he is manifesting either his foolishness or his dishonesty. World-shaking discoveries cannot be produced to order in this way, nor is it the business of marketing-focused Motivation Research to discover them.

Certain basic 'drives' are common to all mankind—the drives for food, comfort, sex, power, social approval, and so on. These are the mainsprings of human activity, and they *underlie* all the patterns of human behaviour. But the patterns of behaviour themselves are shaped by an enormous variety of external circumstances, which channel and modify the forms of the basic drives into social needs. If the analogy of the clock may be pursued a little further, it is fair to say that Motivation Research is concerned not with the mainsprings of human behaviour but with the

escapements and regulators which can be adjusted in the interests of a manufacturer or advertiser.

In other words, it is concerned only with such motives as are *manipulable*—motives which the user of Motivation Research can do something about. When Motivation Research is used to establish, firmly and unequivocally, that a housewife is more likely to buy a product if it is packaged in a blue wrapper than in a red one, it is doing a useful and worth-while job: when it goes further, to discover that she prefers blue to red because she was frightened by a bull in early childhood, it is simply wasting time and resources.

For Motivation Research, like social psychology in general, must be *problem-centred*, as opposed to clinical psychology and psychiatry which are essentially *person-centred*. Unlike these therapeutic branches of psychology, it is not concerned with the behaviour of the individual, but with the behaviour of groups and segments of the market. And while it is true that markets are people, and groups of people are made up of individual persons, those aspects of human behaviour which have to be studied in order to cure a neurotic complaint are not the same as those which are important to the manufacturing or marketing problem.

Suppose, for example, that we are conducting a study into housewives' attitudes towards soup-mixes. The 'clinical psychology' approach to this would be to conduct 'depth' or 'group' interviews with a small number of housewives—say twenty or thirty—at very great length (these terms, incidentally, will be defined and discussed in the next chapter). Many of these interviews will throw up nothing in particular, but it is possible that, say, two of them will indicate a feeling of guilt on the informant's part about using a product which is so quick and easy. And perhaps one of these two will, in the course of a long interview, let drop various remarks which will suggest to the psychoanalyst that her attitude stems from infantile hostility towards her mother, an Oedipus complex in regard to her father,

dissatisfaction with her husband, the sublimation of sex drives into her cooking skills, and so on and so forth.

At this stage all that has really emerged is one finding: 'some women feel a sense of guilt in taking advantage of the speed and ease-of-use of soup-mixes.' But some of the wilder practitioners of Motivation Research, particularly in its early days, would not confine themselves within these limits. The one case with an interesting psycho-analytical background would be pounced on, taken as reliably indicative of the whole population, and used to provide the main data for a report stuffed with psychological jargon and references to sexual functions. Asked how many people in this sample of twenty had actually revealed these attitudes, the analyst would reply that, though only a few of them *actually* revealed them, these few were in fact revealing what the others felt but were successfully concealing or repressing! And on the basis of this highly dramatic but thoroughly unscientific generalization, marketing and advertising advice would be given which might or might not be sound in its own right. When it happened to be sound, it found its way into the case-histories of the subject: when unsound, no more was likely to be said about it.

It must be emphasized here that too much importance should not be attached to quoted case-histories. Even if a researcher is wrong two times out of three, he will still have enough successful guesses to provide an impressive array of apparent evidence. Nor is this situation new, or peculiar to Motivation Research. In the year 1646 the celebrated astrologer, William Lilly, was asked to search the heavens for the whereabouts of a missing dog. In his *Introduction to Astrology*, published in 1647, he quoted his reasoning:

> 'The sign Gemini is west and by south, the quarter of heaven westerly; Mercury, the dog's significator, is in Libra, a western sign, and is in a south-western quarter of heaven; the Moon is in Virgo, a south-west sign, verging to the west angle. The plurality of testimonies showed that the dog ought to be *west* from where

> the owner lived, which was at Temple-bar; therefore I judged that the dog was about Long Acre, or upper part of Drury Lane. . . . Mercury being in an airy sign, I said the dog was in some garret or upper room; and as the Moon was under the beams of the Sun, and Mercury, Moon and Sun were in the 8th house, that he was kept privately, or in great secrecy. But as the Sun, on the following Monday, formed a trine to Saturn, Lord of the ascendant, I intimated that he should then have news of his dog; and this proved true; for a gentleman of the querent's acquaintance, coming accidentally to see a friend in Long Acre, found the dog chained up under a table, and knowing him to belong to the querent, sent him home about ten o'clock on Monday morning, to my very great credit.'

One successful case-history does not establish the validity of a pseudo-scientific methodology!

In the case of the soup-mixes, it might have been demonstrated that 'some women feel a sense of guilt in taking advantage of their speed and ease-of-use'. But before any marketing or advertising plans can safely be laid, it is necessary to know a great deal more than this.

How *many* women feel this way? How strongly do they feel about it? How many feel this way to so slight a degree that it is unlikely to affect their buying patterns? What sort of women hold these views in different strengths? What is the relationship between having this feeling of guilt and the current pattern of buying behaviour?

All these questions are far from academic. For, clearly, the most *powerful* reason for buying a soup-mix, or any other semi-prepared food, is the ease and speed it offers, but if *all* potential customers have this feeling of guilt, then the advertising would be unwise to say so. On the other hand, if any considerable proportion do *not* have this feeling, this group provide a ready market to whom the straightforward ease-and-speed appeal can be made openly and bluntly, with some hope of success, whereas those women who feel a slight sense of guilt may be won over to the

product only if the main appeal is wrapped up so that its slip is not showing.

Suppose, for example, that, having established by a small number of 'depth-interviews' that this sense of guilt is a factor which must be considered, we proceed by the use of a more scientific and statistical method (such as will be discussed in later chapters) to discover *how many* have this feeling, and in what strength. We might get results such as the following:

No sense of guilt	25%
Slight sense of guilt	45%
Strong sense of guilt	30%
TOTAL	100%

This, in the first place, establishes one very important point—the almost hysterical sense of guilt on which the early psycho-analytical school of Motivation Research would have laid such stress is felt by only 30% of housewives, which still leaves a reasonably adequate market among the 70% who are not strongly affected in this way! It might, indeed, be argued that the 30% who feel so strongly are unlikely to be easily converted to acceptance of soup-mixes, even by skilful advertising, so that they might well be ignored completely in framing marketing policies.

The more profitable prospect-groups, however, still require consideration. The choice at this stage is between using a direct ease-and-speed approach, which will undoubtedly be the most convincing for the 'no sense of guilt' group forming 25% of the population, but which will act as a deterrent to the 'slight sense of guilt' group who form the larger proportion of 45%, or alternatively dreaming up some more subtle approach which will work a little better on the 'slight guilt' group, but which cannot, on the face of it, work nearly so effectively on the 'no guilt' group. A decision has therefore to be taken as to which of these two appeals is likely to produce the greater volume of total

sales, in the short term and in the long term, so that policy can be decided accordingly: this is the main function of the study.

At this stage, of course, a good many other factors have to be taken into account. It might be reasoned, for example, that women of over 45 are likely to be set in their cooking habits, and unlikely to be persuaded to adopt novel methods, and a decision might therefore be taken to concentrate all promotional efforts on housewives under the age of 45. The simple table of figures shown above might then be broken up as follows:

	Aged under 45	Aged 45 and over	TOTAL
	%	%	%
No sense of guilt . . .	20	5	25
Slight sense of guilt . . .	20	25	45
Strong sense of guilt . . .	5	25	30
TOTALS	45	55	100

If it has been decided to concentrate on the under-45's, then on the face of it the problem is very much simplified. In this age-bracket the 'no sense of guilt' group is just as large as the 'slight sense of guilt' group: obviously there is a good deal to be said for using the powerful and direct ease-and-speed appeal aimed at the 'no sense of guilt' group, and leaving the rest of the market to be dealt with at a much later stage.

But further analysis might show that this decision was itself wrong. Suppose there are already a number of soup-mixes on the market, and suppose that the usage-patterns among this under-45 group are found to be as shown on page 36.

In this case the 'no sense of guilt' group has already been largely pre-empted by existing brands: sales can only be made to this group in direct competition with the established market-leaders. And it will probably be found that all these established brands are

in fact making use of an ease-and-speed approach in their promotional activities. But the best *potential*, in the sense of the best target for a new brand, clearly lies in the 'slight sense of guilt' group, who have not yet been sold on the idea of soup-mixes at all, and for whom the 'ease-and-speed' approach would be discouraging and therefore best avoided.

	Use existing brands	Do not use any	Total aged under 45
	%	%	%
No sense of guilt . . .	15	5	20
Slight sense of guilt . . .	5	15	20
Strong sense of guilt . . .	1	4	5
TOTALS	21	24	45

This example has been quoted at some length because it indicates some of the factors which have to be cross-analysed in carrying out a competent Motivation Research study. Of course, the factors quoted are by no means exhaustive. There are many other psychological factors which would have to be taken into account (notably the feeling that food out of a packet is not adequately nourishing) and very many other 'circumstantial' factors apart from age—social class, size of family, geographical region, and so on. The sense of guilt which is liable to arise with any semi-prepared food, for example, is found in England to be particularly strong with regard to cake-mixes (since cake-making is part of the everyday English cuisine), but *not* particularly strong with regard to instant coffee or soup-mixes: coffee is a relatively unimportant drink in England compared with tea, and the hostility which is evinced in most continental countries towards instant coffee tends in England to be confined to 'tea-bags', though for the same reason—'it is not the proper way to do things'.

Similarly, since soup plays a relatively unimportant part in the ordinary English menu, 'guilty' feelings arise comparatively rarely in the use of soup-mixes, but since what soup *is* eaten comes for the most part out of cans, the attitude towards dehydrated products in general becomes an important motivator. And in regions of the country, or specific social strata, where soup already plays an important part, the motivations are found to be very different from those where it does not.

Motivation, in fact, is strongly affected by external circumstances. This is a truism of psychology—starving men dream of food where well-fed men dream of other satisfactions—and this is something which is of supreme importance in considering Motivation Research as used for business purposes. It means that in studying the 'personality' of the consumer we must be concerned not only with the psychological variables such as aggression–submission, introversion–extraversion, and so on, but also with all the 'circumstantial' variables, such as age, social class, size of family, and the whole complex of behaviour habits. All these factors interlock with one another to make up the human personality, and the interrelation is such that it is neither possible nor desirable to study one factor independently of all the others.

Three things follow from this. In the first place, Motivation Research cannot confine itself to dabbling in psycho-analytical concepts: in studying the 'why' we also have to take into account the 'what' and the 'how'. In the second place, broad generalizations covering the whole population at one swoop are neither valid nor useful: it is no more meaningful to say 'the average woman thinks . . .' than it is to say the 'average woman has 1·347 children' or 'the colour of the average person's eyes is six parts brown, three parts blue and one part grey'. An average number of children expressed to three decimal places may be *statistically* true, but *practically* it is quite meaningless: some people have one child, some two, some three, and some none, and their behaviour patterns will vary accordingly. And while it is true

that most people have brown eyes, there are still very considerable numbers with blue or grey ones, and it is impossible to strike an average! In other words, people have to be studied in *groups* if we are concerned with the practical problems of production, marketing, and advertising.

A third and vital point follows from this second point. If Motivation Research is concerned to study people in groups it must ensure that the groups it studies are properly representative of the whole populations in which it is ultimately interested. This means that Motivation Research is just as concerned as standard market research with the problems of sampling, of selecting informants in such a way as to provide a properly representative cross-section of the public, and of using large enough samples for the findings to be reliable. The claim that people are fundamentally so similar that Motivation Research can get by with the tiniest of samples belongs to the days of early extravagance: as this chapter has been concerned to show, the modern concept of Motivation Research as a tool of production, marketing, and promotional policies requires a very different approach.

Motivation Research, in fact, represents an extension of standard consumer research: its function is to add to the traditional 'who, what, when, where' the additional and supremely important 'why'. To cope with this additional function it makes use of additional techniques and methods which have not previously been available, but these techniques have to be used in *conjunction* with the standard techniques. A full and valid Motivation Research study should, indeed, comprehend within itself a full 'factual' market study on as large a scale as is necessary. And though it is sometimes the practice to restrict the description of 'Motivation Research' to that section of the study which involves specifically psychological techniques, the user of Motivation Research should ensure that conveniences of vocabulary do not lead to basic misunderstanding as to its real nature or the uses to which it may profitably be put.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BASIC TECHNIQUES

THE preceding chapter commenced with the statement that Motivation Research is concerned with the problem of finding out 'why'—specifically, *why* market patterns take the shape they do. To do this it makes use of methods and techniques, specially designed for the purpose, which go far beyond asking a crude 'why' question of a sample of informants. For we have seen in Chapter Two some examples of the errors to which this last might lead. Motivation Research has, in fact, been described as 'the art of finding out "why" without actually asking', and it is the use of *indirect* methods, the 'beneath-the-skin' approach, which is the distinguishing sign of the art.

The use of indirect techniques is, after all, common enough in everyday life. When a doctor wants to know whether or not a patient has a fever, he doesn't *ask* him: instead, he measures the patient's temperature and pulse-rate, and if these are above normal deduces that a febrile condition is present. When he wants to see whether there is any major defect in his patient's peripheral nervous system, he does not *discuss* the matter, but gives the patient a clip across the knee: if the patient's foot jerks up, the doctor knows that all is well in at least one direction. And it is worth noting that if he gives the knee a slight tap he will produce a slight jerk, whereas a much sharper tap will produce a much sharper jerk, even though what is being checked is exactly the same. The fact that a stronger stimulus will produce a stronger reaction, though the actual phenomenon being studied remains unchanged, is something which is of considerable importance in Motivation Research.

Examples of this sort can be drawn indefinitely from medicine and other sciences. But more everyday illustrations can be found. One favourite example suggests that, if you want to find out whether a man is terrified of snakes, the best way is not to ask him —since his answer may be coloured by his desire not to appear cowardly—but to drop a snake at his feet and see how he reacts. Of course, not many people want this sort of information, and fewer still are in the habit of carrying snakes around with them for test purposes, but is *is* frequently required to know whether a man of one's acquaintance has a sense of humour. We do not (or should not) try to find this out by asking him: we tell him a joke, and see how he reacts. But, clearly, if our judgement as to his sense of humour is to be valid, we must be sure that the joke really is a good one (not just the clever thing that four-year-old Tommy said last Tuesday week) and that we have told it properly: the criterion of this is that other people to whom we have told it (not being under any obligation to us) have been amused by it.

To a very large extent, the most useful techniques of Motivation Research are of this indirect type. And it is frequently the case that wholly valid deductions as to some of the reasons underlying a particular market pattern may be obtained from detailed study of that pattern itself, particularly if other relevant factors are known and can be taken into account. If, for instance, an expensive product is known to have a higher proportion of its total customers among the better-off classes than a cheaper product in the same field, it may reasonably be deduced that price is at least one of the major motivating factors responsible for this pattern, though (as was shown in Chapter Two) it may not be the only one.

But the doctrine that the shape of the market pattern can itself sometimes *explain* that pattern is one that must be applied with great care: it is true only occasionally. A very simple example will demonstrate here: the proportions of men and of women, of the

younger and the older groups, who smoke cigarettes or tobacco at all are approximately:

	MEN	WOMEN
Aged under 45 . . .	79%	47%
Aged 45 and over . . .	85%	28%

It might be deduced from this that women tend to stop smoking after they reach the age of 45, a statement which is just not true. What causes this pattern is that people take up smoking —or don't—*before* the age of 45: the older generation of women tended not to acquire the habit when they were young (because in those days it was hardly acceptable socially for women) and so for the most part never acquired it at all.

An even clearer example can be seen in the following table of the proportion of men in each separate age-group who possess a certain characteristic:

Aged 18–24	0%
Aged 25–34	0%
Aged 35–44	3%
Aged 45–54	23%
Aged 55–64	37%
Aged 65 and over	58%

A hasty deduction from this table might be that the characteristic, whatever it is, is rapidly dying out; it is something which has no interest for present-day young people, and is likely to disappear completely within a few decades. But the characteristic might be that of 'being a grandfather', and the reason for the particular pattern is that this is a characteristic which few men are in a position to acquire before they reach the age of 40!

Skilful cross-analysis of existing information may sometimes show the *absence* of consumer motivations as factors responsible for a particular market-pattern, which in itself can be a very important finding. This is the sort of problem which might arise when a manufacturer says, 'We have 90% distribution in both Area I and Area II, but our brand, Brand A, has 70% of the market

in Area I and only 50% in Area II. We know that the only other brand, Brand B, has been making headway in Area II: what is it about the people of this area which makes them willing to switch away from our brand?'

To answer *this specific question* it might be necessary to examine the purchasing habits of people in the two areas in relation to what is available to them in the outlets they habitually purchase from. And one might find a pattern of this sort:

	Using outlets where only A is available	Using outlets where both A and B available	Using outlets where only B is available	TOTALS
AREA I:				
Number of purchasers .	5,000	4,000	1,000	10,000
Purchasing:				
A	5,000	2,000	—	7,000
B	—	2,000	1,000	3,000
A's share of total market .	*100%*	*50%*	*0%*	*70%*
AREA II:				
Number of purchasers .	1,000	8,000	1,000	10,000
Purchasing:				
A	1,000	4,000	—	5,000
B	—	4,000	1,000	5,000
A's share of total market .	*100%*	*50%*	*0%*	*50%*

from which the following conclusion could safely be drawn: 'Where availabilities are the same, the same pattern of choice between Brand A and Brand B is found in both Area I and Area II. Consumer acceptance therefore appears to be the same in both areas. The higher share of market held by Brand B in Area II is solely a function of its better distribution in that area.'

This sort of analysis is of considerable use in answering the chicken-or-egg question: does the consumer-pattern *set* the dis-

tribution-pattern, or *follow* it? In this particular example, consumer-preference is all set up ready to give Brand B a bigger share of the market in Area II as soon as its distribution makes this possible, and there appear to be no motivational *differences* between the inhabitants of the two areas other than this difference in distribution.

It must be made clear that this particular analysis answers only the *one* question relating to differences between the two areas. It does not attempt to investigate the reasons why, in conditions of equal distribution, consumer preference should be equally divided between Brand A and Brand B; that is another story, though obviously one which is of major importance.

We have already seen, in Chapter Two, the example relating to a baby-food in which it was shown that cross-analysis of the present or past usage of a particular product against the extent to which its price was known could indicate the importance of price as a motivator. Another example can be drawn from the field of motoring. In a certain large-scale survey it was found that when motorists were interviewed about the garage or petrol station they *habitually* used, and asked what was the main reason why they used this in preference to any other, 54% said they did so on account of its 'convenience'. At a later stage in the interview, however, they were asked whether there was any other garage or petrol station equally convenient for them, and 60% of all informants said there was. Now the cross-analysis of the answers to these two questions gave the following:

	Percentage quoting 'convenience' as the main reason
	%
Among informants having another equally convenient	40
Among informants having no other equally convenient	75
AMONG ALL INFORMANTS	54

and this cross-analysis makes it abundantly clear that 'convenience' is not the prime motivator in the final choice of a petrol station to anything like the extent to which the data from the original question would have suggested. Of course, convenience is bound to be a *factor* which enters into the choice of any regular source of supply: very few motorists are likely to use one which is positively *inconvenient*, but this is not the same thing. When 40% of those motorists who have two garages equally convenient quote 'convenient' as the main reason for choosing one rather than the other, they are giving an answer which is easy and seems rational, but is obviously not the real one. And it is legitimate to regard this figure of 40% as a sort of *inflation* to the 'convenience' answer, which may be *subtracted* from it to give some indication of the real importance of the convenience factor as a primary motivator. In this example one could say that, among those motorists without another equally convenient petrol-station, convenience is the *main* reason for the choice of one particular one in 35% of cases: among all motorists, the figure would drop to some 14%.

In all the last three examples quoted, motivational information was obtained by cross-analysis of questions specifically asked. Sometimes, however, it can emerge almost by accident. In a study of the coffee market in one European country housewives were asked at the beginning of the interview what brands of coffee they had currently in the house: only 7% mentioned (along with various brands of ordinary ground coffee) having any instant coffee. But at a later stage it emerged that no less than 28% of housewives actually had a can of instant coffee in the house—in other words, 21% had a can, but did not mention it in answer to the first question. This was not simply a question of forgetting brands (the same thing did not occur with different brands of ordinary ground coffee), but provided a very clear indication that three out of every four purchasers of instant coffee did not in fact regard it as being a brand of coffee like any other, but thought of it as a totally different type of product. The

implications of this, motivationally speaking, were very far-reaching indeed, and though this particular aspect was naturally probed much more fully during the course of the study, nothing emerged quite so clear-cut and obvious as this unconscious revealing by housewives of their basic attitude towards this product.

Detailed and intricate cross-analysis of data collected in standard market research enquiries does, in fact, constitute one of the major techniques for understanding motivations. To this extent, indeed, the more skilful and sophisticated researchers have been practising 'motivation research' *of a sort* for many years, and this without the aid of psychological techniques, ink-blots, word-association tests, and the rest. The fact that newer techniques have been devised to deal with problems which cannot be handled in this way does not in any sense invalidate the more straightforward techniques, which still have a major part to play. Indeed, it is essential that they should be used in conjunction with the more recondite techniques in order to provide that *measurement* which, as has been shown at length in Chapter Three, is really inseparable from Motivation Research used for business purposes.

But, this said, the limitations of a method which relies on cross-analysis of ordinary survey data must be realized. In the first place, the motivational factors which matter must be capable of being handled in this way—and many of them are not. In the second place, the relevant data must be 'written into' the survey, either deliberately or by chance. It is amazing how much useful data *does* emerge by happy chance in most surveys—the word 'serendipity' comes to mind here [1]—but to rely on this happening is no way to conduct expensive research projects. And if the required data are to be *deliberately* sought for and studied, the question that has to be asked is how we know what to look for.

[1] 'Serendipity'—the faculty of making happy and unexpected discoveries by accident.

Alfred Politz, the researcher who may perhaps be regarded as the doyen of American 'classical' research, and who maintains constant warfare against the excesses and extravagances of the more extreme schools of Motivation Research (in which, however, he sometimes tends to throw the babies away with the bathwater), quotes[1] an example of straight cross-analysis to uncover motivation. Motorists were asked whether their cars had good pick-up: they were also asked whether their accelerators were easy or hard to push down. It was found that, among those motorists who said their accelerators were easy to push and keep down, 61% gave their cars credit for good pick-up; among those, however, who said they were hard to push down, only 26% gave their cars credit for good pick-up.

Since it was apparently known that, mechanically speaking, there was no connexion between soft accelerator springs and good pick-up, and no *actual* tendency for cars which had the one to have the other, Politz concluded that the findings were a conclusive proof that the *reality* of an easy accelerator created the *illusion* of good pick-up—a motivational finding which, if true, is obviously of very great importance to car manufacturers. Our reservation regarding its truth arises from the fact that the informant's *word* was taken about the strength or softness of the spring—no actual measurement was made in objective terms—and although the experiment established a definite relationship between what the motorist thinks about his accelerator-spring and what he thinks about his car's pick-up, there is no way of telling which is the cause and which the effect!

It might be, for example, that it is the *reality* of good pick-up which creates the *illusion* of a soft spring. Or it might be that the sort of motorist who tends to think his car has good pick-up is also the sort of man who tends to think his accelerator-spring is soft. Or it might, again, be that the heavy-footed driver, who

[1] Alfred Politz, 'Science and Truth in Marketing Research' (*Harvard Business Review*, January–February 1957).

stands no nonsense from his accelerator-spring, habitually stamps on the pedal in a fashion which sends the car shooting away, whereas the more timid driver gets poor pick-up because he approaches the accelerator in a gingerly fashion which helps to make him more conscious of the strength of the spring.

But even if we assume, for the sake of the argument, that the motorist's view as to the strength of his accelerator spring is in fact in line with reality, so that the particular finding which emerged in this case can be accepted, we still have to ask ourselves by what happy chance we included in the questionnaire-design a question which reveals the relationship. There are so many other things which *might* have been proved to contribute to the illusion of good pick-up: some of them were actually asked about in the enquiry under discussion, and proved not to be relevant, but the list could be prolonged almost indefinitely, to include such things as angle of the driving-seat, length of bonnet, height of driver's head above the road, and so on and so forth. If, in an enquiry of this sort, we have to include everything we can think of, we finish up with a questionnaire of totally unworkable length—and even then the chances are that we have *failed* to think of something which is perhaps really important.

An example bearing on this may again be drawn from the field of medicine. We *now* know that if a woman contracts german measles (*roseola*) during early pregnancy, her baby is very liable to be born blind or with defective eyesight. This has presumably been the case for many thousands of years, but our knowledge of it dates back only about fifteen years—to the time when an epidemic of german measles in Australia was followed in the succeeding year by the birth of a high proportion of babies with defective eyesight. This queer coincidence led somebody to wonder whether there was a causal relationship between them, and once research got thinking along these lines it was an extremely simple job to demonstrate statistically that there was. This relationship established, it then became possible for the medical profession to

devise ways of avoiding or minimizing the consequences. But there are still many thousands of people throughout the world who walk in darkness because nobody ever thought of connecting the two. And in the same way, there are certain primitive tribes who are still not aware that there is any relationship between certain amusing personal activities and the fact that babies get themselves born!

In the field of consumer research, it is frequently not too difficult a task to test a *given* hypothesis. And quite often this can be done by cross-analysis of standard research data. Examples have been quoted already of the way in which this procedure can answer such questions as 'Are welfare centres playing an important part in the promotion of this baby-food?' (page 20) or 'Is the variation between two areas in share-of-market due to any fundamental differences between the populations of those two areas?' (page 42) or 'Is it true that "convenience" is the major reason for a motorist's choice of one petrol-station rather than another?' (page 44).

Of course, there are very many hypotheses which cannot be tested in this comparatively straightforward manner, but which require the use of the specific techniques which Motivation Research has designed for the purpose. These techniques will be discussed in detail later in this chapter, but before we turn to these we must examine the question of where the 'given' hypotheses are to come from. How are we to find out what factors are *likely* to be important, so that we can test for them and measure them?

It is to deal with this problem that Motivation Research uses one particular technique which is relatively so well known that for many people it is, perhaps unfortunately, the beginning and the end of the subject. This is the so-called 'depth interview'. The name is not a very good one, for reasons which will be discussed a little later, but since this is very generally used we may, at this stage, consider it under that title.

The 'depth-interview' is an interview in which the informant is allowed to 'talk himself out' on a particular subject, without the restriction of a rigid questionnaire, and with the minimum of interference from the investigator—who has the responsibility, however, of ensuring that certain key points are covered no matter how widely the discussion may otherwise range. To this end the investigator is furnished, not with a questionnaire, but with what is called an 'interview guide'—a list, in fact, of the points that have to be covered. A simple example of an interview-guide used to study the question of how far women are favourably disposed towards the idea of having separate domestic washing products for different purposes, and how far they would not bother with these but tend to use one multi-purpose product, is given below.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What products are used for what different purposes, usually or occasionally? How much switching about is there, and how much consistent use? If a product is used for several purposes, does the housewife buy it primarily for *one*? Which one? How does she feel about using it for other purposes?

2. How does the informant feel about buying different products for different purposes? What products, what purposes? To what extent does she think this arises from lack of difference between different needs, and to what extent from a desire not to bother with too many products?

3. For each of the broad groups of products she uses, can she try to calculate roughly how much of each she uses for each of the main washing activities? Do her findings on this come as a surprise to her? If so, how does she react? Is her attitude towards buying out of line with these facts? If so, what excuses does she give?

4. Inside each of the main product sub-groups (soap flakes, soap powders, powder detergents, liquid detergents) does she feel that some brands are very much better than others? Which, and why does she think this? How does she feel about each of the sub-groups as a class? Has she any strong sense of loyalty towards any

particular brand? How has this come about? Has she any strong conviction that any one is particularly good, or particularly good for any purpose? Which? Are there any which she feels are good for some purposes but not for others? Which, and why?

5. What determines her buying behaviour for washing products? Does she buy to specific purposes, or generally? What leads her to select the brands she does? What use does she make of any coupons she may get? How does she feel about coupons and special offers generally?

6. Are there any brands which she finds have particularly unfavourable qualities? Which, and what? Are there any she has never tried herself, but has heard are bad? What has she heard bad about them?

7. For each of a list of specific brands, will the informant discuss suitable and unsuitable purposes, advantages and disadvantages; discuss her general attitude towards them?

It cannot be too strongly stressed that this is *not* a questionnaire. The points are listed as questions, but they are rarely, if ever, asked in that form. The idea of the whole thing is *to get the housewife talking*, with, ideally, the investigator doing nothing more than adding an occasional lubricant in the shape of remarks such as 'That's interesting? . . .' or 'What do you mean by that?' or 'Could you explain that a little more?' or 'And how do you feel about that?', apart from two other specific functions. One is to steer the conversation round so that in the end, whatever else has been mentioned, all the points listed in the Interview Guide have been covered, and the second is to ensure that any unusual, unexpected or apparently irrelevant comments are followed up and amplified.

Naturally, the conduct of this sort of interview requires a considerable degree of skill, training and experience on the part of the investigator. This is something which will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Ten, but the essential point here is that the informant's remarks should be recorded as faithfully, and as near verbatim, as possible. This necessity led at one time to a

certain amount of experimenting with tape or wire recording, but these produce fantastic complications of their own and are rarely justified: people are not normally so garrulous that a skilled investigator has great difficulty in getting down all the informant says, either in formal shorthand or in some form of abbreviated writing which can subsequently be written up.

A depth-interview of this type may take anything between fifteen minutes and two or three hours. This depends partly upon the loquacity of the informant, partly upon his or her knowledge of and interest in the subject under discussion, and partly (indeed, mostly) on the area which the interview-guide is designed to cover. The example quoted above is of about medium intensity and extensity, but it could have been designed otherwise. Had the problem it was concerned with been seen differently, it might have started with a good deal of discussion of household duties generally, or at the other end of the scale it might have gone much more deeply into the details of usage of and attitudes towards certain individual products.

Sometimes, indeed, a method known as the 'funnel technique' is employed, in which the interview starts with discussion on the broadest possible level and is gradually narrowed down (the investigator gently leading it) through progressively more restricted channels. For example, an enquiry into attitudes towards a semi-prepared foodstuff (cake-mix, soup-mix, instant coffee, or something of that sort) which is likely to be affected by the 'guilt' feelings mentioned in Chapter Three, and by the housewife's sense of duty towards her home and family, might be started off with a general discussion of household tasks (including the use of various labour-saving devices), narrowed down to cooking, further narrowed down to labour-saving foods such as tinned goods, frozen foods, and the like, narrowed yet once more to the semi-prepared foods, and finally concentrated on the subject of the enquiry—say cake-mix.

There is no standard design for an interview-guide: what is

required in any particular case depends upon the nature of the problem under review. But in any case what results is a batch of 'scripts' or 'protocols' or 'schedules' which may vary in length from three or four pages to twenty or more. Before considering how these have to be handled, however, it might be worth while looking at a few extracts from some scripts which resulted from the already-quoted interview guide.

1. 'I always used Rinso when I was first married, then changed to Daz or Omo for a long time, then very recently to Persil, because I can use bar soap with it to rub on dirty spots. It's more convenient than trying to sprinkle more powder on. I don't boil things except very rarely, and I can't say I'm absolutely satisfied even with Persil. It seems to make a difference to whites if the water is very hot even without boiling with Persil. It's the same with Daz or Omo or Persil, they make the clean parts very dazzling, but they still leave that yellow part in the middle of the sheet or pillow-case, and that is where I rub with bar-soap. Also the feet of socks and stockings, and the collars and cuffs of shirts. Nothing else but bar soap (and a brush for the collars) really budges them. For the washing-up I always use a detergent—Daz, or Tide, or any one of those powder ones, usually depending on what coupons I happen to get. I like Surf least of all of them; in fact at one time I didn't even use the Surf coupons at all. . . . I've never used Cheer, though there was a special coupon for it with a duster, but I'm not interested in dusters with my washing powder. . . . I've got a packet of Lux in the house, but I hardly ever use it.

2. For fine and delicate fabrics? I use Lux, always. Everybody does, surely? I use Lux too for the heavy wash—nappies started me off using it for this, and I always do now. Pure soap takes a lot of beating, of course. I use Surf for soaking dirty tea-towels—or to loosen the dirt in dungarees—or things that don't matter too much.

3. It's definitely worth buying special things for special purposes. When choosing, the main thing is the amount of soiling involved. A baby's nappy doesn't need the same strength of soap as a soiled pillow-case, for example. You need a soap powder for fine not-so-dirty things and a strong detergent for the heavy wash —and for washing up.

4. I use anything—it depends on my mood. I like variety. But I use the same thing for everything—it's Surf at the moment. . . . Persil? You've got to muck around mixing it in, and you don't get so much lather as Surf. Lux? No, I never use it. It's all right for babies. Nice for nylons, too, but a bit dear.

5. I use Persil for special things, and Tide for everything else. I can't be bothered with getting special things for special purposes.

6. I only use special offers on coupons when they apply to Omo or Persil. One of the things I like about Persil is they don't have need to advertise so much—sells on its own merits. I regard coupons as fishy—there must be something wrong with the product to push it so much.

7. For fine things I use sometimes Lux, sometimes Surf, depending on what I have in the house. This includes nylon stockings and undies, blouses and woollies. . . . For the heavy wash I have a washing machine, and use Persil mostly. I like Persil—it brings the clothes up best of the soap powders. . . . I had Tide and Daz on coupons and didn't care for them. Tide made my hands sore. Daz was too blue—didn't like blue, like to put my own blue in. I use Reckitts, only a touch, not too much. . . . Lux is an old and tried friend, good for new woollies and anything special. Don't use a lot of it though; just don't think about it. One packet lasts me months—I just keep it as a luxury for special things. I'm apt to forget it.

8. Dreft? My daughter uses it for stiffening clothes. Yes, I'm sure it is that, isn't it? (GETS BOTTLE.) Oh, no, it's Dip.

9. I did use Lux when the girl was small, for baby clothes, but I find now she is older Daz is just as good. You had to use such a lot of it, it came very expensive. You've got to be careful with babies, they've got such delicate skins. I've been using Daz and Omo ever since they came out. I use Daz for woollens, or nylons, or silk blouses or anything delicate. Find it better than soap powders in hard water. They go all scummy, and you get no lather. I don't know why I use Daz, but I always have done. Now for the heavy wash I use Omo. I do a pretty large wash, with the kiddie—sheets, towels, and the other things. Sometimes I send them to the laundry, sometimes at home—depending on the weather. Now today I'm doing it all at home.

10. I use Surf for everything. I just can't be bothered getting different things. I only use coupons when they're for Surf. These things are all much alike, anyway.

These few examples illustrate the wealth of information which can be collected in this way. Perhaps 'information' is the wrong word: 'pointers' might be better, for it is clear that there are very wide divergencies in attitudes and usage-patterns, and the sample of informants is far too small for any conclusions to be drawn. Further (and this is one of the main limitations of the depth-interview), it is always possible that some point which has been *voiced* by one informant—say the resentment of the blue in Daz in quotation 7, or of the Cheer duster in quotation 1—may also be *felt* by other informants who did not happen to mention it, though it is also possible that these are rare and isolated attitudes. It would, however, be equally wrong either to ignore them altogether or to accept them as universally applicable: they must be regarded, as has already been suggested, as *pointers* for further investigation. On the other hand, the remarks expressed about Lux in quotations 1, 4, 7, and 9, when taken in conjunction with quotation 2, already suggest reasonably clearly a quite definite situation—that Lux is regarded as practically a 'must' for really delicate things, but as something either too precious or too gentle for everyday use.

A number of different attitudes are revealed in these quotations, and many of these are fairly straightforward. For example, some housewives clearly regard it as desirable to use different products for different purposes (see particularly quotation 3): others think it not worth while (quotations 4, 5, and 10). On the other hand, quotation 10 reveals a very mixed attitude: the informant says that all the detergents are much alike, and yet that she will never use anything but Surf, even with a coupon. There is a contradiction here, because if she *really* felt that there was no difference between Surf and the other powder detergents, she would presumably take advantage of the economy offered by coupons for

other brands, as the housewife of quotation 1 seems to do. Similarly, the housewife from whose script quotation 6 is drawn praises Persil because it neither advertises nor gives coupons so much as other brands—a statement which is just not in accordance with the facts. The attitudes revealed by these two cases are thus much more complex, and require a good deal of further examination, for which techniques beyond the ordinary conversational depth-interview are required.

What these techniques are will be discussed later in this chapter. As a first stage, however, the depth-interview scripts can be very revealing, though it must be realized that they are of little use as they stand. A highly skilled research executive (usually, but not necessarily, somebody with psychological or sociological training) has to go through them in detail, analysing and assessing them, pulling out the salient points, estimating the weight to be attached at this stage to each, looking for and following-up likely lines of thought, and so on. In this way it is possible to bring into the picture the multitudinous aspects involved in any particular problem, to delineate the areas over which further investigation is required, to uncover differences in actual behaviour and in the words used to describe that behaviour, and to reveal attitudes and prejudices which, while not being in any way concealed, may not normally be thought of in conjunction with the problem under study. And the extent to which people contradict themselves, or are inconsistent in their remarks, can also be most revealing. Used at the pilot stage, the depth-interview is not only likely to be extremely rewarding, but is also essential in order to set up the various 'hypotheses' which are needed for subsequent testing in a more 'scientific' fashion.

But, in general, it cannot be much more than this, for a variety of reasons, of which two are the most important. The first is that of sample-size—how typical are the depth-interview informants of the total populations they are supposed to represent? The sort of analysis which depth-interviews require is such that

it is virtually impossible to add together the results for any sizeable sample of people—and, indeed, it is impossible to *interview* any sizeable sample and analyse the results within reasonable bounds of time and cost. Yet, as has been shown in Chapter Three, adequate samples are essential, not only to ensure that the results are typical of the population as a whole, but also if reliable guidance is to be given for future manufacturing, marketing, or advertising action. It is not sufficient to know that some people use a product for *this* reason, some for *that*, and some for *the other*: we have got to know how many people there are in each group, who they are, what they do, and how their behaviour, now and in the future, is likely to affect the total sales-picture. None of this is possible without the use of samples big enough to permit the proper study of sub-groups.

The second limitation of the usefulness of the depth-interview is that, despite its name, it really cannot go very *deep*. The psycho-analyst's claim that, after seeing a patient for several hours a week for a period of months, or even years, he can understand that patient's inner consciousness may possibly be valid: to suppose that the same claim can reasonably be made after a single interview, even if it lasts three hours, is ridiculous. The depth-interviewer can dig to a certain extent, but if an informant is not aware of what her own attitudes really are, and what underlying emotions have created them, she can hardly explain them even in a long interview. If these attitudes are ones which she would regard as silly, or unbecoming, she will endeavour to conceal them. And while it is true that something may escape by accident, and be picked up by the eagle eye of the research executive, a lot more will get past. The claim that in any one interview it is possible to distinguish between real attitudes and motives on the one hand and 'rationalizations' (reasonable-seeming explanations which are advanced by way of excuse) on the other, is just not tenable unless the analyst is credited with super-human powers.

In the course of a series of depth-interviews enough *does* escape

to permit the setting-up of many of the necessary hypotheses, but not to test them, to assess their appropriate weight, or to judge of their ultimate importance. For this, the depth-interviews must be regarded simply as a 'motivational pilot', the preliminary stages to the 'quantifying follow-up',[1] which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. But both the pilot and the follow-up stages are likely to require the use of a number of additional techniques, and these must be considered next.

Before turning to these, however, we might glance at a sort of illegitimate half-sister to the depth-interview—the 'group-interview'. Here a number of informants are gathered together in one room—normally anything between four and eight of them—and set talking on a given subject, as in a depth-interview. A chairman (normally the research executive, or psychologist, or sociologist in charge of the enquiry) steers the conversation to cover the points which seem important—following, as it were, an interview-guide—but allows the discussion to develop freely apart from this. He himself takes notes, and the whole thing is recorded either by stenotype or on tape.

What this is, in fact, is a number of depth-interviews conducted at once. Its great advantage is its speed, and it is sometimes advantageous to conduct a group-interview or two *before* drafting the interview-guide for a series of depth-interviews, but it suffers from all the disadvantages of the depth-interview and a number of other disadvantages as well. The chief of these is that it is almost impossible to prevent the proceedings being dominated by one or two people—those who are windbags, and those who have greatest verbal fluency (the two are not necessarily the same thing). Members of the group who are shy, or not ready conversationalists when in company with groups of strangers, may choose to sit quietly in a corner saying nothing, while the chairman's attempts to draw them into the discussion are frustrated by the loquacity of other members. Additionally, it is extremely

[1] This terminology is due to Herta Herzog.

difficult to get a *representative* group of people together in this way.

Attempts have been made from time to time to provide some philosophical justification for group-interviews by arguing that since human beings are social animals, their behaviour is best studied in a social context such as the group-interview provides. This argument, which is worthy of the dialectical methods of mediæval theology, is as much as to say that because a woman wants a new ball-dress in order to impress her friends and acquaintances she should have all the fittings conducted in public. The reasons which underlie purchase-patterns and brand-choice are far more personal than social, and their discussion in the presence of numbers of other people is rather more likely to lead to their concealment than to their exposure. The group-interview has its uses as a quick, cheap, short-cut way of getting certain preliminary information on a problem, but it is very little more than that.

Both depth-interviews and group-interviews suffer from two major limitations:

> (*a*) they cannot be used on large samples of the population, and thus cannot be 'quantified' to give the required degree of *precision*;
>
> (*b*) they cannot elicit, *with any degree of precision*, underlying attitudes of which informants are themselves unaware or which they are reluctant to disclose.

To fill these gaps, one or more of a variety of other techniques have to be used in addition. These techniques have one thing in common—they are all *indirect*, in the sense that the informant is not, or normally should not be, aware of just what it is the enquirer is after. The term 'projective techniques' is frequently used to describe these methods, and though it is not strictly correct to do so (since the phrase has a much more restricted meaning in official psychology), the practice has become so common, and provides so useful a generic term, that it has become almost

legitimate. In Motivation Research, then, a projective technique is an *indirect* method of question which persuades the informant to reveal, usually unconsciously, either some aspects of his *personality* or what are his *attitudes* towards a given product or idea.

Perhaps the most useful and reliable of all the indirect or 'projective' tests is the sentence-completion test. In this technique the informant is given the first part or opening phrases of a number of sentences, and asked to finish each of them off. The *given* phrases have to be very carefully constructed in order not to give any clue as to what might be the 'expected' answer—in technical terms, they have to be 'ambiguous'. Sometimes the area left for response is very wide: sometimes it is much more concentrated. An example of the more concentrated type can be seen in the following sentence-completions used in an instant coffee enquiry:

Powdered coffee is . . .
The nicest coffee . . .
Coffee that is quickly made . . .
She was ashamed of the coffee she had just served because . . .
The thing I enjoy most about coffee . . .
People who never drink coffee . . .

or these, drawn from an enquiry into cigarette-smoking:

People who don't inhale . . .
What I enjoy most about a cigarette . . .
People who don't smoke cigarettes . . .
Filter-tipped cigarettes . . .
If I gave up smoking . . .
People who smoke Woodbines . . .
The nicest cigarette of the day . . .

Both these examples are concerned, in quite narrow terms, with attitudes towards a given type of product. A rather wider field

is opened up in the following example, drawn from a study on prepared cake-mixes, but concerned in detail with housewives' attitudes towards domestic chores in general:

What I like best about looking after a house is . . .
Women who go out to work . . .
Housework . . .
Tinned foods . . .
Slaving over a hot stove . . .
Women who use labour-saving devices . . .
Looking after a family . . .

Sometimes, again, a sentence-completion test is concerned, not with attitudes towards a particular product or problem, but with the personality of the informant. When such tests are used for this purpose they are, of course, performing much the same function as they do in the clinical psychology for which they were originally devised, and it is quite common practice to use standard forms of wording. Examples of the sort of phrase which is used in this context are given below: sometimes it is relatively highly structured (as in the first one) and sometimes almost unstructured (as in the second):

I feel embarrassed and uncomfortable when . . .
Sometimes . . .
If people are rude to me . . .
My father and I . . .
You can trust people who . . .
The world would be a better place if . . .

There is little point at this stage in quoting further examples. As can be seen, sentence-completions can cover any sort of area, and be multiplied to any extent. What must be considered here is, in the first place, why it is that these tests work, and in the second, how they have to be handled.

The really important thing about a sentence-completion is that it catches the informant, so to speak, on the wrong foot. Strangely enough, for anybody who has not tried, it is often not all that easy to complete a sentence: either nothing comes at all, or two or three different ideas come crowding into the mind: either way, some hesitation normally occurs, leading to an embarrassing, if fractional moment, and the blurting out of *something* just to ease the tension. It is precisely in this blurting-out that the key to the situation lies, for the informant has his defences down—he is so concentrated on getting *an answer* out that he cannot be too concerned with what he is actually saying, and his *unconscious* mind has a much greater chance of expressing itself freely than if, for example, he were answering a direct question as to why he does a certain thing, or saying whether he agreed or disagreed with a given statement. The same thing can happen in a different way, when he thinks immediately of *one* way of completing the sentence, without realizing for the moment that there are dozens of others!

The problem of analysing the responses to sentence-completion tests is, of course, a professional matter, and it is not the function of this book to describe this sort of thing in detail. But it may be briefly said that responses can be analysed for *attitudes towards a product or idea* or for *personality of the informant*, and for *content* or for *intensity*. Consider, for example, specimen sentence-endings for the phrase 'Coffee that is quickly made . . .':

GENERAL APPROVAL	. . . is a great advantage.
	. . . keeps its flavour better.
	. . . is a boon to a busy housewife.
QUALIFIED APPROVAL	. . . is sometimes necessary.
	. . . is good when unexpected guests arrive.
	. . . is convenient for a small party.
NEUTRAL	. . . saves time.
	. . . should be drunk on the spot.
	. . . is instant coffee.

DISAPPROVAL	. . . can't be very good.
	. . . is often not strong enough.
	. . . should be made slowly.
STRONG DISAPPROVAL	. . . isn't fit to drink.
	. . . can't be offered to guests.
	. . . is not worth the trouble of making.

Or, again, consider what very different personalities are suggested by the following different answers which might be given to the opening phrase: 'If people are rude to me . . .':

. . . I punch them on the nose.
. . . I feel like punching them on the nose.
. . . I give as good as I get.
. . . I avoid their company in future.
. . . it shows their ill-breeding.
. . . it makes me feel uncomfortable.
. . . I feel very upset.

In considering the use of sentence-completion tests, however, two extremely important requirements have to be borne in mind. In the first place, such tests have to be used in *batteries* of several at a time: any *one* answer is likely to be affected by some extraneous factor which has nothing to do with the enquiry, but which interferes with the revealing of the underlying attitude, and so the risk has to be spread. The problem of assessing the combined group of answers is, of course, one of the most highly skilled jobs the motivation researcher has to do, but it is an essential one: as with most other projective tests, it would be highly misleading simply to tabulate the answers as they stand and take them at their face value. And in the second place, again in common with most other projective tests, the answers have to be studied and analysed in relation to all the other information which is contained in the questionnaire: as has been explained at length earlier, Motivation Research methods demand the simultaneous examination of

all the different pieces of information which are collected in the course of the interview, or are known from other sources.

The principal disadvantage of the sentence-completion method is that it does not always manage to conceal, at least from an intelligent informant, just what is being got at: to some extent, of course, the *tension* involved (to which reference has already been made) helps to overcome this, but it is always possible that the informant, while not spotting the trap consciously, may do so unconsciously and produce a 'rationalization' answer. But with all this said, this particular technique still remains one of the most flexible, fruitful, and reliable of all the many projective tests.

Sentence-completion tests can often be used, in conjunction with depth-interviewing, at the 'motivational pilot' stage of an enquiry. But one of their greatest advantages is that, since they are capable of being administered to large samples of people, analysed reasonably objectively, and subjected to normal statistical treatment, they can also be used in the 'quantifying follow-up' stage, where the pointers, leads, and hypotheses that have emerged in the earlier stages can be studied in a more objectively scientific manner than is possible with more unstructured material.

Another technique which has a good deal in common with the sentence-completion is the 'word-association' test. Here the stimulus which is given to the informant is not the opening phrase of a sentence, but a single word: he is given this word, and asked to say immediately what other word comes into his mind: a whole series of individual words can be gone through like this, with the stimulus words being rattled off so that the informant is, as with the sentence-completion test, under some pressure and likely to blurt out a meaningful response.

There are dozens of variants of this particular test, and it is possible to think of hundreds more. Sometimes the informant is asked to give one word-association for each stimulus-word: sometimes he is asked to give a number. Sometimes, in what is called the 'controlled' form, his choice is limited, in that he is

asked to give a word of similar meaning, or opposite meaning, or an adjective, or the name of a colour, or again he (or she) is given a number of word-associations, and asked to choose between them, as in this sort of example:

DISINFECTANT	clean, germs, health, danger
COOKING	appetite, stove, work, nourishment
SOAP	laundry, beauty, lather, bath

but to some considerable extent this last variant on the method loses many of the advantages found in the 'free-association' methods.

The free word-association test, possibly more than any other projective technique, is able to probe down into underlying attitudes: if the test is being administered at speed, it becomes very difficult even for a quite sophisticated informant to realize what is going on, and taboos and concealments can often be got through quite successfully. The disadvantages of the technique, however, frequently limit the use to which it can be put. It can probe down all right, but it often fails to bring back anything of use: the problem of interpretation is particularly great for this type of test. But its great drawback in most cases is its lack of focusing-power: the associations of one particular stimulus-word can be drawn from so wide an area that it is often difficult to relate them to the problem in hand—particularly when the problem is a commercial one. However, a skilfully designed word-association test, put into the context of a specific enquiry, and analysed in conjunction with other data, can often play a very useful part in a Motivation Research enquiry.

Word-association tests, like sentence-completion tests, can be used in either stage of a Motivation Research enquiry. Entirely *free* association, however, is really only capable of being handled at the unstructured pilot stage: for large-scale work, it is normally necessary to use one or other of the 'controlled' forms, analysing

the results in the light of what has been discovered in the pilot stage and of the other findings of the main survey itself.

Both sentence-completion and word-association tests derive a good deal of their usefulness from the fact that they catch people on the hop, getting them to reveal without knowing it what they might not be able, or willing, to reveal consciously. But for those aspects of an inquiry which *can* be dealt with at what might be described as the 'verbally overt' level (and there are very many such aspects) probably the most useful and manageable of all techniques is what we may call the 'attitude battery'.

The attitude battery provides a means whereby the various attitude factors contributing to a behaviour pattern may be assessed for their relative importance, and also a way of studying the intensity of any *one* factor. It has already been shown in Chapter Two that one of the main reasons why asking people 'why' they do a thing gets one practically nowhere is that they are not capable of sorting this out for themselves, and the same is true if the same single-type question is turned round and asked in a different way. The single question 'Do you like the taste of beer?' will produce some affirmative and some negative answers: it is true that most of the beer-drinkers are likely to reply in the affirmative, but this by itself does not get one very far. If one is concerned to learn something about the height and shape of a mountain, the single statement 'From where I am standing, the mountain peak lies north-west and at an elevation of twenty-seven degrees' is not by itself a very helpful contribution. But a number of *different* observations, taken from a number of different standpoints, can be so related as to give an accurate picture of its height and general shape, and in the field of Motivation Research it is the function of the attitude battery to provide this series of cross-bearings.

Essentially, an attitude battery consists of a number of statements, which may be about the informant himself, his beliefs or behaviour; about other people in general, their beliefs or

behaviour, or about products, brands, or services. These are shown to the informant, and he is required to say in respect of each whether he agrees or disagrees, or sometimes whether he regards them as true or false. Sometimes he is further asked whether his agreement or disagreement is strong or not so strong: sometimes whether he regards the statements as very true or very untrue. (The pedant may argue that truth cannot be thus qualified: this is true in formal logic, but not in real-life situations.) Sometimes provision is made for a 'don't know' or 'no opinion' answer: sometimes every effort is made to force a choice.

The following example comes from a study on beer-drinking and café-going conducted in Belgium:

> 'People have given us a lot of different reasons when we asked them why they go to cafés. Will you look at this list and tell me which of them, in your case, are true, and which are untrue? Just true, or very true? Just untrue, or very untrue?

I GO TO A CAFE:

while waiting for a bus
for a change of scene
to be in company
to meet and talk with friends
to drink a peaceful glass of beer
to play cards or dominoes
just to relax
because I am thirsty
to pass the time
for business reasons
because I like beer
out of habit.

It can easily be seen how a different pattern of true/false answers to these questions can indicate different patterns of motivations and behaviour. Methods of analysis and correlation are, of course, fairly complex (something will be said about these a little later),

but the *concept* of the attitude battery can be grasped easily enough. Another, and possibly rather clearer example, can be seen in the following items drawn from an enquiry into cigarette-smoking. Here again informants were asked whether, in their case, the statements were very true, true, untrue, or very untrue:

2. I often find that a cigarette helps me to concentrate.

3. When I am in an irritable mood a cigarette always calms me down.

6. I find a cigarette particularly enjoyable first thing in the morning or last thing at night.

8. When I have to make conversation with someone I don't know very well, I find it often makes it easier for me if we smoke.

9. I never really enjoy a meal unless I have a cigarette to round it off.

11. For me smoking is something to do, but I wouldn't say it gives me any real pleasure.

14. I smoke because I really enjoy it. For me it adds something to the general pleasure of living.

15. When I most appreciate a cigarette is when I am a bit nervy and strung up. A cigarette helps to soothe my nerves.

22. When I'm really relaxing after the day's work is done—that's when I enjoy a cigarette most.

In this case it was found that two quite distinct groups of people emerged: those who said 'True' or 'Very true' to all or most of items 2, 3, 8, 11 and 15, and 'Untrue' or 'Very untrue' to the remainder, and those who tended to give precisely the reverse answers. These correspond, in fact, to two very important groups of smokers: those for whom smoking provides a relief from the discomfort of some form of nervous tension, and those for whom it is a positive pleasure, of a calm, 'rounding-off' kind. Of course, there are other groups of smokers who get other satisfactions again, and these do not show anything like the same clear-cut patterns on these items (though they do on other items not listed

here): even among the two groups concerned, there are variations in the extent to which *all* the linked items are regarded as true, and wide variations in the distribution of the true/very true answers. Such variations are of great value in determining the internal composition of the groups, and in measuring the intensity and whole-heartedness with which people are affected by the various motivations.

Both these examples have their items expressed in terms of 'I'. But the items of an attitude battery can be expressed much more objectively, as in the following example taken from an enquiry concerned with motoring and the choice of petrol brands. In this case, informants were asked to express agreement or disagreement (strong, or not so strong), or 'no opinion':

2. Once a motorist has pulled out and started to pass another vehicle he should do so at the highest possible speed.

4. The speed-limit in built-up areas should be abolished, and people allowed to drive as fast as they find it safe.

5. Most accidents are caused by people driving too fast.

9. It would be a mistake to have petrol made any more powerful than it is now.

14. It is bad for a car to drive at its top speed for more than a few moments.

18. There should be a speed limit of, say, 60 m.p.h., even outside built-up areas.

23. A great many accidents are really caused by over-cautious drivers.

There are various ways in which intensity of agreement or disagreement can be expressed, and a great deal of possibly unnecessary ingenuity has been devoted to this particular technical aspect. Sometimes people can be asked, as in the previous examples. Sometimes they are given the statements on cards, and asked to sort them into suitably marked compartments on a tray. Sometimes they are shown a sort of thermometer, with up to

(say) five gradations each side of the zero mark, ranging from extreme agreement to extreme disagreement, and asked to indicate whereabouts they would put their answer. The choice of one method rather than another is sometimes determined by the nature of the enquiry, and sometimes by the personal taste of the research worker.

Reference has already been made to the complexity of the analytical procedures for attitude batteries. There are a variety of techniques available, at various levels of sophistication, and it is not the function of this book to describe them in detail. The easiest consists of a simple scoring device, rather on the lines of the self-administered quiz that one finds in a magazine or newspaper. ('How do you rate as a husband? Give yourself five points for every "yes" answer'.) There are, of course, refinements of this method, including the giving of different scores for different answers, and the working-out of a good scoring procedure is a highly skilled job.

At the other end of the scale are the highly involved mathematical procedure known as 'factor analysis' and its various alternatives and developments—latent structure analysis, Q-technique, and the like. For details of these, reference must be made to the massive text-books which have been written about them, though they are essentially the concern of the specialist. They all have their uses, though it is not always certain that they justify the trouble involved. And there occasionally tends to be some confusion between ends and means: somebody who has spent years in working out an ingenious and complicated analysis technique is, very humanly, liable to regard that technique as the master-key to all problems—personal, social, or commercial. Such exaggerated claims are quite understandable, but the prudent business-man will regard them with appropriate scepticism.

There is, however, one intermediate technique which, while not being the answer to all problems, is so useful as to justify

separate mention, and this is what is known as 'scalability analysis' or 'scalogram technique'. Incidentally, this has nothing to do with the so-called 'scalometer', which is only one among the many simple devices mentioned on page 68 for enabling informants to express approval or disapproval pictorially rather than verbally.

The primary function of an attitude battery is to enable people to be divided up into attitude-groups, so that the behaviour of the groups can be studied separately. The basic theory of any scaling technique is that, in respect of any particular idea or concept, people's attitudes are ranged along what is called a 'continuum', ranging from extreme approval at one end to extreme disapproval at the other, and that it is possible to tap this continuum by means of the right questions in order to see whereabouts on it any particular individual or group of individuals lies. But, it is argued, it is not possible to be certain that the questions one is asking are 'pure' (in technical jargon, 'unidimensional') unless they are capable of being 'scaled'. An extreme example of this from the field of political opinion measurement might be this. If we ask the question 'Do you think all the members of the present government ought to be hanged?', it is pretty obvious that such people as answer 'yes' will also answer in the affirmative to the question 'Do you think we ought to have a change of government?' (though, of course, the converse is not true!) Similarly, all the people who answer 'yes' to this second question will answer 'no' to the third question 'Do you agree with what the government is doing now?' We have here a very simple scale, concerned with approval of the government, which ranks people into four groups, ranging from violent disapproval at one end to general approval at the other (the people who say 'yes' to the third question, and consequently 'no' to the first two).

It was pointed out at the beginning of this chapter that, in any measurement of human attitudes or behaviour, the sort of reaction one gets depends very much upon the sort of stimulus one admini-

sters. The purpose of scalability analysis (and, indeed, of attitude batteries generally) is to administer a variety of different stimuli, or stimuli of different strengths, in order that the variations in reaction may enhance, not impair, the accuracy of the ultimate measurement.

An example of scalability analysis applied to a business problem can be seen in the motorists' attitude battery which has been described on page 68. Here it was found that items 2, 18, and 5 were capable of being 'scaled'. Virtually *all* informants who disagreed with item 5 also disagreed with item 18: the converse was not true, but *all* of those who disagreed with item 18 (whether or not they disagreed with item 5) also agreed with item 2. Similarly, all those who disagreed with item 2 also agreed with items 18 and 5, and so on.

This threw up four separate groups of people, whose attitude-patterns can be seen from the following table:

ITEM	GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
2. Overtake as fast as possible	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree
18. Speed limit in open country	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree
5. Fast driving causes accidents	Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree

Now although four other patterns of agreement/disagreement to these three questions are theoretically possible (for example, people who disagree with item 2 and agree with item 18, but who disagree with item 5), in fact none of the informants (or only an insignificant number) fell into these 'inconsistent' patterns. This proved that the three items formed what is called a 'perfect scale', and could be used for scaling analysis. If this had not been the case, other questions would have to have been tried out until a perfect scale was finally found.

The use which can be made of this form of analysis is relatively easily explained. If, to simplify matters, we express approval of

fast driving with a + sign, and disapproval with a — sign, we get the resulting pattern:

ITEM	GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
2. Overtake as fast as possible .	—	+	+	+
18. Speed limit in open country	—	—	+	+
5. Fast driving causes accidents	—	—	—	+

which makes it clear how attitudes shift from one group to another. If, when we study these groups in detail, we find that one particular brand of petrol is used more in Group B than in Group A, more in Group C than in Group B, and more in Group D than in any other, we have established a relationship between this brand and the motorist's attitude towards fast driving which can be of the utmost importance.

There are a number of refinements and developments of scaling technique (particularly in the more recent writings of Louis Guttman) to which the reader, if he is sufficient of a specialist to want them, is referred.[1] But even the simplest version (known as the Israel Alpha technique) can be extremely useful. And all this demonstrates again the futility of attempting to measure attitude by means of a single question, and the uselessness (except for filling space in newspapers) of asking and tabulating single questions such as 'Do you approve of the government?' or (on the much more important *commercial* plane) 'Do you like this product?'

The examples previously quoted have been concerned primarily with *attitudes*. But very similar techniques can be used to measure the dimensions of *personality*—in fact, in the field of psychology, and particularly of aptitude and intelligence testing, their use is much older than attitude batteries used for commercial purposes. They enjoy a variety of different names, but the general title of 'personality-inventory' probably classifies them as well as any-

[1] A simple mechanical device for facilitating the identification of "scalable" questions, devised by Ulrich Jetter, is known as a "chromogram".

thing. And here again (as with sentence-completion and word-association tests used for personality-measurement) it is fairly common to use standard psychological forms.

To some extent the motorists' attitude battery already quoted was concerned with personality, but it studied this at the *attitude* level in relation to fast driving. The following items, taken from an American enquiry into petrol-purchasing habits, are more concerned with the deeper psychological levels. Informants were asked to say 'true' or 'false' to each.

18. When travelling, I prefer to stay at a big, well-known hotel rather than a small inn.

19. I consider myself a careful shopper.

20. I am considered a pretty easy-going person.

21. I dislike going to a party where I don't know many of the people.

23. I tend to worry about things more than the average person.

25. I prefer to shop at small stores where they know me and call me by name.

28. If you trust people too much, chances are they will take advantage of you.

30. I am the sort of person who takes pride in saving things that might be useful in the future, such as nails, pieces of cord, etc.

As can be seen, these items have nothing specifically to do with motoring—in fact, the same list might be used for a study of smokers—but they provided a means of dividing people into separate psychological groups, and demonstrating how the different psychological types tended to use different brands of petrol. This question of the relationship between consumer personality and brand-choice will, however, be examined in rather greater detail in the next chapter.

All attitude batteries and related techniques involve the use of adequately sized samples. They can be tested out, of course, with small samples at the pilot stages of an enquiry, but their real value is only brought out by statistical analysis and correlation with the

other findings of the main enquiry, all of which requires fairly large numbers of informants. But these techniques present no problem in this respect: they are pre-eminently suitable for large-scale work, and this is one of the factors which makes them so useful a set of tools.

The next group of techniques to be examined consist of what may be called the 'visualization' tests (they are sometimes referred to as 'role-playing' techniques, but this is a technical term which is liable to be misleading for the lay reader). These can be either verbal or pictorial, but in either case the informant is presented with an imaginary situation and asked to describe something about it—what sort of people are involved, what they are saying, why they are behaving or saying as they are, and so on. One of the earliest (and certainly the best-known) examples comes from an enquiry carried out by Mason Haire at the University of California in 1949: this example is quoted in practically every article that is ever written about Motivation Research, and all the professionals are heartily tired of the sound of it, but since it is a classic case, clear-cut and (within certain limits) valid, it cannot but be quoted here.

In this particular *verbal* visualization test a sample of housewives were shown a shopping list and given the instructions:

> Read the shopping list below. Try to project yourself into the situation as far as possible until you can more or less characterize the woman who bought the groceries. Then write a brief description of her personality and character. Wherever possible indicate what factors influenced your judgement:
>
> Pound and a half of hamburger
> 2 loaves Wonder bread
> bunch of carrots
> 1 can Rumford's Baking Powder
> Nescafe instant coffee
> 2 cans Del Monte peaches
> 5 lb. potatoes.

About half the housewives who were shown this shopping list described the woman who was visualized as having used it as 'lazy', or as 'failing to plan household purchases well'. From these findings alone it was, of course, impossible to tell which items on the list were contributing to this idea, but at the same time another, identical, sample of housewives were presented in the same way with the same shopping list—with *one* difference. In this second case, the name of an ordinary brand of ground coffee was substituted for the Nescafe, and of *this* sample practically nobody described the woman as lazy, and only 12% described her as failing to plan household purchases. The inference was crystal-clear: it was the presence of Nescafe on the list which led to these unfavourable connotations, and hence a great deal could be deduced about housewives' attitudes towards Nescafe.

A certain amount of further work was done on the same subject, to discover, for example, what differences in attitudes existed among housewives who were or were not already purchasers of Nescafe, and to discover how far the accusation of guilt persisted if, instead of Nescafe, some other form of ready-prepared food were included in the list: these were specimens of the normal cross-analysis which a competent piece of Motivation Research requires, and there is no need to discuss them here.

In this example the requirement to describe the subject of the test was left 'open'—that is to say, informants were asked to use their own words. But it is frequently better, once the pilot stages of an enquiry have been passed, to ask *specific* questions. Once it is known from the piloting what is being looked for—in this case, for example, accusations of laziness and improvidence—and the primary concern is accurate quantification, there is no difficulty about formalizing the procedure. For example, in an enquiry concerned with household disinfectants, women were told:

> Imagine you are a housewife with a seven-year-old boy. You are running yourself a bath. In the kitchen there is a mild,

non-poisonous disinfectant which you keep there mainly for (SPECIFIC PURPOSE). Your little boy takes this bottle upstairs and pours a few drops into your bath water.

(*a*) Would you be annoyed?
(*b*) Would you change the bath water?
(*c*) Would you scold the child?
(*d*) What brand of disinfectant did you imagine it to be?

Four separate but matched samples of housewives were given this question, with a different 'specific purpose' in each case. The object of this test was to find out whether the use of a product in a 'dirty' context (for example, cleaning out the drains) would lead to a feeling that the product itself was in some way 'dirty', and the *key* question to this was (*b*)—'Would you change the bath water?' Questions (*a*) and (*c*) were included simply for purposes of camouflage, and question (*d*) as a special control.

This test measured a single characteristic, but in the same enquiry another test was used (in the same way) to study a more complex attitude. Here again (with four separate samples) women were told:

'Now I would like you to try and imagine the type of woman who always uses a disinfectant for (SPECIFIC PURPOSE). Would she be likely to be:

Young or old?
Sensible or stupid?
Rich or poor?
Tidy or untidy?
Healthy or unhealthy?
Clean or dirty?

and so on. Very large differences emerge in this sort of test, as can be seen from the following figures showing the percentage of informants in each sub-sample who described the woman as young or old:

WHEN SPECIFIC PURPOSE WAS:	PERCENTAGE DESCRIBING HER AS	
	YOUNG	OLD
	%	%
Washing hair	44	56
Washing handkerchiefs . . .	58	42
In bath	62	38
Douching	70	30

The use ot matched samples in this way is very common in visualization tests. But it is not always necessary: quite often, even where a comparison is wanted, it is possible to cover this in one question, as:

> What sort of person would you say uses Brand X?
> And what sort of person Brand Y?

Here, again, the question can be left open, as in this example, or informants can be given a list of characteristics to check yes or no. Again, the question can be swung round and tackled from the other end, as in the following example taken from an American survey into petrol brand preferences:

> Which brand of gasoline would each of the following people be most likely to buy?
>
> Cadillac owner.
>
> Factory owner.
>
> Person who wants the most for his money.
>
> Person who pampers his car in every way.
>
> Person who wants the very best.
>
> President of a bank.
>
> Person who likes to be waited on hand and foot.

The examples quoted above have all involved *comparisons*, one way or another. But the techniques can equally well be used as

a single shot, particularly at the pilot stage of an enquiry where as much 'open' material as possible is required. A survey of beer-drinking in Europe, for example, contained the following:

> 'Suppose you are sitting in a cafe. At another table is a man who has just finished his glass of beer. He calls the waiter and orders another of a well-known brand, but insists that this time it should be brought to the table in the bottle. What do you think about this, why do you think he is behaving in this way, what sort of person do you think he is?'

This particular question threw up a wealth of motivational material, the most significant of which could be sorted out by more structured questioning at the 'quantifying follow-up' stage.

Tests of this sort can be handled verbally, but sometimes there are advantages in presenting the material in a *pictorial* form. In an enquiry into petrol-purchasing habits and preferences carried out in Britain, for example, motorists were shown photographs of six men, of whom two were selected as young and sporty types, two as solid, respectable citizens, and two as depressed and down-trodden types. Informants were shown these photographs and asked:

> 'Here are some photographs of typical motorists. Would you look at them and tell me what sort of petrol you would guess that each one of them habitually uses?'

Of course, a certain number of informants say: 'That's impossible—might be anything!' But this proportion is extremely small—in this particular case, 3%. It is true that the reader of this book might be inclined to make the same comment—how can people give meaningful answers to this sort of question? The short answer is that they *do*, for nonsense answers would produce no patterns, and in fact this question produces highly significant patterns. For, as the table below shows, different brands are ascribed in quite different ways:

	% ASCRIBED TO:			TOTAL
	Young and sporty	Solid citizens	Depressed, downtrodden	
BRAND A .	61	29	10	100
BRAND B .	26	51	23	100
BRAND C .	34	35	31	100

and this information is most revealing of what are termed the 'brand-images' of the different products—something which is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter—particularly when it is realized that the number of motorists who can detect for themselves any *real* difference in performance among the three brands is extremely small.

This particular method is capable of adaptation to a wide variety of different uses in checking the *idea* that the general public has of a particular product or a particular brand. It may be necessary sometimes, however, to carry out a preliminary enquiry to find out what sort of people the photographs in themselves seem to portray to the general public. This is frequently necessary because (as will be discussed in Chapter Nine) it is one thing for the advertiser or his advertising agency to say 'This picture represents so-and-so'—a sporty young man, a smart woman, a motherly housewife, or whatever—and quite another for the *public* to say it. However, if this initial precaution is taken, the 'stereotypes' thus established can be safely used in the suggested manner.

A very frequently used pictorial test of the visualization group is what is known as the 'balloon test'. For this, in its most common form, informants are presented with a rough sketch showing two people talking. One of them has just said something, represented by words written into a 'speech-balloon' as in a comic strip: the other person's balloon is empty, and the informant is asked 'What is he (or she) replying?'

All sorts of situations can be represented—two housewives

chatting, a husband and wife, a shopkeeper and purchaser, a waitress and customer, or anything else. And the wording can be so designed to focus on whatever aspect of things is required. For example, in an enquiry concerned with the drinking of cocoa, informants were given *two* balloon tests, both showing a customer in a restaurant, whose balloon said 'A cup of cocoa, please.' But in one case the restaurant was indicated as being something along the lines of a cabman's shelter, while in the other it was indicated as reasonably high-class. The informant was required to fill-in the waitress's answer in both cases.

Now where the situation represented was a proletarian one, the answers suggested for the waitress were such as indicated acceptance of the request: 'All right', 'With or without sugar?', 'O.K., Bert', 'Won't be a minute', and so on. With the higher-class situation, however, many of the replies were of a different sort: '*Cocoa*, sir?', 'Don't you mean chocolate?', 'Sorry, we don't serve it', 'I beg your pardon?' and other answers indicating a strong sense of incongruity. The snob-disapproval of cocoa, which people had been found reluctant to put into words for themselves, they *were* prepared to put into the mouth of a third person, and this test proved a very sensitive measure of the low esteem in which this particular food-product was held at the time.

This technique, again, is capable of infinite variations. It can be used in a comparative manner, as in the example just quoted, or singly, as where the cartoon shows two housewives sitting over a table, with one saying 'I made this cake from Blank's cake-mix —would you like a piece?' Or, again, it can be used to check on brand-loyalty, by showing a shopkeeper–customer situation with the shopkeeper saying 'I'm right out of your usual brand' and the informant being asked to fill in the customer's reply. But, however it is used, its great strength lies in the fact already mentioned—that many people are prepared to put into the mouth of a third person what they might hesitate to admit on their own account. It is really only with this sort of situation that a balloon-

test is needed—in most other cases it is better to use other projective tests which are less cumbersome to handle—but *in* this sort of situation it can often be invaluable.

Pictorial tests of different sorts can be designed for almost any required purpose. One which was devised for a study in Great Britain of motoring habits consisted of a strip-cartoon *series*, showing a slow-moving car driving on the crown of the road and a faster-moving car trying to overtake it unsuccessfully, until the latter's exasperated driver tries to overtake round a blind corner, has to cut-in to avoid an oncoming vehicle, and collides with the first car. In the final cartoon-frame of the series, blank balloons were left for *both* drivers, and in addition informants were asked to describe what had happened in their own words, and were also asked certain specific questions about blame and responsibility. The material which emerged from all this cast a great deal of light on informants' attitudes towards fast driving, cautious driving, and the like, though it was also found that it lacked precision.

Nearly all the projective tests so far discussed have been concerned with *attitudes*—people's readiness to accept or reject particular ideas, propositions or even products, and their tendencies to act in certain ways under certain conditions. But, as has already been suggested, and as will be developed in greater detail in the next chapter, Motivation Research is also concerned with *personalities*—what sort of people they *are*, psychologically speaking. This normally involves investigation at a much more profound level, and while it is true (as has been pointed out in Chapter Three) that there is frequently no need, in a commercial Motivation Research operation, to go burrowing deep down into the ultimate unconscious, it is also true that analysis of the consuming public in terms of standard psychological classifications, and cross analysis of those classifications with behaviour and attitude-patterns, is often of supreme importance and value.

For the purposes of such standard psychological analysis,

however, it is usual and sensible to use standard psychological techniques. For full details of these reference must be made to the appropriate text-books, but it must be borne in mind that the use of such techniques requires the services of a trained psychologist: they are dangerous tools in unskilled hands. Because of this, only a brief description will be given here, and that only of the most commonly used methods.

Personality-tests, like most other projective tests, can be either verbal or pictorial. The main verbal tests consist of sentence-completion tests, word-association tests, and 'personality-inventories' which take exactly the same form as the attitude batteries previously described. Examples of these have already been given (see pages 60 and 73) among the similar tests used for purposes of attitude-measurement, and there is no need to elaborate further.

The pictorial personality-tests, however, have special forms of their own, and since these forms (in addition to being, quite soberly, of considerable use) have high gimmick-value, they are perhaps rather better known than most of the other techniques used in Motivation Research. Nearly all of them consist of giving the informant a stimulus which is ambiguous or unclear, and letting him read into it what he can.

Probably the best-known (and least understood) of all the pictorial personality tests is the Rorschach Ink-blot Test. This consists of a series of cards, each containing a meaningless ink-blot shape (some are in colour), which are shown to informants, who are then asked what they can see in them. A massive array of literature gives rules for interpreting personality from the responses given, though it should perhaps be added that by no means all psychologists are entirely convinced of the validity or reliability of this particular test.

Another well-known test is the Thematic Apperception Test (usually referred to as a T.A.T.), which consists of a series of cards each showing some situation without much meaning in

itself—a woman looking through the door into a room, two men talking, and so on. Here informants are asked to say what is going on, to make up a story to explain the picture, and once again a solid codex exists for interpreting the responses. These can be very varied indeed. For example, the 'woman looking through door' picture threw up, in one test carried out in the United States, two such dissimilar responses as:

> 'This is a mother, and she is peering into the room. Her son is doing his homework, and she is a little worried because he is working so late. She is wondering whether to disturb him to bring him some coffee and sandwiches.'

This is perhaps rather a lot to be read into a simple picture of a woman peering through a door, but it is obviously very revealing of the informant's attitude towards her family and domestic responsibilities. But the second response is:

> 'This is a woman looking into a room where she sees her husband kissing another woman. She realizes that somehow she has failed him. She wonders what she did wrong to ruin their lives. She has just now decided to go away and commit suicide.'

In the light of responses such as these, it becomes understandable why the T.A.T. is such a fascinating tool to use. Whether its utility for ordinary commercial purposes is quite on a par with its fascination is, perhaps, another matter.

There are a number of other tests, very similar in their general approach to the T.A.T. (the Four Picture Test, the Blacky Test, and so on). In fact, practically every issue of practically every psychological publication contains descriptions of a new one, and it is really impossible to keep up with all of them. Nor, in cold fact, does it seem really necessary to do so, since they are all devised to do much the same thing and there is no very conclusive evidence that any one is all that superior to the others.

A test devised to cover *certain* aspects of personality (which may or may not be relevant to any particular Motivation Research

problem) is the Rosenzweig Picture-frustration Test, which is identical with the balloon-tests already described. In fairness to Rosenzweig it must be admitted that the test was devised first by him for purposes of personality assessment: its transmogrification into the balloon-test for attitude studies followed.

Yet a further test in this group (but of even more recent date) is the 'House–Tree–Person' Test (H.T.P. for short), in which the informant is required to make a freehand drawing of a house, a tree, and a person (sex unspecified, but it is highly significant which he chooses). A great deal is claimed for this particular test, but since it is of such comparatively recent origin no great body of literature has yet grown up around it. Sometimes, instead of or in addition to all this, the informant is asked to draw the subject of the enquiry, where this is something that can be easily drawn (as, for example, a car): it is claimed that this gives an indication not only of personality but also of attitude towards the product, and the claim certainly does not seem illogical.

A test of a different type is the Szondi test, where informants are shown the pictures of a number of different mentally sick persons (all, it may be said, looking pretty horrible!) and without being told this are asked to pick out the ones they like best, the ones they dislike most, and so on. Once again a fixed set of rules exist for interpreting the results, though once again psychologists are in no sort of agreement as to whether or not the test is reliable in itself. It has, however, been used in a way which makes this point irrelevant: there was one enquiry where the differences in responses made by informants when they were stone-cold sober and when they had been well liquored-up threw considerable light on the changes in personality induced by alcohol, and hence on the motivations underlying certain patterns of drinking.

Finally in this by-no-means-exhaustive list comes the study of handwriting, or graphology. This particular technique of personality-assessment has not hitherto been thought very highly of by

British or American psychologists as a whole, though German psychologists in particular have been inclined to ascribe greater reliability to it. It seems to be gaining greater acceptance at the moment: no real evidence yet exists as to how far it is more reliable or less reliable than some of the other techniques which have been described in the last few pages.

These are the main techniques currently being used by psychologists for purposes of assessing personality. With the exception of the verbal personality-inventory, and to a lesser extent of the sentence-completion techniques, they all suffer from the major defect that they are not really suitable for administration to large samples of people, or for cross-analysis with all the other material normally collected in a large-scale Motivation Research enquiry. In this respect some are less unsuitable than others, and to some extent some may be more appropriate than others to any particular research project. But, to a large extent also, which one is used in any particular instance is likely to depend as much upon the personal predilections of the psychologist working on the assignment as on any more objective considerations.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSING AND TACKLING THE PROBLEM

THE previous chapter has described in some detail the main techniques which can be used for studying the motives and attitudes *underlying* behaviour patterns. But a Motivation Research enquiry consists of a good deal more than simply applying a selection of these techniques to a sample of the population. For commercial purposes, Motivation Research must be concerned to study:

(*a*) *how* people behave—at the strictly factual level;

(*b*) *why* the different behaviour-groups act as they do;

(*c*) *what* is likely to happen if any of the circumstances are changed.

It is with this last—the predicting of future consumer behaviour if the manufacturer or advertiser follows a particular course of action, or fails to follow it—that commercial Motivation Research is essentially concerned. The 'how' and the 'why' are means to this end, but not ends in themselves, and however fascinating a research report may be to read, unless it at least *suggests* a course of action it can only be regarded as a waste of effort.

Two points must be made about the use of the word 'predicting' in this context. First, it should not be thought that such predictions can be made in exact mathematical terms, in the sense of 'Change your pack design in this way, and you will increase turnover by 10 per cent' or 'This advertising policy will result in 20 per cent more sales than the other'. To be able to do this is the dream of all people who commission research, and even of those who execute it, but in the present state of development of

consumer research it is little more than a pipe-dream. The sort of prediction that *can* be made is necessarily much less precise, and might (for example) be expressed in words such as 'This particular section of the consuming public thinks or feels this about your product, and tends not to buy it for that reason. If you adopt this particular course of policy in relation to your production/packaging/pricing/marketing/advertising you will be helping to overcome this resistance and, other things being equal, your sales will increase.'

The second point is that the prediction may be implied, rather than explicit. When a Motivation Research report states (again for example): 'This product enjoys a very good reputation for quality, but is thought of essentially as a luxury, not for ordinary people or for everyday use', the prediction is implied 'and therefore, if you do something about this, you will be in a much better position saleswise'.

In fact, of course, a prediction of this sort really ought to be spelt out in detail. In the first place, it is necessary to know whether this view of the product is held both by the people who use it and by the people who do not: it is for this reason that the 'how' and the 'why' must be so carefully cross-analysed. In the second place, if the same view is held by both the user and non-user groups, then presumably (something, again, which must be studied) this is one of the reasons why the user group uses it, as well as being one of the reasons why the non-user group doesn't use it. And if changes are going to be made in pricing, packaging, or promotion in order to try to change this reputation, and thus gain custom among the present non-user group, what is likely to be the effect of such changes among the present user group?

It is in this sort of situation that prediction becomes an absolute necessity. It is one thing to throw out the dirty water before you get in clean, but if the clean water does not materialize you are left with an empty bucket! A certain brand of toothpaste, for instance, enjoyed a small but quite material share of the market:

it employed an old-fashioned formula, had an old-fashioned flavour, and had an old-fashioned pack design. Ordinary market research showed quite plainly that most of its usage was in the older age-groups, and that the majority of its remaining customers had used it for many years. In an attempt to increase market share the formula and flavour were changed to bring them into line with modern fashions, and a new pack-design was introduced.

The results were disastrous. A change of this sort is quite ineffective unless at the same time a major effort is made to change the *reputation* of the brand, by means of really heavy advertising and promotional efforts, among the young non-user groups: the manufacturer in this case was not prepared to make the necessary investment. And in the meantime the hard core of existing users, shocked and horrified by this change in an old familiar friend, deserted it in droves for competitor makes! The last stage of that brand was much worse than the first.

It might be asked why the manufacturer did not conduct a product-test. The answer to this is that he did, and that on blind-test the new formulation was preferred to the existing leader in the toothpaste field. But the test was conducted among the general public, *not among the existing hard-core users.* (The cost of a special test among hard-core users was deemed to be unjustified—something which proved later to have been a very false economy indeed.) Had the manufacturer set his sights on this general public (that is, been prepared to make the necessary very heavy promotional investment) this product-superiority might have worked, in the long run, to his advantage. But in fact it did not have a chance so to work, for product-superiority in the ultimate resort—that is, the minds of the consumers—consists of a great deal more than can be measured in a laboratory or in the course of a blind product-test among the general public, and in this case not enough was done to change the existing *idea* of the product.

What the consumer wants and buys is not simply the end-result

of a production-line, manufactured to a given specification: it is the *total personality* of the product, which consists not only of its chemical composition and formulation, but also of all the *ideas* which the public has about it. It consists, in other words, of the picture which the consumer has in his mind of the qualities inherent in it, real or imaginary (frequently the latter), the sort of people who use it, the sort of circumstances in which it is appropriate, the sort of person he will demonstrate himself to be if he uses it, and so on.

This overall picture is referred to in Motivation Research as the 'brand-image', and this is probably the most important concept that has emerged in the whole history of advertising. For it enables one to explain why, for example, when two brands of petrol are barely distinguishable in chemical analysis, and totally indistinguishable in performance in an ordinary car, one brand should be regarded as particularly appropriate to young and sporty types, and the other as particularly appropriate to the solid citizen. It also enables one to explain why it is that certain types of people tend to buy one brand rather than the other—but this is something which is discussed a little later.

A particular brand-image may have nearly all its basis in fact, or only part of it: on the other hand, it may be purely a creation of marketing, packaging, advertising, or promotion. With products such as petrol, oil, tyres, cigarettes, footwear, paint, stockings, brassieres, and even some cosmetics, most of the different brands of which could hardly be distinguished by the ordinary purchaser in the absence of a label, the brand-image is usually almost entirely a function of advertising and promotion. With other products, such as toilet soap, washing powders, household disinfectants, cooking fats, biscuits, and so on, the various brands may be distinguishable by virtue of differences in colour, perfume or taste, but even so the brand-images may be affected to only a slight extent by these differences, and may again be the creation almost wholly of advertising and promotion.

Even in product-fields where different brands seem to be very sharply differentiated indeed, brand-images may arise independently of any physical realities. It might be thought, for example, that the brand-image of a particular make of car is almost entirely a function of the model's design: this is just not true. Certainly public reaction to design plays a very important part in fixing the brand-image, but to a large extent the *acceptability* of that design—whether it is thought to be attractively up-to-date or vulgarly flashy—itself depends upon the existing brand-image of the make concerned. And certainly ideas about the less obvious qualities of the car—particularly insofar as concerns such things as reliability, length of engine life, and even some aspects of performance—may be totally at variance with what would be found in any really objective test.

It has been pointed out that brand-images are very largely created by advertising and promotion. But it is also true that they sometimes have a way of arising almost spontaneously, or by historical accident. There is one particular analgesic, for example (pain-killer, to the general public), which is regarded as being particularly useful for toothaches rather than headaches. This idea developed because the manufacturer, when the product was first launched, chose to conduct his initial sampling operation among dentists rather than among doctors, and the product was introduced to the public through these particular channels. But, though there is no particle of evidence that the product is more suitable for toothache than for the relief of any other form of pain, the brand-image has persisted in the original form.

Brand-images can arise almost spontaneously, and sometimes are extremely tenacious and take a great deal of effort to change. To some extent, indeed, the more successful a product is in getting a firm and acceptable brand-image established, the more trouble it is liable to have with it in the long run—that is, in the *very* long run. A product which dominates the market, and is accepted as the brand which *everybody* uses, becomes in time the product

which everybody's *grandmother* used to use, and develops the reputation of being old-fashioned and not suited to modern needs, even though its actual qualities may be just as appropriate as they ever were. The manufacturer is then faced with the alternatives of trying to cope with falling sales by *changing* the brand-image—an extremely difficult operation in this context, and one which is liable to lead to his losing his remaining customers while not actually gaining any new ones—or, if he is wise, by training up a new entrant to the field, and creating for that a new brand-image of its own.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that what people choose in a product is the *image* rather than the *reality*. Of course, the image is not independent of the reality—a thoroughly bad and inefficient product is unlikely ever to be able to build itself a favourable brand-image—but the shape the image takes depends upon a great many factors in addition to those provided at the manufacturing stage. This dependence of consumer choice on the *image* is the truth which underlies such advertising bromides—familiar, but still valid—as 'All sales are made in the mind' or 'Don't sell the steak—sell the sizzle!'

Among the various definitions of Motivation Research quoted at the beginning of Chapter Three was one which characterized it as 'the study of the relationship between the personality of the consumer and the personality of the product'. The personality of the product is its brand-image, and Chapter Four has demonstrated some of the principal techniques by which this can be assessed. The same chapter described techniques for measuring the personality of the consumer, and showed how it is possible to study either the basic personality or, at a possibly more immediately useful level, the *attitudes* which arise out of that personality and which affect behaviour more directly.

But it is not sufficient merely to examine these two groups of personalities: the function of Motivation Research is to examine their *relationship*, and the way in which they interact together

with all the other factors—historical, regional, financial, and the rest—which make up the total market pattern.

For people like to choose their brands in the same way as they choose their friends, by selecting personalities that either match in with their own or else complement them—in either case, creating an association that satisfies a need. The strength and tenacity of the association will vary according to circumstances. It is possible to have friends (or at least acquaintances) who have been acquired by chance—because they live next door, or work in the same office, or share an army hut, or use the same railway compartment each morning. Provided there is no *clash* of personalities, they may be accepted as friends. But the test of friendship comes when the chance factor which has started the friendship disappears—when the neighbour moves away, or the war comes to an end. In those comparatively rare cases where there is a real matching of personalities, people will go to the trouble of keeping the friendship alive, but in most cases there will be a gradual fading-away of a relationship which had no really basic foundation, and its replacement by another which is more convenient and in line with the circumstances of the moment.

But even when there is no exact matching of personalities, as they would be measured by the psychologist, friendships often tend to be remarkably tenacious, and this is because the existence itself of the relationship affects the way in which personalities are perceived. When we decline the verb 'to be obstinate' as:

I am firm
You are strong-willed
He is pig-headed

we are simply giving expression to the fact, as mentioned a couple of pages back, that what people perceive is the image rather than the reality. A defect of character which is unforgivable in a stranger becomes an almost lovable fault in a close friend and a positive virtue in oneself. This is an aspect of what

psychology calls 'ego-involvement', of which the most common manifestation is patriotism—the accident that I have been born on a particular spot of the earth's surface leading me to believe that everything about that spot is, in the ultimate resort, superior to anything else in the world.

Of course, ego-involvement does not take so extreme a form in connexion with the ordinary articles of commerce. But the fact that people habitually consume a particular brand of beer, or cigarettes, or margarine, or own a particular make of car or television set, does lead them to feel that in some way their own prestige is wrapped up with the prestige of the brand: they have a sort of proprietory right in it, of which the clearest indication is our knowledge that an advertisement for a particular product is in general far more likely to be noticed by people who are *already* users of that brand than by people who are users of competing brands. Out of the corners of their eyes they spot, and are attracted by, the name of the brand which is 'theirs' in the same way as their own names would attract their attention.

In consequence of this, usage or non-usage of a particular product is one of the factors affecting its brand-image. For it must be realized that an individual product may have very different brand-images for different people. In the instant-coffee study described on page 74, for example, the imputation of 'laziness' was much less strongly expressed by women who were themselves users of instant coffee than by those who were not. It was assumed from this that '. . . if a respondent sees the woman who buys as having undesirable traits, she is not likely to buy instant coffee herself. . . . It does not seem unwarranted to assume that the association is causal'. That an association exists is, on the evidence, undeniable. But it is *totally* unwarranted to assume, as Mason Haire apparently did, that given views on laziness determined whether or not people would buy. It is much more likely that women who bought instant coffee, for the convenience, speed, or economy which it offered, were led by the fact that they themselves were

users ('ego-involvement', in fact) to take a more tolerant view of its faults—just as a man's views on the necessity for penal taxation of high incomes undergo modification as he himself moves into the higher income brackets!

It is this necessity for sorting out the chicken-and-egg relationship—which causes which—that constitutes so essential a part of modern Motivation Research. And it is this which creates the requirement for complex analytical procedures which in turn demand the use of moderately large samples, without which the different variables affecting the situation cannot be adequately isolated and studied.

Of course, it sometimes happens that brand-images are pretty consistent over the whole population. In the petrol study described on page 78, for example, it was found that Brand A had a 'young and sporty' brand-image, and Brand B a 'solid citizen' brand-image. Now the actual *users* of Brand A were not noticeably younger, and no less solid citizens, than the users of Brand B, but they, no less than the users of Brand B, saw Brand A as particularly appropriate for the young and sporty and Brand B as particularly appropriate for the solid citizens. In other words, the brand-images were constant among both users and non-users.

This being so, the immediate problem became comparatively simple, and could be expressed in the form 'What is it about the users of Brand A which attracts them to the brand-image of Brand A and repels them from the brand-image of Brand B?' The more obvious characteristics, such as age, income-group, social status, and so on, were tested one by one, and shown not to be relevant (being essentially the same as the characteristics of the Brand B users), but it was found that there were important *psychological* differences. Personality and attitude tests (of the types described in Chapter Four) included in the survey, but studied totally independently of petrol-brand usage, showed when they were brought together and correlated that the Brand

A users, whatever their age and class, were on the whole far more aggressive, far more dashing, in their attitudes towards motoring than were the Brand B users. And this gave the answer to *this part* of the problem.

The problem could originally be put in the following form:

(*a*) Brand A and Brand B (like any two other premium grades of petrol) are almost totally indistinguishable in performance by the average motorist—whatever he may choose to imagine about them.

(*b*) By all the usual criteria of age, income-group, social status, etc., there is practically no difference between the users of Brand A and the users of Brand B.

Why, then, should some motorists use Brand A and others use Brand B? And the answer to this question is:

(*c*) Although Brand A and Brand B may be virtually identical *in reality*, they have very different *brand-images*;

(*d*) Although the users of Brand A and Brand B seem identical when studied *externally*, they have very different *psychological* make-ups, which correspond closely with the brand-images of the petrol of their choice.

In the light of this admittedly clear-cut example we can see the validity of defining Motivation Research as the study of the relationship between the personality of the consumer and the personality of the product. But it must also be realized that to reach this sort of finding is only the beginning of a Motivation Research study. For though it outlines the general pattern of behaviour, it does not attempt to solve any of the many questions which must be asked—and answered—before a course of action can be decided upon. How have these brand-images arisen, and what can be done to change them? *Should* they be changed, and if so, what to? What are the relative sizes of the different segments of the market which can be reached with different brand-images? Is it possible to attract one without repelling the others?

How? Although the brand-image is seen to be an important factor *relatively*, how important is it *absolutely* bearing in mind the fact that most petrol is bought from the 'usual' garage, which is at least partly chosen on grounds of easy accessibility? And so on, and so on.

To answer these questions, and the many others which need to be asked before a policy can be decided upon, requires the most detailed analysis of *all* the factors which might have any bearing on the situation. It is easy enough to take a broad generalization like that just quoted in respect of petrol, and to rush blindly into a course of action presumed to be based upon it: in fact, however, dozens of different courses of action might arise from this finding, some of which would have happy results and some of which most unfortunate ones. To decide which is which requires a great deal more information than such a generalization contains: it is all very well to set your course by the North star, but if you don't watch where you are putting your feet you are likely to fall into a ditch or step on a rake.

And, indeed, the toothpaste example quoted on page 88 demonstrates this point. It was known that the product had an old-fashioned brand-image, an old-fashioned flavour, and that most of its customers were old. Although what little research was done was extremely superficial, the facts were accurate enough—and, indeed, were pretty well known without research. But the decision based upon a hasty scrutiny of these simple findings—to change the flavour of the product, and to go after the younger end of the market—was ill-advised, in the light of:

(*a*) the extraordinary difficulty of changing a long-established brand-image, particularly when it is actually in line with the reality (i.e., old, old-fashioned, used by old people);

(*b*) the accentuation of this difficulty caused by the fact that the other players (the competition) were playing with blue chips, while this manufacturer was only prepared to ante-up with peanuts;

(*c*) the effect which the change of flavour was likely to have—and, indeed, did have—on the loyalty of the existing customers.

In short, this policy-decision was wrong because it failed to take into account all the circumstances affecting the problem. This point has perhaps been laboured unduly in the last few pages, but it is of vital importance: Motivation Research is only a reliable tool if it examines and correlates *all* the factors bearing on the situation.

One of the most valuable analytical techniques which can be used for this purpose is the study of what are known as 'user-groups'. Examples have already been quoted of comparisons between the users of one brand and the users of another, and also examples of comparisons between present and past users, but since the users of one particular brand may be anything but a homogenous group it is frequently well worth while examining them in detail.

The simplest way of analysing them in the first place is according to their volume of consumption. Whatever the product, some people consume more than others, and it is usually found that a relatively small proportion of consumers account for a relatively large proportion of total sales. For example, if we consider cigarette and tobacco consumption, we find that, of the total adult population:

the 7% who are 'heavy' smokers account for 30% of total consumption;

the 31% who are 'average' smokers account for 61% of total consumption;

the 20% who are 'light' smokers account for only 9% of total consumption;

and, of course, the 42% who are non-smokers don't account for any. Obviously, even from a straightforward marketing point of view, the heavy smokers constitute a group whose importance is out of all proportion to its numerical size. But from the point

of view of Motivation Research, if smoking is an expression of personality (as, indeed, it is), then equally obviously a study of the differences between the various user-groups will produce findings of the utmost significance.

Sometimes, indeed, the market is found to be even more 'concentrated' than in this example. A study carried out some years ago for a certain breakfast cereal showed that:

> 2% of families (heavy users) accounted for 50% of total sales;
>
> 3% of families (light users) accounted for 30% of total sales;
>
> 14% of families (infrequent users) accounted for 20% of total sales

and the obvious question to which this sort of distribution leads is: what is it about these three groups that differentiates them one from another? Here again there was not a great deal of difference between the standard characteristics—social class, size of family, age of housewife, presence or absence of children, and so on. Differences in brand-image are clearly of considerable significance here, as are differences in the personality of the purchaser—the housewife. But since a breakfast cereal is a product which is not cooked-up into a family dish, but is bought—or not—by the housewife and put on the table for the individual family members to help themselves—or not—we have to study the interrelation of the different family personalities, and look at the whole thing in the light of what might be called the 'pantry-pattern'.

Sometimes the housewife buys one brand of cereal, solely and consistently; sometimes she rings the changes, buying one brand one week and another brand the next; sometimes she keeps as many as half a dozen different brands in the pantry, either putting one on the table for a specific meal (that is to say, at her own discretion) or else allowing the individual members of the family to choose their own. In the light of all this, therefore, broad

generalizations about brand-images and consumer-personalities will not be adequate for the determination of production, marketing, and advertising policies. Study of the personality factors involved must be made in the light of the pattern of surrounding circumstances—in this individual case, a very involved pattern indeed.

This particular example was an exceptionally complex one, but user-groups can often be studied in a relatively simple way, and one of their greatest uses is in establishing tendencies and trends. If a particular attitude is common to heavy users, light users, and non-users alike, then we can be reasonably sure that it has little importance as a motivator. On the other hand, if in respect of any particular quality or characteristic of the product there are marked differences between the attitudes manifested by the three groups, then providing we have evidence for knowing that it is the attitude which causes the behaviour (and not the behaviour which causes the attitude, as suggested in the instant coffee example on page 93), we can see what are the factors militating for or against usage of the product.

In an enquiry carried out in Belgium into the market for soup-mixes, informants were analysed into three groups—regular users, infrequent users, and non-users. (It is usually not possible to collect accurate data in a single survey about *volume* of consumption, but for Motivation Research purposes *frequency* is practically as useful, though it cannot always be used for estimating the precise total size of the market.) A very simple projective test was used at one stage of the enquiry—the question: 'For which among these six listed reasons do you think a woman might use soup-mixes?' and the analysis by user-groups is shown in the table on p. 100.

Now the only items which show significant differences between the three groups are items 3 and 5—items which relate to the *quality* of the product and to our old friend, laziness. And it may be inferred from this that these attitudes are the only ones out of

the six that are important *motivationally*—that is, the only ones that *affect the buying pattern*. For example, practically all informants thought that pressure of time would be a reason for buying soup-mixes, but as attitudes on this do not vary materially between the three groups it can be deduced that this does not affect the behaviour pattern. On the other hand, the 'projected'

THINK A WOMAN WOULD USE SOUP-MIXES BECAUSE:	REGULAR USERS	INFREQUENT USERS	NON-USERS
	%	%	%
1. She is pressed for time . . .	95	92	81
2. She prefers to spend her time cooking such things as *cannot* be bought ready-prepared	59	55	49
3. She thinks soup-mixes are as good as home-made soups . . .	73	48	21
4. She is a poor cook . . .	44	45	53
5. She is lazy	35	47	60
6. They are cheap	46	49	42

answer 'Soup-mixes are as good as home-made soups' shows enormous variation between the regular and infrequent user groups, and between these and the non-user group: clearly, therefore, attitudes towards the goodness and nourishing qualities of packet-soups are of very great moment in determining whether or not a woman will buy them.

Similarly, the descriptions of the soup-mix user as 'lazy' and 'a poor cook' were both subscribed to by about 50% of informants. But the 'poor cook' description showed no differences to speak of between the three user-groups, whereas 'laziness' shows very marked differences. Because of these variations, it can be said the fear of being accused of 'laziness' (by her family, her friends, or even herself) is an important motivator in preventing a woman from buying soup-mixes, whereas the fear of being accused of being 'a poor cook' is not.

A question that might be asked here, as of so many of our other examples, is how we know that the behaviour-pattern, the usage-pattern, *follows* the attitude rather than *causes* it. We cannot, in fact, know it from the particular data which have been tabulated above: in this particular case, correlation of these attitude-questions with other questions and tests included in the survey showed that the attitudes were 'independent' of the usage-patterns of the product concerned, and that in the relationship which was found between these attitudes and the user-groups it was the usage which was what statisticians call the 'dependent variable'.

There is no standard way in which this sort of check or control can be applied: the procedures which have to be used depend upon the nature of the enquiry, the sort of data which are being collected, the sort of answers which informants give, and the sort of evidence which emerges during the course of the enquiry. It is in his ability to do this sort of analysis, to 'build-in' the necessary controls in the first place, and to prove beyond question at the analytical stage that all the variables measured are what they purport to be, that the skill of the motivation researcher lies.

For the methods and techniques described in Chapter Four are not particularly difficult in themselves, and there is nothing to stop anybody with a reasonable degree of intelligence from rushing out and administering them to a sample of the population. The skill, the know-how which Motivation Research requires, arises at the *analysis* stage, and it is at this stage that incompetent, or even simply inexperienced, research can do so much damage. Motivation Research, in fact, is essentially a job for the professional.

It was pointed out in Chapter One that this book was not an exhaustive treatise on methods: it is intended for the market researcher or business executive who *uses* Motivation Research, rather than for the expert who *does* it. The analytical procedures

which can be used would require a volume many times the size of this to describe, a volume which would hardly be worth the writing since the ability to analyse technical material scientifically is not something which can be learned from a book.

But, in this matter of the relations between the technical expert and the lay client, one point should be made, and made very strongly. Although the analysis of a Motivation Research enquiry is a task for the expert, not for the layman, the expert *must* be able to explain what he has done, and why it is he has come to the conclusions he has. And he must be able to do this in simple language, and without excessive use of technical jargon: his knowledge, experience, and skill are required at the analytical stage, but should not be used simply to moither his client.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Thus far in this book we have studied what are essentially the *methods* of Motivation Research: the following chapters deal with its *applications*. Before turning to these, however, it is probably worth while taking a brief look at the various stages through which a normal, full-scale Motivation Research enquiry may have to pass. Not all of these are invariably necessary—this depends upon the nature of the problem—and sometimes other stages have to be included, but in general the following might be the pattern for a project designed to fill the brief 'Here is our product—here are our sales figures—what changes (within the bounds of the possible) should we make in our production and packaging, and what should we do as regards marketing and advertising, in order to increase our turnover, or make more profit?'

Stage I, the 'Pre-pilot' stage, will consist of a handful of depth-interviews, or a couple of group-interviews, in order to provide the researcher with a 'feel' of the situation. These should be almost totally 'unstructured', should range over as wide a field as

possible, and will normally be conducted by the research executive (or project-director, or whatever you like to call him) himself. If, however, this particular field of enquiry is one with which he is already acquainted, this stage can be omitted, but it should *not* be omitted simply because the manufacturer says 'I can tell you all you want to know'.

Stage II, the 'Motivational Pilot', consists of anything between 50 and 150 'depth interviews' (it may sometimes be more, but this is not *normally* necessary or desirable). It is the task of the research executive to design the interview-guide for these either in the light of what has emerged from the pre-pilot, or in the light of his own previous research knowledge of the field. The extent to which the interview-guide covers a wide field, or is narrowed down to one particular sector, depends upon the nature of the enquiry.

Included in these interviews are whatever projective tests the research executive can think of as *likely* to add to the findings, to uncover hidden aspects, to overcome resistances and taboos, or in any way to add *depth* to the enquiry. And at this stage every lead (however slight) which has been thrown up at the pre-pilot stage, and every hunch which anybody produces, should be covered one way or another.

The sample of people interviewed at this stage needs to be chosen very carefully—not to be a representative sample, but to include adequate sub-samples of all the different groups, particularly user-groups, whose different attitudes and habits may require separate study at a later stage.

The analysis of this material, which to a large extent the research executive must do himself (or else supervise very closely), is a lengthy business, and will rarely take much less than a month. But the result of this analysis is not a report: its function is to lay the working plan for Stage IV.

The essentially loose and unstructured interviewing technique used for the Motivational Pilot stage is normally neither

administratively feasible nor adequately precise for the large-scale interviewing which will be required at Stage IV. Similarly, the projective tests which have been included at the earlier stage are usually too elaborate, too diffuse, and not sufficiently focused to be used at Stage IV. It is therefore necessary to design questionnaires which *can* be used at this later stage, including in them such simplified projective tests as can be proved to have 'discriminating' value. Before such a questionnaire is put into the field it needs testing, not only in the normal way in which *any* research questionnaire needs testing, but also to see how far the redesigned and simplified projective tests (sentence completions, word associations, attitude batteries, balloon tests or whatever is to be used) stand up to the requirements of the problem. This is Stage III, the 'Methodological Pilot'.

Sometimes this can be done in one pilot: sometimes it needs several—it all depends upon the nature of the problem. And upon this, too, depends the number of interviews required: it is quite impossible to lay down any rigid rules about it.

It sometimes happens that the findings from Stage II, the Motivational Pilot, are so clear-cut that it is possible to proceed straight to Stage IV without more than a token Methodological Pilot. This, however, is a fairly rare occurrence.

Stage IV, the 'Quantifying Follow-up', is the main part of the enquiry, and it is from this stage—and from this stage only—that final results and conclusions can be obtained.

The Motivational Pilot will have uncovered the various attitude and personality factors which have any bearing on the problem: it will have indicated what tendencies and resistances exist, and what methods of enquiry can best be used to investigate them further. It has, in fact, thrown up a series of hypotheses and leads, points which need to be tested, to have their appropriate weight measured, and their ultimate importance judged, in the light of the total problem. And it is at this final stage, where we are seeking *precision*, that we have to bring together all the

factors bearing on the situation, psychological and circumstantial alike.

The importance of studying the psychological factors against the full background of purchase and usage patterns has been discussed at some length in the previous pages, and need not be gone over again. But the essential point to be realized here is that this necessarily involves the use of reasonably large samples and of *representative* samples, in order that the various factors concerned may be studied one against the other, and their interaction examined, with some reasonable degree of statistical reliability, and with a reasonable assurance that the findings may safely be taken as applying to the whole of the market.

The need at this final stage for the use of large samples necessarily involves a far more 'structured' type of interview than that which is used for the Motivational Pilot stage. It needs a formal questionnaire (even though many of the questions may be left somewhat 'open') and projective tests which have been cast in a reasonably precise form. It also involves, incidentally, very complicated analytical processes, which cannot be carried out except with the use of I.B.M. or similar punched-card equipment. These are the reasons, indeed, why Stage III—the Methodological Pilot—is usually necessary, in order to *translate* the procedures used in Stage II into procedures suitable for use at Stage IV.

The size of the sample necessary at this Quantifying Follow-up stage depends upon the nature of the enquiry. It is determined by the complexity of the purchase and usage patterns which have to be taken into account, and the extent to which other background circumstances are likely to affect the total picture. Where all these are relatively simple, the required sample may be as small as 500 interviews (though a sample as small as this is comparatively rare): where they are complicated, the necessary sample may run up to 3,000 or even 4,000 interviews. To some degree, indeed, as with all forms of consumer research, smaller samples may sometimes be feasible if a less stringent level of precision is regarded as

acceptable, but this is a dangerous path to tread: if the sample becomes too small, what looks like simply a loss of precision may in fact be a loss of the general validity of the findings, because a too-small sample has rendered it impossible to track down those motivating factors which are of *real* importance for production, marketing and advertising policy.

CHAPTER SIX

MOTIVATION RESEARCH IN PRODUCTION POLICY

MOTIVATION Research developed originally as a tool of advertising. It was concerned with the *image* of the product as perceived by the prospective purchaser, and with ways of changing or reinforcing that image, without much regard to the product itself. In other words, the problem was: Given this product as it exists, what can be *said* about it which will make it more attractive to more consumers?

But the commercial operation which starts in a factory and finishes up with a retail sale cannot be regarded as a series of rigidly isolated processes. Although, as has been pointed out in Chapter Five, the brand-image of a product depends upon a great many factors besides the intrinsic qualities of the product itself, those intrinsic qualities are of very considerable importance. And Motivation Research, undertaken to find out why people behave as they do in respect of brand-choice, and what course of marketing and advertising action on the manufacturer's part will lead to desired changes in this behaviour, naturally threw up explanations of the 'why' which related to the product *as* a product, together with occasional indications that a variation in product-formulation might equally increase consumer demand and acceptance.

Sometimes the variation in product-formulation was required only to give substance to an advertising claim. For example, it was found that purchasers of a certain type of sweet biscuit had no very marked brand-loyalty: they regarded the products of a number of manufacturers as being more or less the same in

quality, and therefore would not be bothered to demand any one brand, or, if they did, to walk out of a shop which did not have it in stock. The advertising problem then became one of finding a product-plus which would help strengthen the image of quality and food-value for one *particular* brand, and it was suggested that 'You can taste the butter in them' would serve this purpose admirably.

Two difficulties were encountered here. In the first place, the brand in question contained no butter at all; in the second, the manufacturer's bakery chemists stated quite positively that even if the whole of the shortening used in the biscuits were replaced by butter, no member of the ordinary public could tell the difference. But the first of these presented no problem, and the second was irrelevant. For whether or not the taste of the butter is really discernible, if people think they can taste it, taste it they will!

A special product-test was therefore devised, in which people were given two packets of the biscuits, told that one packet was made with butter, and the other without, and asked which they preferred, and why. A small proportion of the test informants said they could detect no difference, but the majority said they much preferred the ones made with butter, because they were richer, creamier, smoother, more tasty. A quite material proportion of them, however, said they preferred the ones made *without* butter, because they were less greasy, more digestible, not so sickly, and so on.

Now the nub of this test was that the two packets of biscuits were identical, and that *neither* of them contained any butter. This, in fact, was not a product-test at all, but a novel form of *projective* test designed to uncover attitudes towards the use of butter in biscuits. And the results of the test were quite clear: the majority of people prefer a biscuit of the type which they think is made with butter to one which they think is made without butter.

Two important points arise from this. Firstly, so far as concerns

the *effect* which the butter claim is likely to have, it does not matter whether or not it is justified—though naturally the manufacturer's sense of moral obligation to his public (to say nothing of the operations of the Food and Drugs Acts and the Merchandise Marks Act) will require him to ensure that the butter is actually there. But, secondly, there is no advantage whatever to be gained by putting butter in unless it is talked about, loud and clear.

Of course, it frequently happens that the presence or absence of a new ingredient *is* discernible (or at least, its effect is) even where attention is not specifically drawn to it. In this case the problem is more complicated: should the ingredient be included or not, and if it *is* should it be mentioned or not? In such a situation the product-test and the projective-test are both necessary, and the easiest method of carrying out these is to check for preference between three things: the product without the ingredient, the product *with* the ingredient but without any reference to it, and the product with the ingredient and *with* a reference on the pack.

There are various ways in which such a test can be done: informants can be given samples of all three packs, and asked to rate them in order, or three identical or 'matched' groups of informants can each be given *one* thing, and asked for an absolute rating of this. Precisely how the mechanics of the test are operated depends upon the nature of the product, but in any case the final result can be obtained as a ranking in order of preference of the three forms of the product.

Now the conclusions to which the manufacturer can come depend upon which of six preference-rankings are obtained. If for example, he gets:

Highest ranking: without ingredient
Second ranking: with ingredient, and so marked
Lowest ranking: with ingredient, but not so marked

or this one:

Highest ranking: without ingredient
Second ranking: with ingredient, but not so marked
Lowest ranking: with ingredient, and so marked

then, other things being equal, he will be well advised *at this stage of his knowledge* to leave the new ingredient severely alone, since it is preferred neither in the image nor in the reality.

Suppose, however, he gets:

Highest ranking: with ingredient, and so marked
Second ranking: with ingredient, but not so marked
Lowest ranking: without ingredient

then his best plan is to include the ingredient, and to publicize the fact as much as possible. On the other hand, with a pattern such as this:

Highest ranking: with ingredient, but not so marked
Second ranking: with ingredient, and so marked
Lowest ranking: without ingredient

while it would still be desirable to include the ingredient, it would be better not to talk about it.

In all these four examples the preference-rankings as between the samples with and without the new ingredient are quite clear-cut. But this is not always so—consider, for example, the following possibility:

Highest ranking: with ingredient, and so marked
Second ranking: without ingredient
Lowest ranking: with ingredient, but not so marked.

Now here the *reality* of the new ingredient is a positive disadvantage, making the product with it inferior to the product without it. But the *idea* is so powerful that it overcomes this dis-

advantage, and the obviously advisable course of action for the manufacturer is to go on experimenting until he finds a way of handling it that is not disadvantageous in itself, so that he may with rather greater safety take advantage of the powerful *selling* properties of the idea.

An even more dangerous situation would be indicated by the following pattern:

Highest ranking: with ingredient, but not so marked
Second ranking: without ingredient
Lowest ranking: with ingredient, and so marked

where the *function* of the new ingredient is highly advantageous, but the *idea* is received with disfavour. In such a case the manufacturer's best course of action is to add the new ingredient and say nothing about it, at the same time hoping that his competitors will not start a 'whispering campaign' on the subject.

It may seem that this example is a remarkably simple one to be dignified with the name of Motivation Research. But Motivation Research need not invariably be excessively complicated: in this particular case, the test is concerned with the relationship of the *image* and the *reality* of a product, and with the impact of that relationship on consumer attitudes, so that it certainly qualifies. On the other hand, it can hardly be considered a classic case, since it assumes that the overall preference figures can be accepted without examining the separate attitude of various groups of consumers.

Such an assumption, however, can never be made. Different people want different things, and product-testing, like copy-testing, should only be concerned with what is called the 'prospect-group'—that is, the sort of people who are likely to buy the product in any case.

A very simple example can make this clear. Suppose a toothpaste manufacturer, whose product is flavoured with peppermint, wants to know whether or not he ought to increase the strength of

peppermint in it. He makes up a consignment with a stronger flavour, and arranges for a 'blind test' of this against his regular product. He might get the following results:

Prefer regular flavour: 55%
Prefer stronger flavour: 45%

from which he might decide to leave his product alone, and in which decision he *could* be very wrong. For it might be that the toothpaste-consuming population consists of two equal groups of people: those who like the flavour of peppermint, and those who dislike it, and the reactions to his product-test of these two groups separately might be:

	AMONG PEOPLE WHO LIKE PEPPERMINT	AMONG PEOPLE WHO DISLIKE PEPPERMINT
	%	%
Prefer regular flavour .	20	90
Prefer stronger flavour .	80	10
	100	100

Now what can he learn from this? The people who dislike peppermint naturally prefer the regular flavour to the stronger flavour—or at least, they *dislike it rather less*. But since they dislike peppermint, they will not buy his regular product in any case—they have answered, quite truthfully, a question which for them is entirely academic! Their views on which of the two flavours is the better—or the least unattractive—are of no value at all to the manufacturer. On the other hand, the people who find peppermint acceptable, and therefore constitute the prospect-group for this particular brand, exhibit a very strongly marked preference for the stronger flavour.

It is the essential nature of this particular product to contain peppermint, and the test shows that those people who are attracted

by this essential nature—the first group—would like it accentuated, by the use of a stronger flavour. Those people to whom its essential nature is in fact unattractive (the second group) naturally find it more acceptable the more it is denatured—that is to say, the weaker the flavour. And the only way in which this second group can *really* be pleased would be by removal of the peppermint flavour altogether.

Now the decision whether or not to follow this last course depends upon many factors quite apart from the results of a simple product-test. Some people like one flavour, and some other flavours: existing brands on the market contain varying flavours: these brands have different brand-images, and appeal to different groups of the population for various reasons, of which flavour is only one, and by no means the most important. The decision as to which segment or segments of the market a manufacturer is going after has to be taken in the light of *all* the relevant factors, including consideration of what it is possible or economic for him to produce. In other words, production policy must be kept strictly in line with marketing and advertising policies.

To say this, however, is not to say that any one of the three basic policies must necessarily dictate the form of the others. And where, for a particular product, the formulation is immutable,[1] then marketing and advertising policies must be adapted to fit it, and the segment of the market which is sought will be that for which the product, as it stands, is appropriate. Such cases will be considered in subsequent chapters, but are irrelevant in this: here we are examining cases where production policy *can* be changed, or (in the case of a new product) actually determined, as a result of Motivation Research findings.

The examples that have so far been quoted in this chapter can be regarded as rather of the nature of parables: we may now

[1] A manufacturer may base his decision to adhere to a given formulation on either *rational* or *sentimental* grounds—or on sentimental grounds masquerading as rational ones.

consider rather more systematically the ways in which Motivation Research can aid production policy.

In the first place, the *products* themselves may be divided into two classes—on the one hand, existing products, already on the market, which are susceptible of modification, and on the other entirely new products which have not hitherto been marketed. And in the second place, the *markets* may be divided into two classes—on the one hand those which can be regarded as 'saturated', where the *total* volume of sales is unlikely to increase materially (such as the soap, or cigarette, or toothpaste markets) so that a new brand can only gain a foothold at the expense of existing brands, and on the other hand those which can be regarded as 'extensible' through either an increase in the number of consumers or an increase in the average *per capita* volume of consumption.

This analysis produces four main classes of product, and there is one other:

Existing product Saturated market	New product Saturated market
Existing product Extensible market	New product Extensible market
	New product New market

the fifth class consisting of new products of an entirely novel type, in a product field which has not yet been developed. In this group, of course, come all the crazy inventions which nobody wants, and which are put on the market for nobody to buy, but it would also include such revolutionary (in their time) articles as bicycles, electric razors, and ball-point pens. The problems of research into this class of product are, however, of a rather special type, and will be considered later in this chapter: for the moment we may deal with the four normal classes.

The divisions between these four classes are, of course, by no means hard and fast. The precise point at which a particular market ceases to be 'extensible' and becomes 'saturated' is very much a matter of degree, and of opinion. Nor is the distinction always clear between 'existing' products and 'new' ones. Is, for example, a new model of a well-known make of car 'existing' or 'new' in this connexion? The answer to this question is that it is both, and this answer pinpoints the difference between the two groups from a Motivation Research point of view. For the existing product already has a brand-image, which has to be taken into account: the new product normally has not, so that the manufacturer has much greater freedom of action. The special case of cars and similar goods will be discussed a little later.

Although the four classes do not form water-tight compartments, they are a convenient way of dividing up the problem. But no matter which of them a product falls into, the basic approach to the problem is the same: the first step is to carry out full-scale Motivation Research, in order to determine:

(*a*) What are the patterns of the market;

(*b*) Why those patterns take this form?

(*c*) What is the relationship between the personalities of the various brands at present on the market and the personalities and requirements of the various groups of people who buy them, or who do not buy them.

From this the manufacturer can decide which particular group (or groups) of people it will be most profitable for him to go after, taking into account *all* the relevant factors—including the position and entrenched strength of existing brands. And from this in turn he can decide what product formulation will be most appropriate to this group, no matter whether this product formulation is required for its own intrinsic function or simply in order to help create a required brand-image.

At this stage, however, there is an enormous difference in the

freedom of action open to him, according to whether he is formulating an entirely new product or whether he is simply considering improvements in the formulation of an existing one. In the latter case, if the product is keeping the production-lines humming in a large factory, and has a strongly developed and widely recognized brand-image of its own, the decision to make radical changes in the formulation and to go after a totally different segment of the market might be highly unrealistic.

To illustrate this we might consider the case of an existing product in a saturated market. One example of this has already been given, in the toothpaste case-history discussed on page 96. The manufacturer did not have the promotional resources available to alter his brand-image and to break into a major segment of the market, even with a new formulation: at the same time, his new formulation rendered the product unsuitable for his existing consumers. But let us look at the problem which might confront the manufacturer of, say, a well-established toilet soap, holding a substantial portion of the market, and strongly perfumed with antiseptic.

Now he might find, as a result of Motivation Research, that this product has *two* brand-images—among users, one of wholesomeness, health, cleanliness, no-nonsense-about-it, and so on, and among *non-users* an image of coarseness, vulgarity, roughness, needed-only-by-dirty-people, and other unfavourable aspects of what is substantially the same attitude as that held, favourably, by the users. He might also find that, what with the increasing standard of living, the swing towards greater luxury, improvements in housing conditions, and other changes of this sort, the population-group whose personalities and attitudes fit in even with his *favourable* brand-image is rapidly shrinking. His production problem can thus be expressed very simply: should he reduce the antiseptic content of his soap, and if so, by how much?

In the first place, of course, he will realize that the actual composition of his soap plays a relatively minor part in its brand-

image, which has built itself up for many decades as a result of his advertising and promotional activities. He can juggle all he likes with the formulation without having much effect on the brand image—at least among the non-users—unless he publicizes the fact very heavily, or follows a totally different advertising policy. The question he must ask himself is how far he can hope to change that brand-image (in conjunction with appropriate formulation changes) and to what groups of present non-users he can hope to appeal. Bearing in mind the historical development of his product, can he reasonably hope to change its brand-image so radically as to reach, for example, the people at the other end of the scale who require large quantities of *glamour* in a toilet soap? If he cannot get at these, what intermediate groups can he hope to reach? What degree of change in brand-image might reasonably lead to the attraction of what sized groups? This sort of decision requires the most delicate balancing of probabilities, and it can be seen from this why it is that modern Motivation Research requires *quantification* rather than vague psychological generalizations.

As has already been suggested, according to what brand-image he feels it desirable to try to develop, so he can change the quantity of antiseptic in his soap (preferably using consumer product-tests, also conducted along Motivation Research lines) to assist him in matching the reality with the desired image. But, in considering the balance of probabilities likely to maximize his ultimate profit, he will also have had to take into account his existing market. How far can he change his brand-image and/or his formulation without losing his present customers? Can he afford to lose them, or some of them, in order to pick up a more profitable market elsewhere? The degree of *compromise* which is possible will depend upon the individual case, but the great danger which must be avoided is that of falling heavily between two stools. Obviously, his decision will also depend to a great extent upon the nature of the competition. If he abdicates the

'strong antiseptic' position, is there another brand ready to step in and take his place? If so, he must obviously be very careful how he moves: if not, it may be that a reduction in the 'antiseptic' brand-image and content may help him to rope in as customers people who are prepared to accept the milder but not the stronger form, while leaving his present users, who prefer the stronger form, less contented but still his customers because they have nowhere else to go!

This question of the existing brand-image does not arise, of course, in the case of a new product. And we might here consider, as an example of a *new* product (but still in a saturated market), a proposed new brand of cigarette. It has already been pointed out in Chapter Four that smokers can be divided into groups according to the particular types of *satisfaction* they get from smoking, or from smoking a particular brand. And Motivation Research can be used in the normal way to isolate these groups, to identify them, and to measure their relative size.

Thus the manufacturer has to decide which group, or groups, he intends to go after, and what brand-image it will be desirable for him to create in order to appeal to them. And at this point he must consider what *nature* of cigarette he is going to make. For although very few people can readily distinguish in reality between one blend of tobacco and another, it *is* possible to create discernible differences—between a very strong blend and a very mild one, for example. And other differences—more particularly having regard to the length and thickness—are more easily spotted by the average smoker, while yet other points of difference —whether or not the cigarette has a cork or filter tip, for example —are obvious to almost everybody.

The manufacturer having decided, then, what part of the market he is aiming at and, what brand-image he needs for this purpose, must now determine a product-formulation which will best fit that brand-image. If, for example, he wants to create a brand-image that is rough, tough, and 'he-man', it would be a

mistake to use an excessively mild tobacco blend: smokers are capable of fooling themselves a great deal, but not quite to that extent. The other qualities needed may not be so obvious, and it may be necessary to carry out fairly extensive product-tests, but in conducting such tests one vital point must be remembered: they should be applied *only to the prospect-group*—that is to say, only to those people whose personalities, attitudes, and smoking-needs identify them as belonging to that segment of the population which has already been picked out as the target for this new brand.

Other examples of the uses of Motivation Research for the determination of production-policy (either for new or existing brands) in an already saturated market can be multiplied almost indefinitely. It must suffice here to quote only three or four, and these only in outline.

An example was quoted on page 108 of the housewife's attitude towards the inclusion of butter in biscuits, and it was shown there that, while *most* people were favourably disposed towards this, a minority were unfavourably disposed—they disapproved of the supposed excessive richness, indigestibility, and so on. The manufacturer's decision to include butter, or to exclude it, would depend upon whether he intended to go after the larger group or whether (because he could see a less competitive and therefore easier market) he would aim at the smaller group.

An enquiry carried out into the market for alarm-clocks indicated that, although many people were attracted towards new and contemporary designs in such clocks, a very large group preferred the old, ugly, traditional design—the basic reason for this being that they identified plainness (not to say ugliness) with efficiency and thought that an alarm-clock ought to *look* like an alarm-clock and should not ape its betters. There are clearly two totally different markets here, and the manufacturer has to make his decision accordingly. In this particular case, however, he has to remember that fashions change, and that as the new contemporary

designs come into wider use they lose their connotation of flashiness and unreliability, and become respectable, so that the group of people who insist on the old-fashioned design will probably shrink quite rapidly over a fairly short time.

In one of the extracts from depth-interviews quoted at the beginning of Chapter Four there was a hostile reference to the 'blue' in a synthetic detergent powder. Now synthetic detergents depend for their 'whitening' properties on optical bleaches, and the colour of the actual powder is almost totally beside the point. The main purpose of colouring the powders themselves is to help create the right brand-image in the minds of housewives who associate blue, traditionally, with whiteness in linen. But (as the example quoted shows) there are some housewives who think it is *their* job to put the blue in, and regard a manufacturer who does so as a trespasser on their private preserves. Such women may form a small group or a large one, but clearly the relative size of the group is something which has to be taken into account in deciding product-formulation.

Of a very similar nature is the whole question of 'nastiness' in medicines and 'sting' in the personal antiseptics used for cuts and scratches. While most people would claim, when put a direct question, that they would prefer medicines which were pleasant-tasting and antiseptics which did not sting, a very large proportion even of these are inclined to *distrust* a medicament that does not have some unpleasant side-effects: they cannot be sure that it is doing them good! There are a number of very profound reasons for this, of which probably the most important is that you can feel the sting chasing the germs or disease away—and it is worth remembering that asafoetida still owes its place in the British Pharmacopoeia to the fact that its foul stink is effective in driving away devils! (Incidentally, the lunatic fringe of Motivation Research would probably claim that people want the 'sting' in an antiseptic to punish them, and thus assuage their sense of guilt, for having been so wicked as to cut themselves.) There is no point in

going into all this now, but the fact remains that 'nastiness' and 'sting' are very important components in a medical product for quite large groups of people, and that it may not invariably be in a manufacturer's best interests to try to reduce them.

Reference was made earlier in this chapter to that category of products which, like cars and television sets, issue new *models* at periodic intervals under the same brand-name. These, though they may technically be *new* products, have to be treated for Motivation Research purposes as *existing* products, since their existing brand-image is a very important factor in the determination of policy.

A Motivation Research enquiry carried out for a car manufacturer in the United States showed that the brand-image of his particular make was that of a conservative, reliable, well-engineered, and somewhat stodgy piece of work. It also showed that this particular brand-image suited the personalities of only a very restricted group of potential purchasers, so that any attempt to increase the market for this make required a major change in brand-image.

It was decided in this particular case that far more would be gained than lost by making this change. But the problem was very complicated, because the brand-images of makes of car take a great deal of changing—as Fords discovered many years ago when, having developed for themselves an image as the epitome of cheap cars, they were obliged to produce under totally different names in order to sell higher-priced cars. In the case we are considering here, all the advertising and promotion in the world could not have changed the brand-image of the car as it stood.[1]

There are two reasons for this. In the first place, though the image of a product depends upon many factors *other* than the reality, the reality itself is also an important factor in some fields—and the car market is one of those fields. And in the second place,

[1] That is, in America. The British situation, complicated by a total war and six years' cessation of production, did not develop in quite the same way.

if the public is accustomed to think of a particular make in a particular way, and they are asked to think of it differently, they require some visible and outward sign that it has changed! With a food or household product, or even a cigarette, this outward and visible sign can quite often be provided simply by changing the pack, but this easy solution is hardly feasible for automobiles. A major re-styling operation has to be undertaken.

In the event, of course, the re-styling went very far beyond what would have been required simply to support an attempt to change the brand-image. It became a major operation in its own right, yet the basic philosophy underlying the whole of it centred round the necessity for getting away from the old image, abandoning the old group of existing customer-personalities, and creating a new model which would appeal to a far wider market and for which an appropriate brand-image could be satisfactorily built up.

So far we have considered examples of products selling in what we have termed saturated markets. But one of the most fruitful uses of Motivation Research in production policy comes from its application in *extensible* markets, where product changes (or original product-formulations) which are in line with the right brand-image can do a great deal to speed up market development.

An example, first of all, of an existing product in this extensible field may be quoted from work done on soup-mixes in Belgium. One particular brand of these held a relatively small share of the market, and did not itself have a very favourable brand-image: there had been little consistent advertising to help create one, and the products themselves were not entirely in line with public taste. A major programme of reorganization was therefore decided on, involving a reconsideration of the formulation of all the brand's different varieties, a re-packaging operation, a carefully-beamed advertising campaign, and an overhaul of the brand's marketing and distribution arrangements.

A Motivation Research enquiry showed that the market divided into three groups—a small group of 'regular users' (about

15% of all housewives), a very large group of 'infrequent users' (about 55%), and a quite sizeable group (about 30%) of non-users. It also showed that the 'regular user' group was very largely pre-empted by the existing field-leaders, that the 'non-user' group had such hostility to the idea of soup-mixes at all that it would be a long job to convert them—and a thankless one, for a brand with only a small share of the market—but that the 'infrequent user' group, though it had certain resistances and hostilities to the idea, could probably be won over to a much more frequent usage if the right personality were developed for a particular brand—and that they would be won for *that* brand rather than for the competitors

An example of one of the test procedures used in this enquiry has already been given in Chapter Five (page 100): without going into excessive detail, it can be said that the brand-image which was found to be desirable was one which focused on *goodness* and *nourishment* rather than on quickness, convenience, or taste. This has some relevance to the product-formulation question, as will be seen a little later, but for most of the product-tests which formed part of the re-formulation programme it was sufficient simply to analyse preferences according to whether informants belonged to the frequent, infrequent, or non-using groups, and to determine policy on the basis of the views of the infrequent users —the target group.

A special problem arose with one particular variety, however. Here the manufacturer's product gave a soup the natural colour of the ingredients, whereas all the main competitors had a much more highly coloured product, made this way by the addition of artificial colouring. The question therefore had to be considered as to whether the manufacturer himself should follow suit.

A very simple product-test—asking housewives to choose between two soups, identical except for the fact that colouring had been added to one of them (though, of course, the informants were not aware of this), showed a 60-to-40 preference for the

coloured version. But at this point it was argued that if housewives were *told* about the colouring matter, they might take a rather different view. Consequently, the experiment was repeated, on a different but similar sample of housewives, with one major variation. The packet containing the *uncoloured* soup was marked 'without added colouring' (nothing was put on the other packet), and when the housewives were given the packets they were told:

> 'Here are two packets of soup-mix. . . . This one has its natural colour: the other has had colouring matter added to it.'

The implication still was that the two soups were different in other respects also (although, of course, in reality they were not). From *this* test, however, instead of a 60-to-40 preference for the coloured version, the overall result was a 53-to-47 preference for the uncoloured.

So far the results were pretty clear—a 'natural' preference for the highly-coloured could be overcome by promotional means. Of course, it is one thing to communicate the 'no artificial colouring' story to people in a test situation, when they are paying attention to what they are being told, and quite another to do so in the hurly-burly of the market-place: beyond question, to get this story across would call for a rigid focusing of advertising effort on that particular point.

Before making the decision, therefore, it was necessary to refer back to the conclusions which had arisen from the original Motivation Research enquiry, and to the selection of the 'infrequent user' group of housewives as the target for this particular brand. In the first place, the first part of the product test showed that, although the majority of housewives preferred the coloured version, a very considerable minority preferred the uncoloured—and this minority included a relatively greater proportion of infrequent users. For the existing field-leader to go after a minority group is almost always a mistake, but for a small brand, struggling

to increase its market-share, concentration on a sizeable minority group who want something which the leading brands do not offer them is often the wisest policy.

In the second place, the 'no artificial colouring' story which the second part of the product test showed to be required to increase the acceptability of the uncoloured version is a story which fits in very well with the *goodness* and *nourishment* brand-image which had already been selected as likely to encourage major market expansion in the interest of this particular brand. In the final analysis, therefore, consideration of all the research data available led to the conclusion that the greatest market potential for this specific variety lay in having it uncoloured.

In this particular case the existing brand-image, though not very favourable, was also not strongly unfavourable—and was not, indeed, very widely recognized at all, since many people were not aware of the brand's existence. To build a new brand-image on the required lines did not, therefore, present any insuperable obstacles: this happy circumstance cannot always be counted upon, and it cannot be too strongly emphasized that changes in product-formulation in order to fit a proposed new brand-image must *always* be considered in the light of the existing brand-image and the requirements of the existing customers.

With a totally new product, of course, this does not arise, and as an example of the use of Motivation Research to assist in the formulation of a *new* product in an extensible market, we may study the case of a new cake-mix on the British market.

Cake-mixes of a sort had been marketed in Britain for many years, but their total sale had been microscopic. And development of the market had to await the time when sugar and fat were no longer rationed, which did not occur for nearly ten years after the end of the war. Major development in this field had taken place several years earlier in the United States, but although most of the great manufacturing houses which tried to open the British market for these products were either American-

controlled or else themselves operated in the United States, they failed to take advantage of the lessons to be learned from the pattern of development which had occurred in the United States.

Cake-mixes, like any other semi-prepared foods, offer considerable advantages in the way of ease, speed, convenience, and so on—this is, after all, their principal *raison d'être*, particularly where (as in Britain) they are rather more expensive than either the wholly home-made cake or the shop-bought article. And they also give the housewife who is not a very skilful cook an almost fool-proof opportunity of making an acceptable cake (they will not produce as good a cake as a really expert cook can turn out on her own, but that is beside the point—there are not all that number of really expert cooks).

But it is precisely from these advantages that the major *resistances* arise. For in Britain (as in most other Anglo-Saxon cultures) the ability to bake a good cake is almost the standard criterion of a housewife's fitness for her job, of her housewifely skill. There are a number of reasons for this (notably arising out of the fact that a cake is neither an absolute necessity nor an extravagant luxury), and a number of motives working at different levels of profundity, but this is not the place to go into them. The heart of the problem lies in our old friend the sense of *guilt*, the feeling that it is slightly immoral to do things the easy way, and in the housewife's *resentment* of the cake-mix which presumes to take her place and to supersede her skills.

As has been pointed out at some length in earlier chapters, this sort of emotion is not felt by all housewives, and even among many of those who do feel this way the advantages which a ready-prepared mix offers are so powerful that they override the resistances. This, again, is a problem of quantification, and each case must be studied on its own merits. In the case of cake-mixes, however, a Motivation Research study showed, firstly, that the resentments and resistances were quite strong, and very widespread,

and secondly that the intrinsic advantages of a ready-prepared mix were not, on the whole, strong enough to overcome them.

To a large extent this was an advertising problem, and more will be said about this sort of thing in Chapter Nine. But it also presented a problem in product-formulation, arising almost spontaneously from the manufacturer's question: 'What sort of cake-mix shall we make?' And one major decision presented itself at once: should it be 'egg-included' (with dried egg already provided by the manufacturer), or 'egg-omitted' (where the housewife herself has to add an egg)?

At the practical level, there was a good deal to be said on both sides. The actual packet of mix would be cheaper if it were egg-omitted: on the other hand, the final cake in this case would be somewhat dearer, since the manufacturer can buy dried egg cheaper than the housewife can buy fresh eggs. A better cake might result from an egg-omitted mix since fresh egg is better than dried egg: on the other hand, eggs vary in size, and the tolerance-limits of the mix would have to be widened to ensure that an acceptable cake was produced whether the housewife used a small egg or a large one. And various other technical arguments existed both for and against the two alternatives.

But the decision had to be taken on a quite different plane. The original Motivation Research enquiry had revealed that there was a small group of people having none of the feelings of guilt and resentment to which reference has already been made, that these were already users of cake-mixes to a considerable extent, and that they were much more users of existing egg-included than of egg-omitted mixes (the egg-included being mostly new brands which had received considerable promotion and had captured a large share of the market). But it also identified another, much larger, group of housewives among whom these resistances existed to a mild degree—not sufficiently to provide an absolute barrier to their *ever* becoming users of cake-mix, but enough to stop them doing so at the moment to any

but a slight and infrequent extent. And when people in this group *did* use a cake-mix, it was much more likely to be one of the older egg-omitted varieties than was the case among the first group.

Bearing in mind, therefore, that the housewife population could thus be divided into three groups—the small proportion with none of the resistances to the idea, another and quite large proportion who showed very marked and strongly felt resistances (and who would therefore have to be written-off from the potential market, at least in the short run), and the middle group already referred to—it was clear that the best opportunity lay among this middle group. Although the largest part of the *existing* market was among the first group, there was little potential left in this group, which in any case was already in the hands of the existing brands: the big opportunity for market expansion lay in the middle group.

But to tackle this middle group involved overcoming certain resistances and prejudices, of the types which have already been described. This, of course, presented a major advertising problem, but it also provided an answer to the product-formulation question. For the Motivation Research enquiry had indicated the importance of the *egg* in this connexion. When a housewife herself adds a fresh egg to a cake-mix, she gets a feeling of *participation* in the cake-making operation to a much greater degree than if she merely beats up an egg-included mixture. Her half-felt and often unconscious feelings of guilt, of laziness, of not taking proper trouble, of not doing her job the way it ought to be done, all diminish in intensity. Additionally, she can rationalize her revised attitude in terms of the goodness and desirability of fresh egg.

Now with the *first* group of housewives we have considered earlier this would make no difference—they have no resistances to speak of, so that there is no need to go to any great pains to overcome them. And, indeed, since the mix to which egg has to be added requires a little more beating-time, and involves a little more bother, than the egg-included mix, the fresh egg may

even be a disadvantage. But in the case of the middle group, the egg makes a considerable difference—it helps to overcome the resistances, to reduce them to a level at which the manifest advantages of a cake-mix can be accepted. One might say, in fact, that the adding of the egg lowers the threshold of resistance.

And in this particular case, since the middle group had already been selected as the target for market expansion, the group for whom the brand-image of the new brand was to be designed, the formulation problem received its answer—the product must be an egg-omitted mix.

This last example has been quoted in considerable detail, because it indicates some of the wide variety of factors that have to be taken into account in putting Motivation Research findings into practical application. Basically, however, the problem can be *expressed* very simply: the brand-image which it is required to create must be appropriate to the segment of the market which has been selected as the main target, and the product itself must be appropriate to that brand-image.

All the examples so far quoted in this chapter have dealt with products in, or entering, existing markets. A special category to which reference was made earlier is provided by *new* products in *new* markets—that is to say, goods of a totally novel type. Here the area which can be covered is so wide that it is almost impossible to lay down any general rules of procedure. All that it is really possible to say is that the basic principles, as outlined in this chapter and in Chapter Five, have to be applied to the particular circumstances. The potential purchasers have to be identified as a group, by any of the techniques described in Chapter Four and by studying reactions to the new product—either the idea, or in reality—in the light of this: attitudes have to be examined, resistances spotlighted, and that course of action plotted which is most likely to prove profitable. This course may, in fact, be the abandonment of the whole idea—or at least its postponement, until some more foolhardy pioneer has bankrupted himself first!

In this type of research operation particularly the oblique approach may be especially useful. For example, a manufacturer wanted to know whether there was any prospect of launching in Western Germany a product consisting of a roll of paper to be hung in the kitchen and used for the various purposes for which dishclouts and towels are normally used. A perfectly straightforward product-test, where housewives were asked to test out the product and to say whether or not they might be inclined to buy it, suggested a high degree of acceptance. But a parallel Motivation Research exposed the existence of resistances which would almost certainly prove a very great obstacle to the rapid development of this market, the chief of these being the *respect* which the German housewife feels towards paper. To a considerable extent this is a result of war-time and post-war shortages, and so may pass off in time, but it means that, in the present situation, she is rather shocked at the idea of using so highly thought-of a product to wipe off, for example, the grease from a frying-pan.

Indeed, it was found that the majority of housewives interviewed made a habit of saving for re-use such things as paper bags and wrapping-paper which came into their possession. And when this characteristic was studied against the expressed attitude to the new product, a most revealing pattern emerged:

	AMONG HOUSEWIVES WHO SAVE PAPER BAGS	AMONG HOUSEWIVES WHO DO NOT SAVE PAPER BAGS
	%	%
Favourable to the idea of the new product . . .	19	63
Unfavourable to the idea of the new product . .	81	37
	100	100

In an operation of this sort it is almost impossible to avoid having to ask, at some stage, for a statement of intention to buy or not to buy. But it must be realized that this information is almost totally valueless in itself; it can only be used in conjunction with all the other information collected, in complex cross-analysis, to *indicate* the sort of trends that are operating, and to divide the potential market up into groups along whatever continuum is judged to be the most useful for purposes of analysis and prediction.

In all product-testing, in fact, questions such as 'Do you like this product?' or 'Would you buy this product?' are largely meaningless. The word 'like' is almost impossible to define, and the phrase 'would you buy' is much too remote from any actual purchasing situation. And although a question of this sort can have its uses, in a case where in one group of people 50% said they liked the product, whereas in another group only 25% did so, so that it may reasonably be deduced that the first group was more favourably inclined towards it than the second. the answers it produces can all too easily be misunderstood. The essence of reliable product-testing, in fact, lies in *comparison.*

And it must never be overlooked (though the difficulty is not peculiar to Motivation Research) that product-testing is full of pitfalls, and that it is extremely difficult to eliminate all the variables except the one under test. But unless this is done, or unless these other variables can be partialled-out (that is, their effects removed from the findings, which is one of the jobs which Motivation Research is designed to do), the answers are liable to be highly misleading. For example, in a test conducted on a scouring powder, housewives were given a sample of a new product and asked: 'Which do you prefer—this sample, or Brand X?' (Brand X being, at that time, the field-leader with about 70% of the market). Some 60% of informants said they preferred Brand X. But following this, another, parallel, group of informants were given another sample—this time Brand X itself, in a plain container—and asked the same question. Here no less than 70%

of informants said they preferred Brand X—that is to say (though they could not express it themselves in these terms) that they preferred Brand X when they *knew* that it was Brand X to Brand X when they *didn't* know what it was.

Clearly, therefore, the new product was a better product than Brand X—which was not the moral which would have been drawn from the first test by itself! Equally, however, the fact that the new product would be preferred to Brand X in a blind test provided no grounds for supposing that it would be bought in preference to Brand X in a real-life situation.

This sort of danger is well enough known to most competent market-research operators. What is perhaps not so well known, since it is a by-product of Motivation Research, is that product-testing can also be highly misleading if it is not confined to, or at least concentrated on, the target segment of the market. And this target segment (assuming, for example, that you are a car-manufacturer) does not consist of all the people who bought new cars last year, or all those who are likely to buy new cars in a given price-range. It consists of the people who are likely to buy a car in a given price-range *and who want the sort of brand-image that your make offers them.* In other words, if you make Jaguars, there is no point in paying any attention to the views or desires in matters of product-design of a man who, by nature and temperament, is only happy in a Rover.

But by the same token it is not sufficient to confine product-testing to *existing* customers of your make, unless you are satisfied that these constitute the whole of your target segment of the market. For it may very well be that the qualities (real or imaginary) that existing customers of a brand like about it are precisely those qualities which put everybody else off: if the brand is to be aimed at a wider group, then the views of the wider group must also be taken into consideration.

Product-changes and product-formulation must, therefore, be studied in relation to the *whole* of the market pattern, and

determined in the light of that overall strategy which the manufacturer judges will ultimately maximize his profits. The decision here (insofar as it follows from Motivation Research) depends upon the *predictions* which can be made about the likely effects of following one course of action rather than another. The word 'prediction', however (as was pointed out at the beginning of Chapter Five), is used in a rather special sense, and it is no use looking to Motivation Research *by itself* to answer the question: 'How much of our product shall we sell—how much therefore shall we gear ourselves to make?'

The reason for this is that market forecasting, at least for the majority of individual brands of consumer goods, is still a matter of informed guesswork. There are so many variables, so many unknown quantities involved, that any claim to accurate foreknowledge must be regarded with considerable suspicion. In a reasonably stable economy it is possible to forecast with some degree of precision (based on knowledge of the present position, and of current trends) the total volume of consumption of, say, toilet soap, or cigarettes, or even newspapers: it is even possible, by the use of the doubtful statistical device known as extrapolation, to make some sort of a stab at forecasting future sales of television sets or electric razors. But to forecast brand-shares is quite another matter, since this depends not only upon what the individual manufacturer himself does, but also on the activities of all his competitors.

To a considerable extent, indeed, the only answer to the question 'How many shall we sell?' is 'It depends how hard we try.' Motivation Research, integrated with the normal procedures of standard market research, can outline the framework of the market, but what happens within that framework must be very largely a result of the sales-pressures and advertising-pressures that are applied. A weak link in the chain can make nonsense of any sales-predictions—if, for example, the sales force is too small or incompetent, or if the advertising budget is inadequate.

Furthermore, as has already been suggested, the activities of competitors can equally knock sales-forecasts for six. In what we have called a 'saturated' market, a manufacturer may be entitled to look gloomily at increased competitor activity. In an *expansible* market, however, a high level of competitor activity may so speed up the general development of consumer acceptance of a new-type product—say instant coffee, or cake-mixes, or electric razors, or television sets—that although an individual manufacturer's market-share expressed as a percentage of the total may fall, the total market expands so fast that his absolute sales increase with it.

But sales-forcasting is a discipline of its own, with its own extensive literature, and it is not the function of this present volume to go too deeply into this. Enough has been said to indicate the part which Motivation Research can play in providing the necessary framework of knowledge of the market patterns, the reasons for those patterns, and the likely effects of changing production, marketing and advertising policies: decisions within this framework fall into the sphere of management judgement.

* * * * *

There is one very important aspect of production policy remaining to be dealt with, and that concerns the questions of price. And this problem has two quite different (though related) aspects, insofar as production policy is concerned—manufacturing price, and selling price.

The question of *manufacturing* price is simply another aspect of the question already discussed: what sort of product shall we make? Shall it be a plain article, at a given cost, or one with trimmings, at a rather higher cost, or a luxury article, at a higher cost still? This, of course, directly affects production policy in the material sense. The question of *selling* price operates in a different plane: it is a matter of gross profit margins on a given manufacturing cost, and here the considerations involved are the relative profitability of (*a*) small margins in the hope of a large

sales volume, or (*b*) high margins on a smaller sales volume. A third course might be the taking of high margins in order to provide resources for heavy marketing, promotional and advertising activities in order to obtain a large sales volume despite the price, but this does not affect production policy in the same way as the deliberate choice between (*a*) and (*b*).

These considerations affect the decisions which follow from Motivation Research findings, and therefore affect the way in which the problem has to be tackled research-wise. But the basic principle involved is the same as that applicable to other aspects of production policy: what characteristics should the product have in order to fit the brand-image we are trying to build for it, and to suit the group of customers at whom we are aiming?

But price plays a triple role in all this. As a controlling factor in the product's make-up, it *positions* the product in the market—as a cheap, an everyday, or a luxury article. Then it is an essential element in the product's identity, and therefore is one of the factors affecting the *brand-image*. And, finally, it is one of the *resistances* which the purchaser has to overcome before the act of purchase can take place.

The *position* which the product is to occupy in the market—at the cheap, everyday, or luxury level—has to be examined in the light of the personalities, needs, and *circumstances* of the consuming public. It cannot be assumed, for example, that a luxury article will only be bought by the very rich—if the less wealthy feel a strong need for it, they too will buy it. It is not easy to determine what is the relationship between different price-levels and the distribution of purchasers among the different income-groups, particularly since it is rare to find products (the Rolls Royce and diamond tiara category excepted) which fit into watertight compartments. In this connexion Motivation Research can outline tendencies and trends, but cannot give precision to what is in itself very largely inchoate.

So far as concerns *brand-image*, it is in general true to say that

the higher the price, the more favourable the image it helps create. In this connexion it might be worth quoting the story of the street trader in apples, who divided his barrow-load arbitrarily into halves, and put a different price-ticket on each half. The higher-priced apples outsold the lower-priced! This happened, of course, because the purchasers assumed that the higher-priced apples must be superior to the lower-priced—why else should they be more expensive?—and this sort of attitude affects the whole pattern of brand choice, even in those cases where the price-differential is quite small.

The word 'favourable' in this context relates essentially to a quality judgement. It may sometimes happen, however, that this quality judgement is not in the manufacturer's best interests. We have already seen in Chapter Four (page 54), the case of the household washing product that is so highly thought of that it tends to be kept under lock and key in a safe place and not used at all—and this sort of behaviour pattern can quite easily arise as a result of a price differential. People may regard the product with a slightly higher price as being incontestably superior, but at the same time as being inappropriate for everyday use, even though they could perfectly well afford to buy it. On the other hand, the 'quality' image which a slightly higher price sometimes helps to create may, in certain circumstances, be the image that is desired by the majority of consumers. In considering this aspect of the pricing problem, the most detailed Motivation Research information is needed, resulting from the most searching analysis of all available data.

The *resistances* that the price-factor occasions arise from the fact that, other things being equal, people would rather not pay more for a thing than they have to. (Other things very rarely are equal, but that is beside the point at this juncture.) If for the moment we ignore the possible detrimental effect on brand-image of a low price, there is some truth in the generalization that the lower the price, the greater the volume of sales.

But this generalization is only applicable in certain circumstances, and is riddled with exceptions. The smooth 'demand curves' used to corrupt the young, by economists who have spiritually never set foot outside their universities and who have no acquaintance at all with the facts of human economic behaviour, just do not exist in real life. The effects of price-changes on the total market are jerky in the extreme: up to a certain point they may be negligible, and then beyond that point a very small price-change may exert a very great influence on sales. The reasons for this are highly complex, and connected with what might be called the 'psychological price'—itself a function of the general price-structure of the market, the level at which people are accustomed to buy, and—possibly most important of all—people's irrational reactions to pure numbers, which are of peculiar importance in Britain because of our complicated currency system.

As these last few pages have suggested, the study of price is a very complicated matter, and it is really not safe to generalize about it. But before leaving the subject it might be worth while considering one very simple and everyday example of the relationship between the effect of price on brand-image and what we have called price-resistance. When a woman in a shop is shown something cheaper than she wants, she asks: 'Haven't you something a little *better*?' When she is shown something dearer than she wants, she asks: 'Haven't you something a little *less expensive*?'

The reader can be left to work this one out for himself.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MOTIVATION RESEARCH IN PACKAGING

IT was pointed out in Chapter One that the problem of packaging is a problem so close to that of production that the two can hardly be considered separately. This is particularly true, of course, where the pack has what may be termed a function-in-use—where, for example, it acts as a *dispenser* and thus has some positive physical function to perform. But it is also true even when the pack is simply a wrapper which is torn off and thrown away.

The reason for this follows very simply from the discussion of product-formulation policy which occupied the previous chapter. For pack design operates in the selling operation in three different ways:

(*a*) Insofar as it affects the way in which the product is used—when, for example, it acts as a dispenser—it becomes a constituent part of the *reality* of the product, playing as specific a role in the overall performance as do the various ingredients and constituents which are put into the product at the production-line or assembly-line stages.

(*b*) But whether or not it has some actual physical function, it will invariably have some effect on the *brand-image* of the product.

(*c*) Additionally, the pack has a major task to perform at the point-of-sale, in attracting the attention of the potential customer and in conveying the idea that it is a desirable purchase, quite apart from the considerations already noted under (*a*) and (*b*) above.

It will be appreciated that although these three aspects can be considered separately in theory, in practice they run together very closely, and no one aspect can be divorced from the others. It is,

ıdeed, one of the weaknesses of much modern pack-design that /hereas it may consider the functional efficiency of the pack, and ay great attention to its eye-catching aspects, it frequently results ı a pack which, so far from contributing to the most effective rand-image, actually works against it.

The pack designer cannot normally be blamed for this. He /orks—or should work—to a specific brief, and if this brief is ot written with due regard to the brand-image which needs to e created, altered, or maintained, then the necessary guidance is ot provided. Indeed, one of the most dangerous remarks a ıanufacturer or his advisers can make in respect of an existing roduct is 'Let's clean-up the pack', if this remark is made without dequate appreciation of what is involved. In such circumstances ıe only criterion taken into account may be that the re-designed ack should be in line with whatever happens to be fashionable t the moment, and thus qualify for a favourable mention in the lossier trade papers.

The results of such an operation will sometimes produce (more y luck than judgement) favourable results. If a carefully ıought-out plan is being implemented to take an old-fashioned roduct and give it an entirely new personality, in order to attack totally new market, then the principle referred to in earlier hapters of throwing away dirty water before getting in clean /ill obviously apply to the packaging problem. If, on the other and, the slightly old-fashioned image of the product makes it ıitable for an *existing* market which likes it that way, and if that xisting market has to be protected, a new package looking like ɔmething from science fiction may have a disastrous effect. 'his is simply another aspect of the problem of changing an xisting product, and the considerations involved in this have een dealt with at some length in Chapter Six.

But there is another factor involved, and this is the question of *ımiliarity* and *recognition* at point-of-purchase. This factor is articularly important for old-established products operating in a

field where brand-differentials are not very great and where brand-loyalties are due rather more to inertia on the part of the purchasing public than to any deliberate choice. The sight of a familiar packet on the counter or the shelf will 'trigger-off' the *habitual* purchase-reaction, so that the housewife buys a packet of her usual brand without really thinking about it. Now if the pack-design is radically changed, this semi-automatic reaction is less likely to operate: the housewife is led to make a conscious decision, and at this point the inertia which holds her to the brand may be very materially reduced.

By the same token, of course, the housewives who *reject* the brand in the same semi-automatic way when it is in its old familiar dress may be led, by the sight of a new pack-design, to reconsider their attitude towards it—or, rather, to consider it consciously for the first time. The extent to which the losses on the swings may be compensated for, or swallowed up, by the gains on the roundabouts, is another of those problems in quantified prediction which call for Motivation Research on an adequate scale.

We have seen at the beginning of this chapter that pack design can operate in the selling operation in three different ways, which can be summarily described as reality, brand-image, and shelf-appeal. At this stage it will be worth while looking at these in somewhat greater detail, and considering the Motivation Research methods which can be used to investigate them.

At first sight it might be thought that the *efficiency* of a new pack-design, involving some function-in-use, does not need anything very subtle in the way of Motivation Research. Does it work or does it not?—is it more or less efficient than the old design?—these are surely things, it might be argued, in respect of which a straight answer can be given to a straight question. And to some extent this is true, although the questions should not always be *too* straight—to get the full value out of consumer-reaction to a new package design calls for 'open' questioning in a sort of depth-type

interview. None the less, the information which can be obtained from consumer-discussion of a prototype pack can be extraordinarily revealing.

But it frequently happens that the logical answers given to logical questions are totally unreliable for the prediction of future consumer behaviour. Consider, for example, that supreme example of 'inefficient' design, the tall, thin pack of a breakfast cereal. From practically every logical point of view this is inferior to a shorter, fatter, squatter pack. It uses more board, it is difficult to put into a shopping basket, it frequently will not fit into the shelves of a cupboard, larder, or pantry, it is very easily knocked over, it is more difficult to see how much of the contents are left, and so on.

Despite this, however, there are a very considerable number of women who are more likely, all other things being equal, to buy the tall, thin pack. And there are a number of reasons for this, though they are almost wholly *emotional* ones. The tall pack goes better with the feeling of airy lightness which is part of the brand-image of most breakfast cereals: it offers larger surfaces for attractive and colourful designs. The operation of tipping the contents from such a pack is emotionally satisfying to many people, in its cornucopia-like action, and to see a small child handling a pack which seems almost as big as he is promotes a warm feeling of parental superiority in the face of childlike dependence.

These feelings are anything but logical, and they obviously will not be quoted as reasons for preferring one pack rather than another—though they may, in some cases, be of supreme importance. They will not be of the same importance to everybody, or to the purchasers of different brands and types of cereal: they tie in, in fact, very closely with the brand-image of the product and the personalities of the purchasers.

The point of this example can, indeed, be expressed very simply. The functional efficiency of pack-design cannot be considered by itself, but must be studied in relation to the brand-

image which it is desired to build and the needs and attitudes of the people who form the target group of customers.

Thus, *brand-image* enters the problem even where the functional efficiency of a pack is concerned. Where no such functional considerations are involved, the importance of the pack's contribution to brand-image is even greater, particularly since it is much more controllable by the manufacturer. The colour, the design, of a wrapper round a pack will not in general affect the cost, so that there is no physical reason why the design ultimately selected should not be that which will give optimum results. In these circumstances the task of the pack is to convey the idea to the potential or actual purchaser that the product is exactly what he or she needs, and this can be done at any stage between purchase-point and actual consumption.

For—and this is an extremely important matter—the reaction to the product *itself* can be affected by the illusion created by the pack. The effect of, for example, colour in the product on the sense of taste has already been seen in the toothpaste example quoted in Chapter Two (page 22) and the packet-soup example quoted in Chapter Six (page 123), but the colour of a *wrapper* can also affect the 'taste' of a product. This aspect will be considered again later in this chapter, but it will be obvious from this that if what is believed to be a reality—that is, taste—can be modified by the illusory effects of pack-design, then clearly other qualities of the product, themselves rather less grounded in reality, will be capable of being affected to an even greater extent.

Perhaps the aspect of this which produces the clearest-cut examples is that relating to 'quality', an area in which the phrase 'penny plain—twopence coloured' often ought to be reversed into 'penny coloured—twopence plain'. An expensive product, aimed at a limited, upper-class, and discriminating market, may find its brand-image of quiet superiority best served by a restrained and classical pack-design, whereas a cheap product aimed

at the mass market may find it necessary to make use of garish and showy colours and design. But because of this, a product which aims to give itself an 'upper-class' look in the mass market may find severity and restraint in pack-design a very useful contribution to this end.

Perhaps the classic case-history of this relates to a relatively inexpensive brand of chocolates to which it was desired to give a luxury atmosphere. A pack design revolutionary in its severity and simplicity (in its day—over twenty years ago) was adopted, and has been used ever since, with the result that this product has a reputation as a 'high-class' chocolate which cannot be approached by anything else in the same price-range, or even considerably above it.

Of course, there are disadvantages as well as advantages in such a reputation. While it is true that somebody looking for a 'nice box of chocolates' is likely to ask about this brand, and is not likely to be provoked by the price into further asking 'Haven't you anything cheaper?' (or, even if he is, will not find anything significantly cheaper, and so will probably buy the brand) it is also true that other people will assume without asking that anything so obviously superior as this brand must be expensive, and so out of their price-range. However, since a box of chocolates is almost always regarded as something of a luxury, and as an extravagance which is justified only by the circumstances in which the purchase is made, the advantages of the luxury connotation almost certainly outweigh the disadvantages.

Yet this need not always be so, particularly in product-fields where justifiable extravagance is not a motivating factor. A certain cake-mix was put on the market in a very similar type of pack, in the hope that its classical severity and smartness would give a quality connotation sufficient to justify a unit price considerably above the average run of prices. This did not work, and the reason is fairly simple. Chocolates are eaten out of the box, and the 'luxury' packaging contributes to the enjoyment.

But a cake-mix is used by a housewife in the privacy of her kitchen, and the pack is thrown away—but not before its luxurious appearance has reproached the housewife for her extravagance, an extravagance which she cannot justify to herself as she can the purchase of a box of chocolates.

In general, indeed, the attitude of the housewife towards cooking demands that the packaging of cookery ingredients should be *workmanlike* rather than anything else. This is not true in all cases, of course, and it is not necessarily true of food-products which are put on the table in their packs. And, again, it is most definitely *untrue* of many other products: everything depends, in fact, on what idea the pack is intended to convey, and each case must be judged on its own merits.

This leads on to the third aspect of pack-design, which is what we have called *shelf-appeal*. Before a product can be used it has to be bought, and certainly a major aspect of packaging design is the extent to which the pack will make itself visible on the retailer's counter or shelf, and attract the attention of the potential customer. It is, indeed, this aspect of the matter which has enjoyed most of the attention of the industrial-design fraternity, and the need is so obvious that there is little purpose in elaborating on it here. A variety of optical techniques exist for measuring the relative visibility of different colour-combinations, shapes, designs, lettering forms, and so on, and the rules to which these have given rise will obviously be taken into account by any designer who knows his business.

But there is more to package design than visibility. A package may be a good attention-getter without being thought desirable: it may be regarded as very lovely in itself, but create in the breast of the potential customer no urge whatever to buy it. Unless the pack helps in *offering* the purchaser some quality which will satisfy a need, its intrinsic beauty is highly irrelevant.

In some cases it is possible to test the relative selling-power of alternative pack designs, by mounting carefully controlled sales

experiments in a group of shops. But this is not always possible, and in such cases it becomes necessary to fall back on a study of *attitudes* as expressed in interviewing situations. But even the results of a sales-test experiment may not necessary be conclusive, unless it can be extended over a much longer period than is normally possible. For it may sometimes happen that, of two packs, the one with the greater shelf-appeal is the one which is the less conducive to helping build the required long-term brand-image, so that it creates immediate sales but stalls repeat purchases!

Enough has been said to make it clear that, in studying any packaging problem, all three factors of function, brand-image, and shelf-appeal must be taken into consideration at the same time. The subject of packaging is a very large one, and cannot be treated here other than in a very abbreviated fashion, but a few examples will serve to indicate the nature of some of the problems which can arise.

Primary in any packaging problem is the nature of the container itself. A liquid detergent, for example, might be packaged in glass bottles, in cans, or in polythene. Among the principal advantages of glass bottles are that they can be moulded into attractive shapes, are clean-looking, and permit immediate sight of the quantity of the contents remaining: disadvantages are that they are liable to slip from the hand, and are easily broken. The principal advantages of cans are their durability and the opportunity they offer for brightly-coloured design: among their disadvantages are the fact that they conceal the product, are liable to rust, and cannot show how much is left. Polythene containers have many of the advantages of glass, without being so brittle, but have certain disadvantages of their own—notably a peculiar *feel*, which some people find repugnant, and an *unfamiliarity* which is liable to militate against acceptance of the product in the early stages.

In the light of all this, which type of container would be

recommended in such a case? There is no single answer: it depends upon the exact function the product is intended to perform, the sort of people for whom it is intended, the brand-image which is intended to be built for it, and so on. The package, in fact, must contribute to the personality of the product, not detract from it.

In considering this sort of problem, due attention must be paid to existing hostilities—such as, for example, that which is frequently felt towards tins. The old-fashioned distrust of tins as food containers dies hard, and though the advantages of canned food are now so generally accepted as to over-ride such fears, this distrust is liable to manifest itself in the marginal case, or where some element of novelty is involved. It is interesting, for example, to compare the relatively high acceptance of canned beer in the United States with the microscopic progress this type of product has so far made in England. One of the major advantages of cans as containers for beer is that they fit so easily into refrigerators (which bottles do not), and in America this advantage tends to outweigh much of the uneasiness which is felt in bringing together beer and tinplate. In Britain, on the other hand, where most beer is *not* chilled (the British liking to *taste* their beer), this advantage cuts very little ice, so that the feeling of inappropriateness is not overcome.

Linked with the question of the material of which the package is made is the question of *shape*. This can be studied from a great many aspects, one at least of which has already been mentioned in relation to the design of cereal packs discussed earlier in this chapter. But apart from the *impression* which a particular shape can give of the personality of the product it contains, another extremely important consideration is the illusion of quantity. For a given volume of contents, one shape can look much larger than another, and while it may be morally reprehensible for a manufacturer deliberately to try to make his pack look larger than it really is, there is no moral obligation on him to

handicap himself by choosing a pack which looks smaller than the packs of his competitors!

There is no great difficulty about devising tests which will provide reassurance on this point, though they must necessarily be rather subtle—it is all too easy to produce false answers, by asking too direct a question. For example, if a housewife is shown two packs, and asked 'Which of these do you think is the bigger?' many of them will give a perfectly straightforward answer. But many *others* will suspect a 'catch', and will reason to themselves that the one which looks the bigger must really be the smaller, or why should they be asked about it? In such a case it is essential to use an indirect approach, and to slip in the question relating to size in such a way that it does not provoke this sort of reaction.

The whole question of package-shape gives, of course, considerable scope to the lunatic fringe of Motivation Research to babble of phallic symbols, womb-images, and the like. How far psychological investigation at this level is justified by any practical good that can come out of it is very doubtful, and to some extent the same is true of attempts to read cosmic significance into questions of pack-colour. It is sometimes argued that some colours are 'masculine' and others 'feminine', and these attributes should be taken into account when choosing package colours. Red, it is sometimes said, is a strong, masculine colour, and will give a masculine image to any product with which it is associated. This may or may not be so, but in the British cigarette market at least the only two well-known brands which come in red packages are both women's brands—smoked almost wholly by women, and with strongly feminine brand-images—whereas all the leading men's brands are in blue, or green, or white packages. It is true that there are certain other reasons why the two brands concerned should have feminine images, but there is no evidence at all that the red packaging works in a counter-direction.

In the immediately post-war period in Europe, product-tests

demonstrated that the public preferred food-products wrapped in bright colours—a fairly natural reaction from the drabness of the war years. But four or five years later similar tests showed a swing away from over-bright colours, in favour of pastel shades. That changes of this sort should occur is not surprising—the same thing happened in the field of women's fashions—but they do indicate very strongly that colour-preferences are not inherent in the fundamental human soul, but are (like most other aspects of Motivation Research with which business is concerned) affected very strongly by the *circumstances* of the moment.

This is not to say that, at any particular moment of time, colour-preferences are not of supreme importance in packaging policy. Colour—or colour-combinations—can play a very considerable part in developing or maintaining a brand-image. In an American study of cosmetics, for example, it was found that the restrained blue-grey colouring of one brand reinforced the idea many women had that the brand was a little conservative and dull, compared with another brand which used—and *dramatized*—very bright colours in its pack designs. And in a study of detergent packaging, certain packs were found to give an impression of undue mildness on the one hand, and others of excessive roughness and harshness, which carried-over into the brand-images of the brands concerned; these impressions arose partly from the nature of the *design*, but mainly from the colour-combinations used.

In considering the question of colour in packaging, however, the same rule exists as is found throughout Motivation Research—don't ask the direct question! When a woman is asked her preference for, say, the immediate wrapping of a food product, she is likely either to give the perfectly reasonable answer: 'What on earth does it matter?' or else select the colour she currently likes best *as a colour*. But this is irrelevant: what it is wanted to know is which colour is more likely to make her want the *product*, and to ascertain this it is essential to use an indirect approach.

Of course colour, like other aspects of packaging, can affect both attitudes towards the product-in-use and what we have earlier called sales-appeal. An example of the first was referred to in Chapter Two (page 23), where an illustration was given of what may be called the 'bogus' product-test method of pack-testing. In this informants are given *identical* products, *wrapped* differently, and asked which *product* they prefer. Any net preference for one 'product' rather than the other can only be a result of the difference in pack, since everything else (including the product) is common to both samples, and this net preference therefore provides a measure of the extent to which one colour increases the acceptability of the product *as* a product.

Tests of sales-appeal, of course, really require an experimental sales situation, if this can be arranged. For example, the manufacturer of a unit-sale chocolate biscuit wanted to know whether the product should be wrapped in red, in blue, or in green foil, and a test was devised whereby biscuits wrapped in all three ways were put on sale, in a specially created self-service situation, in a sample of shops. (It may be added here, as a warning, that the most *complicated* arrangements had to be made to rotate the positions of the various containers, to keep the stacks topped-up, and to control all the other variables which were irrelevant to the test and which, if they had not been so controlled, would have completely wrecked it and invalidated its findings.)

Now in this test the biscuits wrapped in red outsold those wrapped in blue and green together. In the light of the findings from an earlier 'taste test', which had shown red to have a *slight* edge in this respect over the other colours, the immediate moral was perfectly clear—if one colour must be used, it had far better be red than either blue or green.

But during the sales-test itself very careful observations were made about the way in which people bought. And it was found that the majority of purchasers (and even more so among the important 'heavy-user' group) did not buy just *one* colour, but

made up an assortment for themselves, containing for the most part all three colours (though with red rather predominating). The moral to be drawn from the test was therefore amended—if only one colour wrapper is possible, then it had better be red, but it would be better still (if technically possible) to market the line in a sort of harlequin assortment of different-coloured wrappers. And it was found in subsequent research, when the line had been on the market in this form for some time, that the colourful assortment this produced on the tea-table was a valuable contribution to the product's brand-image.

Another example along similar lines is worth quoting since it deals with a rather unusual field. The publisher of a certain magazine, a very large proportion of the sales of which were from railway bookstalls and kiosks, and which was known to be very much an 'impulse' purchase, wanted to find out what colours it would be best for him to use for the cover. A range of ten colours were selected as being technically possible, and the research brief was to ascertain the relative sales-appeal of these ten.

A special experiment had to be set up for this. A small booklet was prepared, called 'Selections from XXXXX', and priced very cheaply: this was produced in ten versions, absolutely identical except for the colour of the covers. Arrangements were then made for these booklets to be put on sale at a number of railway bookstalls, in groups of four colour-batches at a time. A very complicated experimental pattern had to be worked out, of permutations of different colour-batches one with another, and very rigid controls kept over other possible variables. At the end of the experiment, however, it was possible to calculate what percentage of total sales were accounted for by sales of each colour, and thus deduce the relative sales effectiveness *in this context* of the different colours.

This experiment was conducted some years ago, and the actual findings will no longer be valid (because of the changes in colour-

preferences which always occur over time). But it is worth while looking at certain of the results, not for any intrinsic value they have, but because they help to explode certain popular fallacies which have arisen recently in relation to colour.

COLOUR	Percentage of all purchases	Percentage of purchases made by men	Percentage of purchases made by women
	%	%	%
Brick-red . .	14	15	12
Dark blue . .	12	14	6
Lilac . . .	12	9	24
Orange . . .	11	12	8
Turquoise . .	10	11	6
Yellow . . .	10	10	8
Carmine . .	9	10	5
Green . . .	9	8	12
Mustard . .	7	6	11
Light blue . .	6	5	8
TOTALS . .	100	100	100

Although a relatively small proportion of the purchasers were women, it is clear that women's preferences follow a rather different pattern from the men's. More significant still is the fact that it is not possible to talk meaningfully about 'blue' or 'red'. One shade of blue (described here as 'dark blue') did very well overall, and among men, but badly among women: another shade of blue ('light blue') did very badly among men, and not much better among women. On the other hand, a third shade ('lilac') did slightly worse than average among men, but exceptionally well among women, whereas a fourth ('turquoise') did slightly better than average among men, but badly among women. The two tested shades of red ('brick' and 'carmine') did very differently, while of the two shades of yellow one did averagely among men and rather worse among women, whereas

the other ('mustard') did poorly among men and better-than-average among women.

Enough has been said here to demonstrate that generalizations about colour-appeals are very largely meaningless. The colour factors in pack design have to be studied, as do all the other factors, in the light of the nature of the product, the people to whom it is being sold, the personality that is to be built for it, and so on. This involves research tailored to the specific problem, and in line with the basic Motivation Research programme relating to the production and marketing of the product as a whole: there is no easy short-cut.

Reference has already been made to *design*, in the sense not of the shape of the pack but of what is actually printed on it. The way in which the brand-name is printed, the type-face and size used, the use of various geometrical shapes and patterns, and so on, are all matters which can be of very considerable importance, but since in general the ways in which this problem can be tackled resemble very closely the methods of dealing with the problem of colour there is no need to go into detail again.

On the other hand, the *wording* which is printed on the pack needs to be studied in a rather different way. To begin with, it is liable to contain any number of four quite different components: the name of the product, a straightforward description of what it is, instructions for use, and descriptive material of a purely 'advertising' nature. The problems raised in respect of each of these four components are naturally of very different types.

With an existing product, or a new line sold under the umbrella of some existing range brand-name, the name is given from the beginning, though it is sometimes possible to make certain changes where these are indicated as desirable. But insofar as the choice of a *new* name is concerned, Motivation Research can play a major part in helping to select one which will assist the new product to get off to a good start.

It is rather doubtful how much importance attaches to the

name of an *existing* product: once its brand-image has been built and accepted, it is probable that any undertones which might lie in the name itself cease for the most part to be heard. This may not invariably be true, but since it is almost impossible to devise any method of checking it, the hypothesis may be accepted. On the other hand, the right name for a new product can be a potent factor in helping to *create* the desired brand-image.

The Motivation Research techniques which can be used to determine how far a new brand-name fits into the role allotted to it depend upon which of three types of name are in question—a name descriptive of the product (insofar as present government regulations regarding registered trade marks still make this possible), a name which is an ordinary dictionary word or name, but without specific reference to the product, or a meaningless syllable. For either of the first two types, fairly straightforward methods will usually produce some indication of the sort of atmosphere which they are likely to create, though the presence of unsuspected hostilities must always be watched for. With nonsense syllables, on the other hand, much more subtle methods are called for: a straightforward word-association test, for example, is an essential *preliminary* step but will by no means necessarily provide the final answer.

And whatever methods are used to measure attitudes towards possible names, it is always desirable that the 'short-list' should be tested experimentally, using techniques similar to that suggested above (page 149) in relation to package-colour. Here one would test reactions with *identical* products under *different* names, so that the test panel of informants think they are choosing between products, whereas in fact they are choosing between names. And here again the test can be carried out for the product-in-use, or for point-of-sale.

In considering the brand-name, of course, as with any other aspect of brand-image, it is essential that research findings should be studied in relation to the basic overall strategy which has been

decided upon for the new product. An interesting example here is that of Mary Baker cake-mixes, which were given that name because it was desired to launch them under the aegis of a new 'corporate personality'. The name itself was carefully selected in order to fit in with the personality it was desired to develop: the portrait of the imaginary 'Mary Baker' which was finally put on the pack was exhaustively studied, tested, and amended in order to ensure that it created the right atmosphere, and even the signature which also went on the pack was considered in this light. In this operation packaging policies overlapped rather more widely with advertising policies than is usual, but it is worth noting here that, in a matter of this sort, there is always bound to be *some* sort of overlap.

The second component of the wording on a pack consists of whatever straightforward description of the product it is desired to add. With food products, government regulations in most civilized countries now insist on a statement of ingredients: this is not quite the same thing, but even here the *prominence* which these are given should depend upon research findings as to how far the presence of such ingredients as 'dehydrated egg' or 'soya flour' is something to which the attention of the consumer should or should not be drawn. Where the listing of incredients is *not* obligatory, the same considerations arise, and in this connexion reference may be made to the relationship between 'reality' and 'image' of ingredients which has already been discussed in Chapter Six (page 110).

But descriptions can take other forms than lists of ingredients. Should a pack of synthetic detergent powder, for example, carry the description 'detergent', or 'washing powder', or no description at all? The solution 'no description at all' is an impossible one for most products, but with the weight of advertising pressure which normally accompanies the launch of a new detergent it is perhaps not unreasonable to suppose that everybody who sees a packet of WIZ will know what it is, and in such a case it might

well be that the absence of a positive description might help avoid the creation of resistances.

Even where a description must be added, what words should be used? Should a new toothpaste be called toothpaste, or dentifrice? Should a new cooking fat be called cooking fat, or shortening? These points can be of considerable importance, and the decision must be taken in the light of all available information. Should instant coffee, for example, be called instant coffee, soluble coffee, or powdered coffee? It was found, in this last instance, that the unfavourable brand-image of one particular product derived to a very material extent from the fact that the package was labelled 'soluble coffee extract in powdered form', a form of words which specifically drew attention to some of the more unfavourably regarded attributes of the product.

It is not invariably necessary to carry out specific research or tests on this point: quite often the basic marketing policy, and identification of the target group of the population, will indicate what is the best course of action in this respect. But whether or not separate studies are required, attention must be given to the point, and the final wording selected with full knowledge of what function it is intended to perform.

'Instructions for use' form the third component of pack-wording. The attention these are given by manufacturers is very rarely proportionate to their importance, since their phrasing is frequently left to the laboratory or test-kitchen. But the problem here is much the same as one of the problems of advertising: does the reader understand what he or she is *intended* to understand? It is, as a rule, not particularly difficult to check this point, which makes it that much the greater pity that checking is so often omitted. Yet the acceptance of a product is quite often put in jeopardy because the user is not quite certain how to use it, or misunderstands the instructions and uses it wrongly.

Most manufacturers of food products employ what it is fashionable to call a 'home economist', and it is usually she who writes the

instructions for, say, a custard powder or cake-mix. This is at least one stage better than having them written by a research chemist, but it has dangers of its own: a home economist is, by definition, a skilled cook, and in practice is normally highly literate. *Communication*, through the printed word, with the ordinary housewife, is not necessarily something at which she is equally skilled.

Large items of what are called 'consumer durables'—electrical equipment, and the like—normally involve fairly complicated instructions-for-use. Where these are ambiguous or misleading, the equipment may well be damaged, and since it is usually under guarantee the manufacturer learns about this in due course—he learns the hard way, but at least he learns. With the cheaper consumer goods, however—shampoos and cosmetics, shaving creams and home perms, and so on—there is no such direct blow-back, and the manufacturer may never know why it is his product has done so badly. For both types of product, however, it is normally perfectly feasible to check instructions for comprehensibility, and to make whatever amendments are necessary in the light of the test findings.

It is also possible, incidentally, to write instructions in such a way that they *seem* difficult to carry out: the problem is not solved by simply prefacing them with the phrase 'all you have to do . . .'. Here again it is not particularly difficult to check this point, though it may involve the use of quite subtle Motivation Research techniques, and once the manufacturer has got over his very natural indignation that people can be so stupid, the instructions can be re-written in a more attractive way. Or, indeed, the instructions may be seen to be *really* impracticable: research carried out, for example, among users of a new aerosol hairspray indicated quite clearly that they had been asked to do the impossible ('You try spraying the back of your head while holding the can ten inches away from it!'). This last does not require the use of any special Motivation Research techniques, but in the same

enquiry it was found that certain warnings printed on the can relative to disposal after use had assumed a prominence in users' minds out of all proportion, and were creating a fear of the product itself: such vital but subtle factors can affect the welfare of a product enormously.

The fourth component of pack-wording has been listed earlier as comprising material of a purely 'advertising' nature. It is not always easy to distinguish this from the straightforward 'descriptive' material already referred to, but insofar as it *is* different it needs to be considered in the same way as any other advertising material, which will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Nine.

CHAPTER EIGHT

MOTIVATION RESEARCH IN THE MARKETING OPERATION

IT would seem to be logical to begin this chapter with a definition of what is meant by 'marketing'. No such definition will, however, be attempted, since controversy as to the precise limits of the term is wholly irrelevant to the purposes of this book. We are concerned to see how Motivation Research methods can be used for business purposes, so that it really does not matter which particular *labels* those purposes carry. Let it suffice to say that marketing, as dealt with here, covers those aspects of the commercial operation which are normally handled by the Sales Director or Marketing Director (but excluding questions of advertising, which form the subject of the following chapter).

The object of nearly all manufacturing operations is to finish up with a retail sale. And although, in the case of certain classes of goods (office equipment, for example, or ocean liners, or atomic power-stations), the manufacturer may make the final sale himself, this does not affect the principle. But since, for the majority of commodities likely to be of interest to readers of this book, the final stage in the operation takes place in a purchasing situation where the ultimate consumer chooses (or rejects) the articles in some retail outlet, it is obviously of very great importance that this purchase situation should be understood.

And to understand a purchase situation, as to understand any other situation, requires two sorts of information—a precise knowledge of *what* is happening, and at least an inferential knowledge of *why* it is happening. In this area Motivation Research can be a very useful tool: indeed, many aspects of the

purchase situation are so complex and confused that it is very difficult to see how any reliable information can be collected without the use of those indirect and subtle techniques which have been earlier described as constituting Motivation Research.

There are today very few large manufacturing houses still subscribing to the fallacy that information of this sort can be collected by the sales force. The reason for this is very obvious: it is the function of a sales force to sell, and this requires (or at least creates) a relationship between the salesman and the retailer which is totally unsuited to the collection of objective information. To a very large extent the salesman-retailer situation is a sort of game, the rules being that the salesman tries to sell as much as possible and the retailer tries to buy as little as possible, or not at all. The game is normally a friendly one, the rules are nowhere made explicit, and neither side will usually be so ridiculous as to carry them to extremes, but it does mean that however amiable may be the relationship between salesman and retailer, the situation is almost invariably one of *conflict*,[1] and thus inappropriate to detached observation. Indeed, the whole question of the relationship between salesman and retailer, and of the retailer's attitude towards the manufacturing company and its representatives, is itself an area in which Motivation Research can often play a valuable part: more will be said about this later in this chapter.

Even apart from this, however, the credence which can be put in information thus collected is necessarily slight because the salesman can only report what the retailer *says*, and this may bear little relation to the truth. The retailer may know how much he is selling of a given product—though it is extraordinary how often he is misinformed about even this—but his views as to what sort of people buy, for what purposes, and with what motives, are frequently found, when submitted to the test of objective observation, to be almost wholly beside the mark. Thus although

[1] And it does not become any less so in consequence of a starry-eyed wish that it were otherwise.

his opinions, as expressed through the sales force, may need to be known to the manufacturer for what might almost be termed 'public-relations' purpose, they can rarely be accepted as reflecting with any accuracy the needs and attitudes of the consuming public.

This is particularly relevant in the case of new products or brands, where the phrase 'There's no demand for it' is often used by the retailer as an excuse for refusing to stock them and thus play his part in *creating* the demand. And this leads on to the vital question of how much co-operation is needed from the retailer in the selling operation.

It might at first sight seem that, since any manufacturer wants the maximum co-operation from his retailers, there is no need to indulge in costly Motivation Research to prove the point. How should he *not* want to have his goods on the counter, his display material all over the shop? But the difficulty is that these very desirable things are liable to cost money, one way and another, and it is not always certain either that the necessary resources are available or that if they are they would not be better spent in some quite different manner.

Suppose, for example, that an individual manufacturer has a small sales-force, enabling him to visit and get direct distribution in, say, only 20% of the retail outlets handling his type of product. Of course, if his sales-manager knows his business, these outlets will have been carefully selected in order to produce a much higher proportion than this total of sales-volume, but there will still remain a very large number of outlets, handling a very large share of turnover, where the manufacturer will have to get his distribution (if he gets it at all) for the most part through the good offices of the wholesaler.

There are a number of mechanical courses of action open to the manufacturer at this stage, ranging from the use of stocking-bonuses and coupon-offers through to the ultimate expedient of doubling or trebling the sales force. The choice between any or

all of these is, in the last resort, a matter for management judgement, but unless what has been described above as the purchase-situation is understood, such judgement will be working under a severe handicap. There are a number of questions which the manufacturer quoted in the example above should ask himself, some of the most important being:

(*a*) Is our product one which *needs* blanket-distribution so much as to justify the cost of getting it? How far is it a specialized product such that most of the consumers who constitute our target market are already covered by the existing limited distribution?

(*b*) To what extent can we 'pre-sell' by means of advertising to the extent only that the consumer is prepared to *accept* it when he sees it before his eyes in the shop, and to what extent can we pre-sell so strongly that the consumer goes into the shop with the firm *intention* of buying it?

(*c*) If a consumer with a firm intention of buying our product goes into a shop which does not stock it, what is he likely to do:

(i) accept a substitute cheerfully;
(ii) accept a substitute grudgingly;
(iii) walk out of the shop, and go elsewhere?

(*d*) What subsequent action is the retailer likely to take in each of these last three cases?

Now the course of action which the manufacturer should take will be very largely dependent upon the answers to these questions. Given a situation, for example, where so powerful a job of 'pre-selling' can be done (by advertising or other promotional means) that the consumer will go into the shop with the firm and deliberate intention of buying one brand and no other, and will stalk out in high dudgeon if it is not in stock, the manufacturer has nothing to worry about: consumer demand will force distribution for him, and the wholesaler will provide it. If, on the other hand, the product concerned is of such a nature that it is virtually impossible to build consumer 'loyalty' in advance—if all that can be done for it is to create a climate of acceptance such that

the consumer will buy it if it is offered to him in the shop (either specifically by the retailer or else in some form of point-of-sale display) but will not otherwise bother about it, then the manufacturer must himself take every possible step to force distribution, and display, in as many outlets as possible.

These, of course, are extreme cases, and there are likely to be an infinite number of gradations between them. And the situation in respect of any particular product can vary between one case and the other. It is one of the main functions of a 'coupon offer', for instance, to create an artificial 'advance loyalty' for a product which might not normally produce it in its own right, and thus create conditions in which the retailer must either stock the product or else run the risk of losing custom. In modern business practice, incidentally, the *warning* that consumer's selective demand is about to be created by a coupon-offer is frequently sufficient to force the retailer to stock, but this is only because he knows from experience what is going to happen: it in no way invalidates the principle. Indeed, in the mid-thirties in Great Britain, when couponing and 'deals' were a relatively unfamiliar form of trading, many retailers tried to resist such artificially induced pressure, and some of the devices alleged to have been used by manufacturers to bring them to a speedy recognition of their unwisdom have become part of the folk-lore of marketing.

To a very material extent, the considerations which have been outlined here may seem to be related to what are sometimes described as 'premeditated' as against 'impulse' purchases. The trouble with this particular terminology, however, is that it carries an air of precision which is highly spurious. For it is quite impossible to define, in any general terms, what the two phrases mean. Consider, for example, the case of a man who goes into a tobacconist's to buy his daily quota of twenty cigarettes. Having asked for these, he notices a counter-display of a new brand, and buys ten of those 'to try', handing back ten of those he has already bought of his usual brand. The sight of a dispenser-unit

for matches makes him wonder whether he needs any, but on looking at the box in his pocket he sees that this is nearly full, so he does not buy any more. But all this reminds him that his table-lighter at home is running out of fuel, so he asks for a bottle of his usual brand. This is not in stock: the tobacconist offers him another, and he buys it. As he turns to go, he remembers that on the following day he is due to pay his monthly visit to a bedridden uncle, to whom he always takes a packet of pipe-tobacco, and it occurs to him that if he buys it now it will save breaking his journey next day. So he asks for his uncle's rather obscure brand, which the tobacconist, after a good deal of ferreting about, manages to produce for him. On his way out of the shop he notices a display outer of a chewing-gum, and this reminds him that he was recommended by a friend to chew gum while driving, and had made up his mind to try doing so: he consequently buys a packet.

Or consider, again, the case of a woman going into a shop to buy her usual groceries. She stands in the shop, working out what it is she needs, and gazing around her in order to refresh her memory. She orders eggs, and cheese, and the sight of the bacon-slicer reminds her that she needs bacon (though it must be realized that even without this reminder she will certainly work round in time to remembering that bacon is necessary). She has just asked for her usual brand of margarine when it occurs to her that, when she was watching television a few days earlier, she had made up her mind to try a new brand then advertised: consequently she changes her order. She knows she needs disinfectant, and looks at the various bottles displayed: she has no 'usual' brand here, nor any very strong views as to which is the best brand, but the effect of an advertisement she saw in her newspaper three days earlier works unconsciously to make her select one particular brand from the six or seven on display. A stack of packets of one brand of cake-mix reminds her that she has heard good things said of *another* brand, which she asks for

and gets. Remembering that she is running short of breakfast cereal, she asks for, 'as a change', a brand which she has not bought for some weeks: on being told that this is out of stock, she takes a packet of a new brand suggested by the retailer. She knows she needs biscuits, and consequently hovers over the glass-topped biscuit tins to make a selection, which she does almost wholly in terms of *types*, with no attention paid to brands. Finally she idly picks up a tin of curried prawns, and after having heard their virtues extolled by the grocer buys them 'to try'.

Some of these cases are rather extreme, and a good deal is included for the sake of example. But the point here is that it is virtually impossible to lay down any *general* distinction between 'premeditated' and 'impulse' purchases: patterns may exist for individual categories of products, and may be studied in relation to those categories, but that is all.

And the difficulties of definition in cases of ordinary consumption-goods are liable to be considerably increased when it comes to the rarer type of purchase. A man may spend weeks deciding to buy a television set, and studying advertisements and catalogues: he may go into the dealer's shop with his mind firmly made up to what make he is going to buy. Yet once he is in the shop the dealer's recommendation may lead him to buy a totally different make—though this is unlikely to occur unless he has to some extent been 'softened-up' in advance by advertising. On the other hand, he may go into the shop with a completely open mind, look over all the many sets assembled, and in his agony of choice clutch at the brand-name which seems to him to offer the greatest reassurance and security—where he is buying, in fact, what may be termed the 'company image'.

One of the areas in which confusion is probably greatest is that concerned with the purchase of petrol by a motorist who is on tour away from his 'usual' petrol station and who observes that his reserves are getting low. One motorist may be so loyal to one particular brand of petrol that he will turn in at the first garage

offering that brand. On the other hand, a second motorist may be suffering from an unconscious itch to be unfaithful to his 'usual' brand, and to go philandering after strange brands—or, rather, after one particular brand whose image has attracted him but which is not normally available to him because he feels obliged, when at home, to patronize his 'usual' garage. In such a case he may seek every possible excuse to by-pass garages selling the 'usual' brand ('because they have an awkward turn-in', 'because the pumps were busy', 'because I didn't see it until it was too late', 'because it was on the wrong side of the road', and so on) until he can, with a reasonably clear conscience, pull in to a garage selling the desired brand.

Clearly, the factors resulting in behaviour-patterns of this sort are extremely complex, and the full range of Motivation Research techniques may be required to disentangle them, and to separate out the *real* reasons from the 'rationalizations'. In the example quoted, it might show that the first motorist's 'loyalty' to his 'usual' brand arises from the fact that this brand offers him something that he really needs—its brand-image, that is, ties in with his own personality—whereas the second motorist does not really *want* his 'usual' brand, but is held to it by force of circumstances when at home, so that when this restraint is lifted he can turn to a brand whose image is more nearly appropriate to his needs, as a man may take his secretary out to dinner when his wife has gone to the country!

Reference has been made, in the housewife example quoted earlier, to products such as disinfectants. These may be mentioned again, since they can serve to illustrate a further point. It was found in one study that, though most women who bought disinfectant went into the shop with an idea (at the *back* of their minds) that they needed another bottle—because the bottle in use was exhausted, or nearly so—they normally had no particular *brand* 'in mind': they did not (at least not consciously) attach sufficient importance to brand-differences to be particularly

interested. Their choice was usually made in the shop, with the bottle-display as a sort of *aide-memoire* for a final selection at least partly dependent upon the various brand-images which had been previously created by advertising, pack design, and the various other factors which have been shown in earlier chapters to affect it. It might be said, in fact, that the purchase here was 'pre-meditated' so far as concerns product-class, but 'impulse' so far as concerns brand.

In other cases, not even the product-class can be said to be 'pre-meditated' in any real sense, and this is particularly true in the field of food-shopping. For many groups of items the housewife enters the shop with only a vague determination to 'get something nice for dessert': whether she finishes up with a custard or a jelly, tinned fruit, or pudding, or even simply an ice-cream, will depend upon the interaction of her usual purchasing habits, her feelings at the time of purchase, the sort of things she sees displayed, and the extent to which she has been pre-conditioned to accept one type or brand of product.

As has been suggested earlier, the reasons which people give when asked direct questions about their behaviour in a purchase-situation may often bear little relation to the truth. And the way in which they describe that behaviour itself is frequently misleading, if the terms they use to do so are over-simplified. It is easy enough to ask a question such as 'Did you intend to buy this when you went into the shop?' but a quick glance at the examples quoted above of the smoker and the housewife will demonstrate how meaningless would be a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer to such a question, in the case of the majority of purchases there described.

The study of the purchase-situation, in fact, and of the factors affecting behaviour in that situation, can be seen to call for the most subtle and sophisticated research methods. Precisely which ones are used will depend upon the particular case, and where the situation is such that sufficient information can be obtained from

an interview with the purchaser at home, the techniques described in Chapter Four can be used appropriately. But it often happens that the full picture cannot be obtained in this way, and that to an interview with a purchaser there must be added a good deal of observation of his actual behaviour at the point of purchase. To watch a woman in a self-service store, for example, picking up a packet of something, looking it over, replacing it on the shelf, doing the same thing with another brand, and finally selecting a third brand, can be extremely revealing in itself: when it is combined with a subsequent Motivation Research type interview with the housewife concerned, it becomes possible to approach pretty nearly to real understanding of the purchase situation.

It is, indeed, because of the rewarding nature of such study that a number of ingenious technical devices have been developed—particularly in the United States—for recording mechanically various aspects of customer-behaviour. These range from hidden microphones and cameras to a fantastic device known as the 'blink-meter' which records how rapidly people blink when looking at various classes of goods—it being alleged that there is a relationship between the rate of blinking and the interest felt in the product. How far it is necessary to go these sort of lengths is a matter of opinion, but certainly the differences between what people are *seen* to do and what they *say* they have just done can be very revealing. In one study of petrol purchases, for example, motorists driving into garages for petrol were observed from a distance, and their purchases carefully recorded: as they drove out they were interviewed, and asked what brand and grade they had just bought. A considerable proportion of them reported some *other* brand or grade than they had been seen to buy, and analysis of the other Motivation Research material collected during the course of the interview produced patterns which explained *why*, so that the misreporting itself could be slotted into place as a further indication of general attitudes towards petrol as a product, and of attitudes towards particular brands and grades.

From the point of view of sales management, in its broadest sense, the ability to understand the purchase situation is primarily required to answer one question—what is the relative importance of 'pre-selling' as against 'point-of-sale'. It is possible to conceive —theoretically—of a product which can be so powerfully advertised, for which so competent a pre-selling job can be done, that the public will clamour for it from the retailer, the retailer will clamour for it from the wholesaler, and the wholesalers will line up at the manufacturer's door to buy it. In such a case the cost of a sales force could be totally dispensed with! It is equally possible to conceive of a product which, if it can only be got into the shops and displayed there, will sell itself without any 'softening-up' of the consumer in advance, and in such a case there would be no need to spend money on advertising. But such extreme cases are, to say the least, fairly rare: for most products both pre-selling and point-of-sale pressure are necessary and functional, and the problem that arises is what combination of the two, what relative allocation between the two of the available resources, will do the best job.

Point-of-sale pressure has been discussed so far in this chapter as concerning only the problem of distribution. But in fact it comprises a great deal more than that, and in particular the use of what is normally called point-of-sale material—showcards, window-bills, display containers, and the like. The importance of the role which these can play in the selling operation depends again, on the nature of the purchase-situation for the goods concerned, and the proportion of promotional resources which are devoted to them must in its turn depend upon that purchase situation, as must the form which they can most profitably take.

Additionally to this, however, the questions will usually arise as to whether the *design* of such point-of-sale material is right. To some extent the problems here are problems of advertising and the considerations involved are similar to those concerning other forms of advertising, which will be discussed at length in

the next chapter. But to some extent also point-of-sale material can be regarded as a sort of extension of *packaging*, and the techniques appropriate for testing it are those which have already been described, in Chapter Seven, in describing the use of Motivation Research in packaging policy.

Similarly, 'pre-selling' pressure has so far been discussed as concerning mainly advertising, but here again it comprises considerably more than that. Indeed, one of the most powerful forms of pre-selling, of creating consumer demand *in advance* of the consumer's entry into the shop, is the device of distributing coupons, entitling the holder either to a free packet of the product or to a packet at a reduced price: that some of these coupons are likely to be misused, and treated as currency, in no way affects the general ability of the coupon to create consumer demand and thus force distribution. To a lesser extent, the banded-offer or other special deal has a similar effect, though the effect of such an operation is often more likely to be an increased rate of purchase rather than a materially widened distribution, unless very heavy advertising support is also given. The extent to which the costs of couponing or special offers are likely to be justified, or likely to prove more profitable than if the money is spent in other ways, will in itself depend upon the nature of the purchase-situation for the product concerned, and falls into line with the general rule that sales-management decisions of this nature need to be based upon a complete understanding of what the purchase-situation is.

But there is one extremely important side-effect likely to arise from the use of coupons or special deals. This is the effect which such operations may have on the brand-image of the product. In the specimen extracts from depth-interviews quoted in Chapter Four a number of comments are made about the use of coupons for soap-powders and detergents, some of them hostile, and while it is one of the basic tenets of Motivation Research that comments of this sort cannot be taken at their face-value it is also true that they cannot be ignored. In any case, as has been shown in Chapter

Six, the price of a product is one at least of the factors affecting its brand-image, and obviously couponing and special-dealing, since it affects the price the consumer pays, will also play a part here. Additionally, there is always the possibility of creating an attitude such as that expressed in quotation 6 (on page 53): 'I regard coupons as fishy—there must be something wrong with the product to push it so much.'

Now how far this sort of operation will in fact affect the brand-image deleteriously, or how far indeed concealed price-cutting of this type will be accepted by the consumer as perfectly normal and acceptable, depends upon consumer attitudes towards the product-class as a whole and towards the brand in particular. In the field of washing-products, for instance, these marketing devices are now so universally and so frequently used that the housewife accepts them almost unthinkingly: very rarely indeed do they have much effect on the brand-image. The disadvantages seen in them arise on what may be termed the 'intellectual' plane rather than in the field of actual consumer behaviour, which explains why so much of what criticism there is gets voiced by female journalists whose acquaintance with the realities of the market place is slight.

On the other hand, the disadvantages of couponing may be of much greater importance when applied to a product where an atmosphere of particular 'quality' is required to help create a long-term brand-image. One particular cake-mix, for example, was test-launched with a very generous coupon-offer, and an extremely high proportion of the housewives who received the coupon actually used it. Bearing in mind that at the time in question cake-mixes were not at all widely known or used, this short-term result could be considered extremely satisfactory. But practically nobody bought a second packet! And subsequent research suggested that this was not due to any particular dissatisfaction with the product *itself*, but to a vague feeling that it was a low-level product, worth only what it cost in the first

place (that is, with the coupon), but *not* worth the full post-coupon price—even though that price was no higher than the prices of competing cake-mixes.

In studying the likely effects of couponing and dealing, of course, it is essential to distinguish between potential consumers and those people who are not likely to become consumers in any case: it is only the first group whose reactions matter. This involves the identification of that segment of the total market for which the product is likely to be attractive, and the formulation of policy in the light of the brand-images these people want and the sort of attitudes they themselves hold. This is the basic strategy arising out of all Motivation Research, and it is just as valid in the formulation of marketing policy as in production, packaging, and advertising policy. But its importance is much more sharply seen in that sector of marketing policy which deals with the use of premium gifts, or gift coupons and of trading-stamps and similar devices.

A premium offer, for example (whether self-liquidating or given free), must be *appropriate* to the product with which it is given. This does not mean that it must be linked with it in use—there is no need to confine the premiums given with breakfast cereals to cereal plates, spoons, or sugar-sifters—but implies that it must (*a*) be attractive to the sort of people whom it is desired to attract to the product, and (*b*) not be in conflict with the desired brand-image of that product.[1] And the same fundamental considerations apply to the problem of gift coupons and trading stamps. It is necessary to know what sort of people are likely to use the product in any case, and what sub-groups of them are likely to be attracted to a particular brand by the fact that it offers gift-coupons: these are the people whose desires must be studied in deciding what particular coupon-gifts to offer.

The same thing applies to other types of gifts. It has been not

[1] It has been suggested, for example, that stockings do not make a suitable premium for a food product—because of the odour of feet!

uncommon practice in America, for example, for car-dealers to give quite expensive hidden discounts to customers in the shape of a 'free' television set or washing-machine. Yet it would be clearly not only unnecessary, but also entirely out of place to do this with an expensive and luxurious make of car which is being bought, among other things, for the status and prestige it offers. This is an extreme case, and, like most extreme cases, it solves the problem itself, but the precise point at which this particular marketing trick ceases to be appropriate is something which requires the most detailed investigation and analysis, and consideration of what its effect is likely to be on the brand-image.

It is, indeed, one of the handicaps which Motivation Research has had to overcome that its use as a tool of advertising has tended to limit too strictly to the advertising field the techniques and concepts which it offers. Yet these are of just as great importance to the marketing operation, and examples have already been given of the effect which certain marketing devices might have upon the product's brand-image, and hence on its ultimate success in the market. And the same considerations apply in the primary area of marketing policy—the choice of the retail outlets through which the product is sold.

It was suggested at the beginning of this chapter that, in general, any manufacturer would naturally wish to see his goods stocked by as many outlets as possible, and that the main problem arising is how best to allocate available resources to get the optimum results. But it does not automatically follow that it is desirable for the product to be carried by every outlet that is prepared to stock it. The reason for this is that, in certain cases, the *nature* of the shop selling a particular product may itself affect the brand-image of that product, and in particular instances may do so unfavourably—unfavourably, that is, in the light of a specific long-term policy.

From the wealth of examples which might be quoted, two have been selected to demonstrate the point. The first concerns

cosmetics, where we might consider a brand which requires a supremely high prestige to justify its high price. Now it is one of the peculiarities of the cosmetic market that even the highest-priced products sell a very considerable proportion of their total output to the lower-paid working-classes. This is because, although the factory-girl may only use *one* lipstick of a particularly expensive brand in the course of a year (and that possibly a gift from her boy-friend at Christmas), whereas the wife of the factory-owner may buy ten or fifteen in the same period, factory-girls outnumber by several hundred to one the wives of factory-owners. Yet the manufacturer of such a brand, though he should be aware of the fact, would not normally aim his promotional efforts at the factory-girl: the strength of his brand lies in its upper-class brand-image, and anything he does which weakens that brand-image is unlikely to be in his long-term interest. This is particularly important in the field of media-selection for advertising, but it is of almost equal importance to the selection of retail outlets. For—to take an extreme case—if he tries to sell his brand through the bazaar chains, where it will have to rub shoulders with the cheap brands specially manufactured for the factory-girl market, and be jostled by the sweaty multitude of customers, its prestige will fall very rapidly, and the brand-image change from one which justifies a high price to one which is simply priced too high.

It is, of course, unlikely that the bazaar chains (who usually know their business, even if the manufacturer does not) would stock the brand at a high unit price. But the same evil effect would follow if the manufacturer went to the trouble of producing a specially small item for the market, at a low-unit price: it might, in fact, be worse. And it is for this reason that many manufacturers, who value the high volume that bazaar chains can offer, manufacture for them under totally different brand-names, or under no brand-name at all.

At the other extreme the manufacturer can limit his retail

outlets to, say, beauty-salons, large department stores, and a handful of high-class pharmacies. He preserves the prestige of his brand-name in this way: on the other hand, he may be putting very arbitrary limitations on the total volume of sales he can hope for, and the question continually arises as to whether, by descending from this high plane, he can increase turnover without affecting his prestige—which is, in this case, the main component of his brand-image.

What point between these two extremes is best in any particular case depends upon the circumstances of the case, upon just what sort of brand-image needs to be created, and upon the nature of the purchase-situation in general. In these circumstances there is likely to be a considerable difference between short-term and long-term effects, and in the formulation of policy it is essential that all aspects of the marketing situation—consumer-attitudes and behaviour as well as the reactions of the retailers and the sales force—should be considered as a whole. Failure to collect, and to take into account, *all* the relevant factors, can lead to a major catastrophe.

Our second example is concerned with disinfectants. It was found in an enquiry that one particular brand in this product-field had a peculiarly powerful 'medical' aura, the result of an admirably single-minded advertising policy over a number of years and of the fact that for many of those years the product was retailed only through chemists—not, like all other disinfectants, through grocers as well. It was also found that the people who used it as a household disinfectant (as opposed to the majority of people, who because of its high price used it only as a personal antiseptic), and who consequently used a great deal of it, consisted of a small but clearly-distinguished group who were slightly unbalanced on the subject of germs and infection. These people needed reassurance, and the weight of medical—or at least pharmaceutical—authority behind the product they used even for scrubbing the floor and flushing out the drains: something bought

at the chemist's offers them this to a much greater extent than something bought at the grocer's.

This sort of case presents a very nice problem in long-term planning—the calculation of how far the increased sales which will result from the distribution of the product through grocery shops as well as pharmacies are likely to counterbalance any loss which may result from the fact that since the product now has to sit cheek by jowl on the grocery shelves along with the ordinary disinfectants it may lose some of its special characteristics in the eyes of the public. Long-term effects of this sort are by no means easy to predict, and it is doubtful whether even Motivation Research can give a clear and unequivocal answer as to what is likely to happen. What it can do, however, is to furnish a description and explanation of the existing situation, to outline what is likely to happen in given circumstances, and to indicate what additional activities are likely to be most helpful in counteracting any harmful tendencies. The ultimate decision, the ultimate risk, must be a matter for management judgement, but this is supremely the type of situation where that judgement should be exercised against a background of detailed knowledge.

The disinfectant market in Britain is complicated by the fact that it is all mixed up with the antiseptic market, the only material difference between antiseptics and most of the disinfectants being that the former are *called* antiseptics and carry purchase-tax, thus being more expensive. It might be thought that this is the major factor contributing to the rather peculiar pattern just described, but it is by no means certain that it is so. For in the United States, where no such factor operates, exactly the same sort of pattern may be found, as can be seen from the following case: [1]

> 'We did a survey recently of a popular household disinfectant. This product is generally considered to be very strong and effective. The most loyal buyers think of it as a particularly potent germ-killer. It appeals most to the type of housewife who worries

[1] From a speech by Virginia Miles.

about germs and cleanliness, and who is likely to be a fanatic about scrubbing and scouring everything in the house. She has a strong emotional need for this disinfectant, and regards it more as a weapon to keep her home safe than as an ordinary cleaning aid.

'Now we found an odd thing. This brand of disinfectant is available in grocery stores as well as in drug stores. The heavy users of this brand are more apt to buy it in a drug store, while the light users are more apt to buy it in a grocery store. From a strictly logical point of view, this doesn't make much sense. After all, it's the same product in the same bottle no matter where you buy it. But the difference makes a kind of psychological sense. The women who worry about germs are likely to feel that a drug store purchase will make their homes more antiseptic than will something from a grocery. The light user, less concerned about germs, buys the product wherever she happens to be.'

These parallel cases are of considerable interest. Two quite different products, one on each side the Atlantic, have virtually identical brand-images, which in turn result in very similar retail-outlet patterns. And it is of further interest to observe that, while the product dealt with in the American example is actually on sale in Britain, it has there a totally different brand-image and an almost negligible share of market.

In all the examples so far quoted there is no *logical* reason why the consumer should prefer to buy at one sort of retail outlet rather than another. But in other cases some sort of argument can be made out for a deliberate choice of outlet. A man who is contemplating buying a radio set, or a watch, may do so at a radio shop or watchmaker's: on the other hand, either of these two articles may be bought from any reasonably large department store. The main argument in favour of the specialist shop is that it *is* a specialist shop, and should have the best technical skills: on the other hand, there is a quite widely held view that radio dealers and watchmakers are not to be trusted, and indulge in sharp practices of various kinds. The limitations of the department store are felt to be that its main interest is in the sale of

clothing and furnishings (and toys at Christmas time): on the other hand, many people feel that a *big* store with a *reputation* to lose will give its customers a squarer deal—if only because it can better afford to—than will the small independent specialist.

Obviously, in matters of this sort, different people hold different opinions, and different patterns will emerge in respect of different types of product. Indeed, the position of the retailer as technical adviser to the consumer is affected enormously by the nature of the purchase-situation, and upon this depends the policy which a manufacturer must pursue not only in respect of the type of outlet through which he tries to get distribution but also in relation to the effort he must make to get the retailer on his side. It is easy enough to say that he should *always* do so: so he should, other things being equal, but if doing so involves the use of resources which can be spent in other directions, the decision to spend them in one way rather than another—say in increasing retail margins, as against increasing advertising expenditure—involves a problem of management decision. In the case of heavily advertised packaged grocery items, for example, the part which the retailer plays in the purchase situation is often so slight that no increase in retail margins is likely to produce an effect on sales commensurate with the cost: the money is normally better spent in other ways (couponing, more advertising, or even a straight price-reduction, according to the circumstances of the product). But in the cases of many other products it is of considerable advantage to have the retailer's goodwill, and if this can be obtained by increasing margins it may be well worth the cost.

Of course, it does not always follow that an increase in retail margins will increase the retailer's goodwill towards the product, or even if it does that it will lead him to *do* anything in the way of applying sales-pressure. Retailers and their assistants are human beings, and liable to be just as illogical and emotion-ridden as their customers. Their behaviour-patterns are frequently totally

inconsistent with their expressed attitudes, as in the case of one group of household products which are manufactured by two giant concerns and one small firm (small, at least, so far as this group of products is concerned). Retailers frequently express themselves in very hostile terms regarding the two giants, whom they accuse of treating them with scant courtesy—an accusation which is, on the whole, not entirely unjustified—and speak very warmly of their affection for the small firm. If retailers' affection could be included in divident-warrants, this small firm would be on velvet: as it cannot, it is not.

On the other hand, even where being loved is not the key to financial success, it is normally better for a firm to be liked—or respected—than otherwise, and once one gets away from the field of very heavily advertised packaged goods which create their own demand, and into areas where good point-of-sale display and retailer's recommendations are of vital importance to success or failure, the question of the retailer's attitude towards the manufacturing company becomes a matter of some moment. Just how important it is depends upon the nature of the purchase-situation, and enough has already been said about ways of investigating this to make it unnecessary for this to be gone into in any further detail. Once it has been decided that it *is* important, however, techniques have to be selected for investigating it.

But the Motivation Research methods used for this purpose, though they differ slightly in their applications, are basically the same as those which have already been described in earlier chapters. On the one side are the 'subjects'—small shopkeepers, large shopkeepers, buyers of large multiple chains and co-operatives, and so on, all of whom have needs and drives of their own (some logical, some illogical) expressed in their attitudes and behaviour, and on the other side are the manufacturing firm and its competitors, themselves involving both reality and images. The study of the relationship between these two sides requires, essentially, those techniques which have been described in Chapter Four, but

within the framework provided by those techniques it is possible to produce virtually all the information which is likely to be relevant to the problem.

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There are, of course, a great many aspects of marketing (however defined) which have not been discussed in this chapter. This is not a treatise on marketing or sales management, and it is not possible to do more than outline some of the typical problems involved, and to demonstrate how Motivation Research may be used to help solve them: such examples as have already been given will have to suffice for this purpose. But before ending this chapter it is worth glancing at one particular feature of marketing —the attitude of the public towards one particular shop or type of shop—from the point of view not of the manufacturer who wants to sell through that shop, but from the standpoint of the shop-owner himself.

It has already been pointed out that, even from the manufacturer's angle, considerable importance attaches to the differences in public attitudes towards grocers' and chemists' shops, bazaar chains and beauty salons, department stores and speciality shops. These are only special cases of the general rule that different shops, or groups of shops, have personalities of their own in the eyes of the consumer, which personalities may have to be taken into account by a manufacturer framing a distribution policy. They are obviously of even greater significance to the owner of a large department store, or the board of a large chain of multiple shops.

A particular shopping-centre may have up to a dozen grocery shops, of which perhaps five may belong to great national chains, three to smaller, regional, chains, and the remaining four be local independents. Now just *why* do different people patronize different shops? How far do customers habitually patronize several of them, and how far are they loyal to only one? And why? In

the case of grocery shops, the merchandise carried is, for the most part, very much the same, and prices are almost entirely the same. Yet very clear-cut patterns of customer-behaviour exist, and though the evidence concerning this field is currently pretty slight, there is already enough to suggest that such patterns do not arise by pure chance.

In the case of other types of shop, of course, there may be rather greater differences in the range and type of merchandise carried, and such differences will obviously be a factor in determining the patterns of customer preference. These constitute what might be called the *reality* of the differences between shops, but they must not be allowed to obscure the fact that the *image* is also an important factor, and that the total personality of a particular shop is made up of a very large number of constituent variables, including not only the type of merchandise it stocks and the price ranges it covers, but also the sort of customers it has, the manners of the sales staff, the decor and layout of windows and counters, its policy regarding complaints and returns, and a hundred and one others.

It is common enough to find these various factors discussed at length in treatises on store management, and in the pages of the retailing trade press. What is usually *not* found, however, is the concept of matching the totality of these factors to a particular ideal personality, so that it will match the personality of the target customer. In practice, of course, experienced retailers can often fly very well by the seat of their pants: Harrods and Saks Fifth Avenue on the one hand, and Gamages and Gimbels on the other, to quote only two examples from each side of the Atlantic, follow policies which (though there is no way here of judging their profitability) are at least highly consistent—as, indeed, it is not too difficult for department-store policy to be. But in other cases the problem is not so simple: not only is it impossible to judge, upon instinct, what particular line of policy is likely to be the most profitable, but it is equally impossible to guess quite

what forms of activity will fit in with a given line of policy. And it is in this area that the methods and concepts of Motivation Research, described in this and the preceding chapters, can serve to provide the necessary background not only for basic management policy decisions but also as a frame of reference for detailed activity.

CHAPTER NINE

MOTIVATION RESEARCH IN ADVERTISING

WE have seen in the earlier chapters of this book that Motivation Research is concerned to answer a number of questions in succession, these being:

What are the patterns of the market?
Why do they take the shape they do?
In what way can we *change* them?
What will be the *results* of such changes?

We have also seen that what the consumer wants and buys is not simply the end-product of a production-line, but the *total personality* of the product—the image rather than the reality. Of course, the image will normally be strongly affected by the reality, but it is also a creation of such factors as packaging, marketing and advertising. All these factors are important, and some examples of the way in which a particular product is manufactured, packaged and marketed can affect the public's desire to buy it have been given in the preceding three chapters. But while it would be unjustified to say that advertising is a more potent factor than any of these in all cases, it is certainly true that the part which advertising can play in shaping the image is usually vital.

It is because modern advertising methods are so much concerned with shaping the personality of the product that Motivation Research has found its greatest development in this field of commercial activity. It can, in fact, be equally useful in other fields, as has already been shown at some length, but its applications there are rather less obvious, whereas everybody is aware

that advertising operates on the mind of the consumer. (Not everybody is aware of the necessary implications of this, but that is another matter.)

It is the function of advertising to reinforce or to change an existing brand-image, or to create a new one. As has already been demonstrated, this function can be performed by production, packaging, and marketing activities as well, but the difference here is that these are long-term operations, incapable of being changed every few weeks, and so something which tends to be taken for granted. A particular pack-design may exert a considerable influence on brand-image, but in the short-term it is as much a part of the *given* product as the product's own formulation, and must be considered as an element in the framework of circumstances against which the product has to be sold.

But every single advertisement that is published, posted, or shown has its own separate effect on the brand-image. It will, that is, operate on its own to help reinforce, change, or create a brand-image, and the fact that the advertiser may not *intend* it to do this, and may not even be aware that it is doing so, is quite beside the point. When Monsieur Jourdain suddenly discovered that he had been talking prose all his life without knowing it, his ignorance in no wise vitiated the fact that prose was what he had been talking! Similarly, though an advertiser and his advertising agency may be totally unfamiliar with the whole concept of 'brand-images', the fact still remains that the thing exists, and that every advertisement which is issued has some effect on it. Even more important is the fact that what the advertisement is *intended* to do and what it actually *does* do can often be entirely at variance, and that unexpected side-effects may quite overshadow the main purpose of the advertisement. We may know what it is we intend to *say*: whether or not this is what our audience actually *understand* is another matter altogether.

An example might be quoted here of a series of television commercials intended to promote the sale of port wine. A popular

comedian, playing the role of an inebriated night-watchman, was shown drooling over a bottle of port, and making the point (in a strong cockney accent) that port wine comes only from Portugal. The commercial itself was extremely entertaining, and it made its point very effectively. But what it almost certainly *also* did was to reinforce the unfavourable image of port (an image which has grown up during the last few decades) as a drink essentially appropriate—if we may exaggerate for the sake of effect—for consumption by drunken charwomen at funerals. The use of a comic vehicle in order to make more vivid, and to drive home, an almost *intellectual* point (namely, that true port comes only from Portugal, as opposed to the 'port-type' wines coming from Australia or South Africa, or even produced in Great Britain) resulted in a side-effect which is extremely unlikely to have been what was intended. Similarly, the use of phrases or concepts such as 'a child can make it', to promote semi-prepared foods such as cake-mixes, though they are intended to provide an assurance of simplicity and a guarantee of cookery success, are likely to create considerable hostilities among women, who feel this to be a denigration of their housewifely skills.

Whatever action the advertiser takes will have its inevitable effects, and will exercise some influence on the brand-image of his product. He cannot include himself out by declaring that he is not interested in Motivation Research, or brand-images, or other new-fangled notions of that sort. Whether he likes it or not, whatever he does will either reinforce or modify the consumer image of his product, and this still remains true even if his advertisements consist of nothing more than his name—or, for that matter, if he does not advertise at all! And it is one of the functions of Motivation Research to study what is happening in this area, in the light of all the circumstances affecting it.

This last proviso is of extreme importance. One at least of the reasons why great manufacturing houses decline and fall is that they adhere too long and too obstinately to policies which, highly

successful in their day, are rendered inappropriate by the march of events. This is particularly true in the field of advertising. Advertising started taking its present form at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, coincident with the rise of *branding*. At that time the fact that a product was advertised at all gave it a very clear brand-image as a modern, up-to-date, important, reliable product—as against the relatively unknown and frequently unbranded goods which littered the grocer's shelves. Even if the advertising merely said 'Drink Smith's Tea—the Best' it performed a very definite function of brand-image building, by virtue of the fact that most tea was neither branded nor advertised.

But times change. In those early days the mere existence of the advertisement promised a 'consumer benefit', implicitly if not explicitly: people liked to feel that they were using *advertised* goods, because they were probably more up-to-date and reliable: they felt the same way about goods which used 'clever' advertising. Today, however, when the vast majority of consumption goods are branded, and nearly everything which enters into ordinary day-to-day household purchase is heavily advertised as well, the mere fact that a product *is* advertised conveys no particular implicit message, and by itself can have little effect on the brand-image. The promise of a consumer benefit has, therefore, to be much more explicit.

Consideration of all the circumstantial pattern of the market is one of the major tasks of Motivation Research as it has been described in this book. It has already been suggested (page 169) that although couponing, price-cutting, two-for-the-price-of-one, and so on, may have a highly deleterious effect on the brand-image of a particular product, in one particular product-field at least—washing powders—the public is so accustomed to this sort of operation that for most people it has no effect at all upon the brand-image. Similarly, it has been found that the somewhat exaggerated claims made for various brands of petrol and oil in

the way of increased performance are not *believed* by motorists in any literal way, but not disbelieved in any *hostile* sense—they are accepted as a somewhat flowery way of making a claim for a slightly better performance than before. When a British business man receives a letter from his Paris agent which concludes 'Accept, dear and respected colleague, the expression of my most distinguished and cordially devoted sentiments', he knows that this only means 'Yours truly'—it's the French way of putting things, and implies no willingness whatever to cut a profit-margin. And in the same way, when a motorist sees a petrol advertisement which claims that he will get 10% higher mileage from a particular brand, he knows that this is just the traditional way of putting things—he might hope for an extra 1% or 2%, but certainly does not expect 10%.

But this only applies in a field where exaggeration is accepted as the normal way of advertising. A brand of tea which advertised a 25% reduction in the quantity of tea used, for example, must live up to that promise, since the consumer would expect it to be almost literally true and would be most indignant if it were not. In other words, the advertiser must speak the language of the country, and it is one of the major functions of Motivation Research when used for advertising purposes to delimit the boundaries of the country and to indicate what sort of language ought to be spoken there.

There are four fundamental questions which must be asked, in relation to the formulation of advertising plans, by the advertiser and his agency. These are:

(1) What do we want to say?
(2) To whom should we say it?
(3) How should we say it?
(4) Where should we say it?

but it will already have become clear that the first two of these cannot be studied separately, that it is not possible to divorce the

formulation of fundamental advertising policy from consideration of what segment of the population constitutes the target group. Examples illustrating this will follow, but one of the clearest instances can be seen in the case of possible advertising treatments of instant coffee. Here the advertiser might be faced with the choice of trying to create the image of a quick, convenient drink—almost a substitute for proper coffee—to be used in cases of emergency, or else of attempting to build the brand-image of a *good* coffee, as good as any other, fully capable of playing its part (at the dining-table or in the drawing-room) in the standard ritual situations, but having certain aspects of convenience as well. Now of these two possible images one will appeal to some people, and the other to others: the acceptability of the two images will vary between the two groups, and so will the quantities they are likely to consume. The choice of one policy or the other requires a nice judgement of their relative likely profitability, but obviously here what needs to be said is very closely linked with which particular groups of people it is going to be said to.

Or, again, in the examples quoted of disinfectants (both in Britain and the U.S.) in Chapter Eight, the manufacturer's decision to aim his product either at the large group of people who regard disinfectants as little more than another cleaning material or else at the small but very heavy-using group of people who are obsessed with the idea of disease and germs (a decision which has to be taken in the light of the relative sizes of the two groups, their relative rates of consumption, the existing brand-images of his own product and the competition, and so on) will determine whether he ought to try on the one hand to create a brand-image which gives the idea of clean, fresh, wholesome, normal, and so on, or on the other hand the brand-image of a powerful, medically backed weapon to use against the legions of germs which are always waiting to pounce. Here, as in the previous example, and in many others, which of the two

brand-images is finally selected as the ideal will depend upon which group of people are selected as the marketing target—and *vice versa*, since the two aspects have to be considered together.

Now although these two aspects do not seem, at first sight, to belong together, we thus find on closer examination that in fact they usually do. Contrariwise, two aspects which *do* seem to be much the same—*what* do we want to say, and *how* should we say it—need to be kept quite rigidly separated. For the first of these, the problem of what we want to say, is a matter of determining a fundamental advertising strategy and of selecting the brand-image which it is desired to build up—decisions which have to be taken in the light of all the production, packaging, and marketing policies involved. This is an area in which, as the previous chapters have been concerned to show, Motivation Research can play an extremely important part. The other aspect, however, the problem of how we should say it, is a matter of selecting what combination of words and pictures will best communicate a *given* idea to a particular group of people: this is the sphere of what is called 'copy research'.

Copy research is concerned, as this suggests with measuring the efficiency with which a particular idea can be communicated, and *not* with judging the wisdom or otherwise of using that idea. Such judgement belongs one stage further back, to the basic research against the framework of which the fundamental advertising strategy has been worked out, and it is essential that the two stages should not be confused.

The point is an extremely important one, because well-conducted copy research, particularly when it uses (as it must, if it is well-conducted) the usual techniques of Motivation Research, is so powerful a tool that there is a standing temptation to use it for purposes for which it is not adequate. Particular difficulties arise in this connexion from the existence and use (by people many of whom should know better) of a number of primitive or half-baked copy-testing procedures, but even when copy research

makes use of more sophisticated methods which are quite adequate to copy research problems, the fact still remains that its essential function is to measure the efficiency with which a particular advertisement *communicates* a given idea, and not whether that idea is the one that *ought* to be communicated in the light of the brand's long-term strategy.

This point will be developed rather more fully a little later in the chapter, when we come to consider copy research in detail. But a couple of examples might serve here to illustrate the difference. Suppose we are selling a brand of disinfectant (to take a product with which we have already dealt) and decide to aim the product not at the majority of the population, who regard disinfectants as simply another cleaning material, but at the *minority* who are obsessed with germs and disease—this decision being taken in the light of a Motivation Research study which, after examining all the relevant factors and the current competitive situation, suggests that the greatest profitability is likely to be found in this approach. But suppose now we prepare two advertisements, one plugging a 'germ' story and the other a 'cleanliness' story, and submit the two to some form of copy research. We might find that the 'cleanliness' advertisement showed up as a better liked, easier understood and more convincing advertisement than the 'germ' one—in the ratio, say, of 68% to 32%.

These results would *not* mean, however, that the 'cleanliness' story is necessarily the right one. For the 'germ' story might be expected to appeal to that minority who require a disinfectant to protect them from germs, while the 'cleanliness' story might be expected to appeal to the others—the majority group. And if the 'obsessed' group consists of, for instance, only 20% of the population, we might find the pattern in 100 people as shown in the table on page 190.

Now if it has already been decided that production, packaging, marketing, and advertising policy shall be focused on Group B, because it is judged that this course of action is most likely to

	GROUP A People who regard disinfectants as simply another cleaning product	GROUP B People who want disinfectants to protect them from germs	TOTAL
Relatively more likely to be impressed by:			
'Cleanliness' ad. . .	65	3	68
'Germ' ad. . . .	15	17	32
TOTALS . . .	80	20	100

produce a successful and profitable operation, the fact that people who are *not* the target can be more easily affected by an advertisement which is 'off beam' so far as this policy is concerned, provides no reason at all for changing the policy.

The second example concerns instant coffee, to which reference has been made on page 187. We might be faced with a choice between two advertisements, one of which pointed out the advantages of instant coffee so far as concerns ease and convenience, and the other of which stressed the point that our particular brand is very good coffee. Now it is much easier to write a convincing, *effective*, sales-pulling advertisement on the first theme than on the second, and any copy research operation would almost certainly demonstrate the point. But if it has already been decided that the line of greatest profitability is to be found in the long-term image-building of our brand as a good coffee, and that mention of ease and convenience is inimical to this, the fact that the 'ease and convenience' story is easier for people to believe, and more likely to produce immediate sales *at the moment*, is almost wholly irrelevant.

Enough has been said now to show that the problems of *what* it is we want to say and *how* we are going to say it are two quite

separate matters. We might at this stage revert to our four fundamental questions (of which the first two have been thrown together) and look at some of the ways in which Motivation Research can help to answer them.

The formulation of a basic advertising policy requires, as its essential preliminary step, the determination of what brand-image it is desired to create for the product. And as has been shown in earlier chapters, this is something which both affects and is affected by production, packaging and marketing policies, and also involves the selection and definition of that particular group of people who constitute the target market.

The preliminary stages of such a selection can be done without Motivation Research—sometimes, indeed, without any research at all. It requires no profound investigation to discover that most petrol is bought by people who own cars, most pet-foods by people who own pets, most household supplies by housewives. And quite simple market research of the traditional type will usually serve to outline the existing user-patterns, in terms of sex, age, social class, region, and so on, and to measure the extent of use, frequency of use, and other direct data of this kind. Such information, vital as a starting-point, can normally be obtained without a great deal of difficulty. But even this 'factual' information may not always be as simple as it seems. Many cars, for instance, though owned by men, are driven to a greater or lesser degree by women—their wives or daughters. How far do these 'secondary' drivers buy petrol and oil, and how far do they themselves choose what brands to use, as against simply following the pattern set by the husband or father? And although, to quote another example, nearly all breakfast cereals will be *bought* by housewives, it does not necessarily follow that the other members of the family exercise no choice in the matter. Indeed, the fact that so many of the premiums given away (or self-liquidating) with breakfast cereals take the form of children's toys, and are extensively publicised in children's magazines, suggests that in

this field at least many manufacturers are convinced that the *effective* purchaser is as much the child as the housewife.

To understand, in any effective way, how this interplay of influences works, itself requires the use of the techniques of Motivation Research—primarily because the nature of the problem means that any *direct* approach is likely to be unfruitful. In an enquiry concerning the purchase of alarm-clocks, for example, it was found that most husbands (interviewed by themselves) said that *they* decided on the purchase, whereas most wives (also interviewed by themselves) said that, on the contrary, *they* did. In a further set of interviews, conducted with husbands and wives together, a relatively small proportion of decisions were reported as the husband's, and another small proportion as the wife's: in most cases, however, the couple agreed that the decision had been a joint one, and the unsophisticated enquirer might be forgiven for assuming that this represented the true and valid answer. But such an assumption is quite unwarranted, because an answer of this sort, given in response to a direct question by a husband-and-wife team anxious to present a united front against the outside world, does not necessarily reflect what actually went on, or how far the alleged 'joint' decision was arrived at by one partner deciding and the other meekly agreeing, or by a heated argument in which one partner ultimately prevailed, or by a spontaneous meeting of like minds, or by a decision by one partner to which the other partner's agreement was purely formal —as where the wife decided she needed one, and the husband merely handed over the purchase price.

Obviously, this question of just what people are involved in any purchase decision, and what is the relative importance of the part each plays, is something of vital significance in determining an advertising policy, and something which must affect the choice of the brand-image which it is decided to build. But this is only part of the solution: of probably even greater importance is the necessity of knowing not only what people are involved but also

what *sort* of people constitute the target-group for which a brand-image must be devised, or an existing brand-image reinforced.

Suppose, for example, a particular make of car is found in a Motivation Research study to have a 'closed-in', safe, self-contained, 'home-spun', moderate, sort of brand-image; suppose again (for the sake of demonstration) that motorists fall into one of only two classes—prudent, cautious, introvert types, and extravagant, dashing, extravert types. Now if, as a result of a careful study of all the relevant factors (such as those discussed in the preceding chapters) it is decided that the first group offers the biggest potential for this make, then the job of advertising is to *reinforce* the existing brand-image. It must stress safety and reliability, must talk about the coachwork rather than the engine, must show family situations rather than boy-meets-girl—in other words, the whole advertising policy must be bent to the one agreed end, and nothing which leads off in another direction must be allowed to come into the picture. If, for example, a car of the make concerned is successful in the Monte Carlo rally, the manufacturer's very natural desire to boast about this in his advertising must be kept in check, since the only effect of publicizing it would be to weaken the brand-image of prudence and 'ordinariness' which it is desired to build.

In the case of cars, of course, as has been indicated in Chapter Six (page 121) the *reality* plays a very considerable part in determining the *image*—in other words, the product itself is a very important factor, so that the brand-image which it is decided to build cannot be too far out of line with the car's current design and styling. But if we consider a product such as petrol where (at least for the average motorist) the various brands are in reality almost identical, the brand-image which can be built is not dependent on the product, but is a function almost wholly of marketing and advertising. What has been said about cars in the previous paragraph might equally well apply to petrol, and the moral so far as the oil company is concerned is exactly the same.

In the example of Motivation Research in the cake-mix market discussed in Chapter Six (page 127) it was pointed out that, as regards the sense of 'guilt' felt in relation to the use of semi-prepared foods in general and cake-mixes in particular, housewives could be classified into three groups—a small group with no such feelings of guilt, a large group having these feelings to *some* extent, and a middle-sized group holding these feelings very strongly. And a case-history was cited in which a manufacturer, judging that the third group offered no prospects at all in the foreseeable future, and that the first group was already pre-empted by existing brands, decided to launch a new brand aimed at the second group—at those housewives among whom the 'guilt and resentment' resistances existed to a mild degree, not sufficiently to provide an absolute barrier to their *ever* becoming users, but enough to stop them doing so at the time to any but an infrequent extent.

This led to a production-policy decision—to the decision to make an 'egg-omitted' mix, into which the housewife would have to put a fresh egg, so as to encourage a feeling of *participation* which would diminish the intensity of her resistances. But it also led to a major advertising problem. For the strongest and most obvious reasons for buying a cake-mix—or any other semi-prepared food—are the ease and convenience, the quickness and simplicity, which it offers. Because of this, it is extraordinarily difficult to keep these out of the advertising—yet kept out they had to be, for the brand-image they would tend to create would have *intensified* resistance among the target group of potential consumers. Instead, it was necessary to create the image of a 'home-made' cake, a cake which would exemplify the touch of the housewife's own skilled hand, a cake-mix which by its superb ingredients would make it possible for the *housewife* to make a better cake. The obvious advantages of speed, convenience and so on would be realized, and would help to sell the product, but they must not be talked about.

A decision such as this requires courage—which in the particular case-history quoted was not lacking, and which was suitably rewarded. But courage of this sort is not always one of the attributes of the average manufacturer, or of his advertising agency, neither of whom can usually bear to let slip the opportunity of saying *anything* about the product which seems favourable—whether or not it is in line with the long-term policy. He wants, in fact, to be all things to all men, and frequently finishes up by being not much to anybody. For by the same token, the manufacturer of a cake-mix which was already selling well to the 'no-guilt' group would be ill-advised to switch to this advertising line, unless he were deliberately attempting to change his brand-image—which in any case would not be easy with an 'egg-included' mix. For the housewives who are currently buying his product, those who experience no feelings of guilt or resentment, are almost by definition those who are less interested in the 'home-made', 'participation' aspect of cake-making: what they want is ease, convenience, simplicity—and failure to offer these particular advantages is likely to weaken their desire for the particular brand.

All the examples so far quoted concern products where the requirements of different groups of consumers are different, or even contradictory, so that the choice of an advertising policy depends upon which group is being aimed at. There are product-fields, however, in which virtually all consumers have requirements or resistances in common. There are far fewer instances of these than might be supposed from the *ex cathedra* statements of the more flamboyant and primitive practitioners of Motivation Research (particularly some of the American and French ones) whose assertions that '*the* housewife wants this', or '*the* motorist wants that' (author's italics) can be so terribly misleading, but they do exist.

Attitudes which are held in common across all groups of consumers are, however, more likely to be *resistances* than

requirements. For example, Motivation Research carried out in the United States on behalf of one brand of vacuum cleaner indicated that it would be unwise to follow an advertising policy stressing the brand's greatest 'product-plus'—the fact that it had stronger suction than the competing brands. For the majority of housewives, it was found, did not *want* stronger suction—they were frightened that it would damage their carpets, and that it would pull up from the lower layers of the carpet the deep dirt that had filtered down there, and would be best left alone. In other words, the use of this particular product characteristic as a main feature of advertising policy would have helped create the brand-image of a powerful, searching, *merciless* piece of equipment—and an image of this sort had been found to be unacceptable, at least to the majority of potential customers.

This, indeed, is only a special case of the general rule that a 'product plus' should be something that is regarded as an advantage by the consumer rather than by the manufacturer. There is no reason, of course, why a particular product advantage or claim should not be an inducement to purchase as well as a source of pride to the manufacturer, but it is not *necessarily* so. The fact that a particular firm was founded in 1842, or the assertion that a particular brand is the 'first name you think of in biscuits', may cause the advertiser's breast to swell whenever he sees them in print, but it does not follow that they are helping to create the right sort of brand-image. And, as in the example just quoted, a perfectly valid performance-claim may prove positively detrimental to the desirability of the product's image: another example of this was quoted in Chapter Six (page 111).

There is little need to quote further examples: it will already have become clear that advertising policy, like production, packaging, and marketing policies, must be directed single-mindedly to the establishment or maintenance of a carefully selected brand-image, designed to attract a certain group of consumers. And all the instances which have been given in previous chapters of the

ways in which Motivation Research can be used to assist in the formulation of such policies will have some bearing on the problem of determining advertising policies. But it is one thing to determine an advertising policy—that is, to decide what we want to say, and to whom—and quite another to decide just *how* we are going to say it. And this aspect of the matter is the one we must turn to next.

The function of a particular press advertisement, or poster, or television commercial, is to *communicate*—to put across information, or an argument, or an impression, and thus induce in the mind of the reader or viewer a change or reinforcement of *attitude* towards the product advertised. For most commodities advertised, of course, that change in attitude is intended to lead on to a change in behaviour—in other words, we want the reader to buy the product—but this is not invariably so, particularly with advertising campaigns devised for 'institutional' or 'public relations' purposes. (More will be said about these towards the end of this chapter.)

Whatever the ultimate purpose of the advertising campaign, however, the function of the individual advertisement can be described, quite simply, as the transmission of a message of some sort. But though we may think we are saying one thing, the people who hear us may in fact understand something quite different. For no man knows what his own voice sounds like—or, rather, no man did until the recent happy development of the tape-recorder. And what the tape-recorder is to the orator, what may be called 'copy research' is to the advertiser.

Incidentally, when copy research is dealt with here, the word 'copy' is not used in the restricted sense of the written words only. Copy research is just as much concerned with illustrations, with the general ensemble of the layout, and with the shape, size, and colour of press advertisements, as with the work of the specialist copywriter. And it is also concerned to study the efficiency of the uses made of other media—posters, television, radio, cinema, and

everything else which can be used to communicate the advertiser's message to the potential consumer.

It is the function of the creative people in advertising to take the basic agreed advertising policy (as described in previous pages) and by the use of appropriate words and pictures to communicate it to the consuming public—to translate it, in other words, into a form suitable for public consumption. In this operation Motivation Research can play two parts: in the first place, it can provide clues and guidance which can help in the actual creative process, and in the second place, applied to copy research, it can *check* whether a particular advertisement has done, does, or is likely to do what it is intended to do.

About the clues and guidance which Motivation Research can provide in the creation of advertisements it is perhaps not necessary to say a great deal: enough has already emerged from the earlier pages of this book to illustrate how Motivation Research, by uncovering the needs and requirements of the consumer with regard to any particular product, by exposing the resistances and obstacles which exist, and by delineating public *attitudes* towards a particular product-group or brand, can indicate not only what brand-image needs to be built but also some of the concepts which can be used in advertising for that purpose. And the *words* which informants themselves use in describing what they like or dislike about products, though they cannot be transposed straight into advertisements, often serve to spark off brilliant creative ideas.

The use of Motivation Research in a copy research function, however, to *check* the efficiency and suitability of any particular advertising treatment is something which we may examine in rather more detail. Preliminary to this, however, we might consider the three steps in which an advertisement does its job—and this is true whether we are talking of an advertisement in a newspaper or magazine, a poster, a film, a radio or television commercial, a bus-ticket, or anything else. In the first place, the advertisement must be so positioned that as high a proportion as

possible of the prospect-group will be physically *able* to perceive it. In the second place, the advertisement must be so designed that as high a proportion as possible of these actually *will* perceive it, and in the third place it must be so designed that it will *communicate* the right message to those who do perceive it.

Now the first of these steps—the *positioning* of the advertisement in such a situation that the prospect-group is physically able to perceive it—is the function of what is normally termed 'media research'. There are Motivation Research aspects to this also, which will be discussed a little later, but the other two steps are the province of 'copy research'.

We are concerned in advertising to maximize both the *perception* [1] which an advertisement gains and the success with which it *communicates*. Sometimes, however, these two desiderata seem incompatible. We know, for example, that a half-page advertisement in *The Times* for a mechanized accounting system, pointing out the manifest advantages of this system, the service it offers, what a great and forward-looking organization the company is, and so on, will be looked at by a relatively small proportion of people. Now it is always possible to increase the 'readership' figure—if, for example, half the space is filled with the picture of a pretty girl in an exiguous bathing-costume, the proportion of even *Times* readers looking at the advertisement will skyrocket. But the effect which the advertisement is likely to have on the brand-image of the company may not be at all what was intended. Some industrial advertisers *have* used this method, but there is little evidence of any conspicuous success.

On the other hand, the same space might be filled with a detailed explanation, entirely in 6-point type with no headlines, of the advantages of the new system, and it might be that the argument is so unanswerable that anybody who read it all through would immediately insist on converting to the system. This would not help, however, if (as would probably be the case)

[1] The word being used in a general sense, not a technical one.

just nobody read it. This apparent conflict between attention-value and communication is something which arises quite often, and it is very important to any copy research operation to be quite sure which of the two things is being measured. Obviously, what is really required is to maximize both, but this is not always possible and one must be in a position to judge how the two are interacting in order that the most efficient final result can be arrived at.

A word might be added here about the implications of the word 'communicate' so far as the Motivation Research approach is concerned. Clearly, any advertisement which is seen or heard will communicate *something*, but it is a fallacy to suppose that the success of an advertisement can be measured by the extent to which the content of the advertisement is 'played back'.

One particular toilet product, for example, was required to be given a 'French' atmosphere, and an attempt to do this was made by including in its advertising the picture of a girl wearing supposedly very smart French clothes. In subsequent checking it was found that a very high proportion of women remembered the peculiar costume, and even associated it with the product, but that not many of them associated it with 'Frenchness' at all, and that even those who did were not particularly disposed to look upon *that* sort of Frenchness as much of an advantage in the product concerned.

Quite apart from any failure to communicate, however, a particular combination of words-and-pictures may produce an impression quite different from that intended. In respect of a product used for women's sanitary protection, to quote a specific instance, the decision was taken to try to build the image of the product as something which would be recommended by older women or mothers, for use by younger women or daughters. An advertisement was therefore designed showing two women talking, the younger one grumbling about her difficulties and discomforts, and the older recommending her to use the product.

But prior testing revealed two major defects, not in the concept but in the execution. In the first place, the older–younger relationship was by no means clear to the majority of readers, and in the second place the 'worried' look worn by the younger woman was interpreted by many readers as an air of high tragedy! This was particularly marked when, as part of the check, the picture and headline were tested without body-copy, and thus with no product identification—a considerable proportion of readers suggested that she was probably going to have an illegitimate child!

Most advertising agency people are convinced that they can look at an advertisement and see at a glance what it will say to the ordinary reader. And many manufacturers, without the excuse of professionalism, are even more dogmatic on the subject. The chances are that they will be wrong, because the overall impression which an advertisement leaves on the minds of the people who see it can be affected to an extraordinary effect by minor variations in the expression on a model's face, the actual phraseology used, and other factors which either seem unimportant or else are interpreted quite wrongly. And although routine methods of advertisement testing may serve to indicate that a particular advertisement is *wrong*, the probing techniques of Motivation Research are normally required before it is possible to see just *why* it is wrong. An example may be quoted here of two advertisements used in America for a backache remedy: one, the classical, with a picture at the top, big headline, and short body-copy; the other, violating every advertising principle known to award-committees, with no picture and a mass of solid copy. Yet the second proved much more successful than the first (this being a coupon-response campaign), and copy-testing along Motivation Research lines indicated the reason. People who suffered from backache, it was found, were convinced that their backache was like no other backache in the world, and they were not prepared to identify themselves with the picture. What they wanted from an advertisement was a recognition that theirs

was a serious ailment—and the more text the better, because it made them feel that somebody was taking their case very seriously, and giving them real advice on what to do about it.

One further example may be cited in this section. It was desired to convey the impression that a particular brand of disinfectant was suitable for *all* household purposes—drains, lavatories, kitchens, floors, and the rest. Somebody felt that a picture of the *whole house* would help in this operation, and that this could be given impact and realism by making it a *doll's house*, with the child sitting by. The idea seemed brilliant, but it was found on testing that the impression left by this particular advertisement was not that of a household disinfectant at all, but of an antiseptic for *personal* use. The advertisement was admired, found convincing, and created a very favourable attitude towards the product—but it was building the wrong brand-image!

Copy research is an extremely broad and complicated subject, and it requires a book of its own—it certainly cannot be treated exhaustively in this one. There are, of course, an almost infinite number of permutations and combinations of different *frameworks* inside which such research can be carried out. People can be shown different advertisements in layout form, as groups of alternative designs or singly, separately or in concertinas, with or without control advertisements, with or without brand-names attached, and so on. Or copy themes, or actual copy, can be tested simply by showing them on cards, in batches or singly, or as paired comparisons, or by substituting them for the existing copy on existing advertisements. Attempts have been made, indeed, to produce dummy magazines specifically to contain advertisements for copy research purposes, and although it seems to have been found that the extremely laborious and expensive procedures involved are not wholly justified by the results, it is true that the problem of trying to get away from too artificial a situation is one which has to be taken into account.

And similarly television advertising, or cinema advertising, or

outdoor advertising, all present special problems of their own so far as concerns the establishment of a framework for testing them. The media themselves are much more intractable from a point of view of experimentation, and because of this not only is greater ingenuity required in the devising of checking procedures, but also the results which emerge have to be evaluated that much more carefully. But whatever the media concerned, and whatever the experimental framework judged necessary in order to mount the test, one basic principle applies. A satisfactory answer to the question 'How shall we say it' requires those same techniques of probing below the surface as have already been outlined as the essential tools of Motivation Research.

One further point needs to be made here. Although, as has been stressed, the questions of *what* to say and *how* to say it are quite different matters, they must nonetheless be studied in conjunction. For it is quite pointless to use Motivation Research to help determine an advertising policy, and to indicate what sort of brand-image needs to be developed, if the advertising which ensues is not on the same beam. In other words, advertising which purports to be based on Motivation Research findings requires testing and checking, with the use of Motivation Research techniques, in order that the advertiser can be sure it is going to do its job.

The question having been settled as to what it is desired to say about a particular product, to what group of people, and in what terms, the problem then arises of *where*—in what advertising media shall the message be placed, in order that it may do its job most effectively, economically, and profitably. This is the area covered by what is called media research—an area in which Motivation Research has not so far been very extensively used, but one in which the need for it will fairly readily be apparent.

Media research, in its everyday form, is concerned with the measurement of audiences—how many people will see a particular newspaper, or magazine, or advertising film, or television

commercial, or sixteen-sheet poster. And the first problem in deciding on advertising media is that of determining what particular selection of them will provide the greatest possible audience at the most economical expenditure.

There are relatively few products, however, which are concerned with *total* audiences. In most cases, advertisers want to reach specific groups, defined in broad terms. Food products normally need to be advertised to housewives, for example; petrol and oil to motorists; cosmetics to younger women, and *expensive* cosmetics to younger women in the higher income-groups. For this reason, advertisers have always been concerned to know what *sort* of people constitute the audiences for different media: up to the middle of the 'thirties, such information was largely a matter of inspired guesswork, but since that time a whole codex of techniques has been devised for measuring (with varying degrees of accuracy) the precise composition of the audiences for various individual advertising media, in terms, of sex, social class, age, region, town-size, family composition, ownership of certain types of equipment, proneness to certain patterns of behaviour, and so on. This sort of analysis now forms the basis of most intelligent media planning.

Thus standard media research studies the audiences for advertising media in terms of these objective, 'external' factors, in the same way as traditional market research studies the characteristics, in similar terms, of the consumer. But just as the techniques of Motivation Research can be used to study consumers and purchasers of particular products in terms not only of these 'external' factors, but also in terms of their *personalities*, so these same techniques can be used to study, in these same personality terms, the audiences for different advertising media. The habitual reader of *Good Housekeeping*, for example, is a very different sort of woman from the habitual reader of *True Romances*—not only in respect of the obvious characteristics of age, social class, and marital status, but also, and even when allowance is made for

these differences, in respect of personality and attitudes. And, again, even when allowance is made for the obvious differences in these external factors, habitual cinema-goers exhibit very considerable personality-variations from people who never go to the cinema or go only rarely.

This is an area in which very little work has as yet been done, and much of what has been done (or at any rate, published) does not inspire a great deal of confidence, being for the most part both tendencious and superficial. But the point is an important one, certainly deserves more attention than it has yet had, and ought to be taken into consideration when studying the question of *where* an advertising message is to be placed.

There is one aspect of the problem which is perhaps rather simpler than most of the others. This concerns the appropriateness of certain *types* of media for carrying particular types of advertising message. The well-known and frequently extremely effective 'irritation technique' of advertising—the hammering of a particular theme *ad nauseam* to the point where, although everybody detests the advertisements, they absorb the brand-image whether they like it or not—can work most efficiently in media such as radio and television, and to a lesser extent in outdoor advertising, where people are much less able to shut down their 'inner' ears or eyes than is the case with press media. Similarly, if the building of a particular brand-image is judged to need colour in the advertisements, or a high standard of art reproduction, the choice of the particular *type* of medium is automatically narrowed-down from the start. Or, again, if it is deemed essential that a particular advertising message shall be perceived on a particular *day*, then the media selected must be those where this concentration is possible—daily newspapers, radio, television—rather than those where the impact is spread over a number of days—weekly newspapers, posters, cinemas, and so on.

One point needs to be specially mentioned here, however. The judgement that an advertisement *ought* to appear on a

particular day must be scrutinized very closely before it is accepted as valid. Because women tend to do rather more shopping for household products on Thursdays and on Fridays than on other days of the week, because motorists tend to be out and about rather more on Saturdays and Sundays than on weekdays, there is a tendency to suppose that advertising should be timed to catch the attention of potential customers just before the purchase is made. In consequence, Thursday and Friday editions of newspapers are liable to be packed solid with advertising, each advertisement having that much less chance of gaining the reader's attention, the whole thing in the interests of the fallacy that the last person to get at the purchaser before the purchase is made is likely to prevail. It is a fallacy (at least in most cases) because advertising does not normally work that way: its function is to create a brand-image, an operation which takes time, and there is some experimental evidence for supposing that in many cases the *motivating* power of a particular advertisement is greater several days after it has appeared than immediately after. Before we insist, therefore, on placing advertising as near as possible *in time* to the purchasing situation (and determining media policy in order to do this) we might well ask ourselves whether we have any really good reason for doing so, or whether we are merely following a private superstition.

Consideration of the appropriateness of particular *types* of media requires one approach: consideration of that of individual newspapers or magazines in particular requires another. There are a number of facets to this problem, of which one has been touched on a few pages back—the extent to which the sort of audience we can reach with one particular medium, one particular newspaper or magazine, matches more than another (from the point of view of *personality*) with the product we are selling, the brand-image we are trying to create, and the message we are trying to communicate. But a second facet concerns the effect which the brand-image of the publication itself might have on the

brand-images of products advertised in its pages. An illustration of this type of thing was given in Chapter Eight (page 173) in respect of luxury-class cosmetics, where it was pointed out that, although a considerable proportion of total sales were accounted for by the lower-paid working-classes, the strength of the brand depended upon its 'upper-class' brand-image, and that any obvious slanting of marketing or promotional policies towards the mass market could be catastrophic. The relevance of this sort of concept to the problems of media selection will be obvious.

On the other hand, it must be appreciated that obvious and clear-cut instances of this sort are rare. Before an advertiser dismisses a particular publication as unsuitable for his purposes, because its brand-image would clash with that of the brand-image of his product, he must know with some degree of assurance what those two brand-images are. For a manufacturer to refuse to use a particular newspaper or magazine because he himself dislikes its editorial policy, its style or make-up, or the sort of story it carries, or because his own wife doesn't read it, is common enough advertising practice. The fact that it is common practice, however, in no way gets over the other fact that it is childish and irresponsible: whether or not a particular advertising medium is appropriate to a given long-term advertising policy is something which Motivation Research can be used to check, in conjunction with all the other data available from standard media research, but it should not be judged upon instinct.

A third facet of this same problem is concerned with the extent to which advertising in one particular medium creates more conviction in the mind of the reader simply *because* it is carried in that medium. Claims of this sort, of course, are habitually made for practically every publication in existence by the salesmen whose job it is to sell advertising space in them, but it is only comparatively recently that any attempt has been made to give substance to such claims. The sort of argument advanced might be expressed as '*Good Housekeeping* is concerned with household

management, whereas *Illustrated* and *John Bull* (in Britain) and *Life* and *Saturday Evening Post* (in the States) are of general interest: it therefore stands to reason that an advertisement for a household commodity will gain more attention, be more likely to be believed, stand more chance of motivating a purchase, if it appears in *Good Housekeeping* rather than in one of the others.' While it is quite possible that this is in fact the case, it is equally possible that the reverse is true, the human race being as cussed as it is: unfortunately, what research work has so far been done to try to demonstrate this sort of point has turned out to contain certain technical imperfections which can result in nothing more than a verdict of 'not proven'.

If differences of this order really *do* exist between different publications (and there is some slight evidence for this) then obviously they can be of the greatest importance, if they can only be isolated and measured. The same is true of yet another facet of the problem which has recently begun to receive attention, concerning what are called 'opinion formers'.[1] Here it is argued that certain types of people act as 'fashion leaders' for their friends and neighbours: what they do today, the rest of the population will do tomorrow, and if the advertiser can only get at *these* people they will do his work for him, by word-of-mouth.

Now it is perfectly true that *if* such people do exist, and if their influence is as stated in respect of the choice of motor oil and laxatives, television sets and cooking fat, cosmetics and shoe-polish, beer and bananas and bicycles and brassieres and baking-powder and bootlaces and bandages and butter and batteries and baby-foods, then clearly the advertiser will be concerned to put his advertising message where *these* people will see it, whoever else does or does not. The crucial question is not how to reach

[1] Or 'influentials' or 'gate-keepers', or 'influence groups' or what you will. Practically everybody who has started investigating this problem has chosen his own name for them—for reasons which are not difficult to understand.

such people—that is pretty easily found out, if they exist – but whether they exist at all, and how far their influence is an important motivating factor for the rest of the population. Theoretically, it should not be impossible to discover this, though it would seem probable that the 'influence' groups for batteries are not the same as those for baby-foods, and different again from those for brassieres. But certainly for such purposes it would be essential to use the basic methods of properly quantified Motivation Research, and the failure to do so explains why what material has so far been published on the subject has proved remarkably unconvincing, on either side of the Atlantic.

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The last seven or eight pages have dealt with Motivation Research and the media problem solely from the point of view of the advertiser. But Motivation Research can also be of direct use to the media proprietor himself. He has a product which he is concerned to sell, in which respect he is no different from any other manufacturer, and for which he has to work out production, packaging, marketing and advertising policies, and see that they are integrated one with another. Indeed, an example has already been quoted in Chapter Seven (page 147) of a 'packaging' problem relating to a particular magazine.

The problem for the media proprietor, however, is rather more complex than that facing the average manufacturer, since media have two sets of customers—on the one hand the ordinary public, who buy and read the newspaper or magazine, go to the cinema, or tune in to a particular radio or television programme, and on the other hand the *advertisers* who buy time or space. In effect the media owner is selling two different products, with a common brand-image, and it may sometimes happen that the image which is favourable in one situation is unfavourable in the other. The London *Daily Mirror*, for example, has the highest sale of any daily newspaper in the world, and is read each day by

about 40% of the British population. But the very characteristics which are so attractive to the mass of the population tend to be looked at askance by certain advertisers, so that although the *Mirror* has no difficulty in selling its advertising space it certainly seems to find it expedient to keep its advertisement rates-per-thousand somewhat *below* those of its nearest competitors. Similarly, many business publications find themselves in something of a dilemma by their desire to sell subscriptions to students and young people on the way up and at the same time to convey to potential advertisers that their readership consists largely of top brass personnel with the power of taking purchasing decisions. This adds another dimension to the 'balance of profitability' calculations which arise as a result of any Motivation Research enquiry, but it in no way affects the basic principles involved.

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Throughout this chapter advertising has been studied purely in relation to paid advertising space used to sell goods, and little has been said about 'institutional' advertising or those relatively new techniques of promotion comprehended under the rather broad term of 'Public Relations'. This is not because Motivation Research has no part to play here, but rather the contrary: virtually everything that has been said in this book applies to institutional and public relations campaigns with even more force than to the normal business processes of manufacturing and selling.

It will be fairly obvious why this must be so. Institutional and public relations campaigns are concerned essentially with the *company image*—the picture which the public has in its mind of the sort of organization the company is—and with public attitudes, towards that image. (Sometimes they are concerned only with special sections of the public, but that does not affect the principle.) They deal normally solely with *ideas*, and very rarely with market patterns, so that the questions listed at the beginning of this

chapter as those which Motivation Research is concerned to answer do not apply in quite those terms. Instead, the questions which need answering in relation to institutional campaigns are:

(1) What attitudes do people currently hold with regard to the company, and why?

(2) What attitudes do we want them to hold, and why?

(3) What do we want to say, and to whom, and why?

and thereafter the questions as to *how* and *where*, as in any other problem of mass communication.

To deal adequately with these three questions would require a book on its own: it is not possible here to do more than outline some of the problems involved. The first question is essential because, with institutional and public relations campaigns as with ordinary selling campaigns, it is quite impossible to decide what ought to be done without knowing something about the existing situation: the second and third arise because, with this sort of operation, the required end-results are by no means always obvious.

Finding out what attitudes people currently hold with regard to the company, and why, calls for exactly the same techniques of Motivation Research as those already outlined in earlier chapters. Crude and primitive methods of asking direct questions will no more serve to indicate *real* attitudes than they will serve to indicate real purchasing motives, and for exactly the same reasons. It is perhaps unfortunate that 'public opinion' should be so identified in the public mind with the rather superficial enquiries carried out by or for popular newspapers, where people are asked whether they are 'for' or 'against' something—usually some political topic of the day, such as capital punishment—and the results used to provide a headline which is read one day and forgotten the next. Such methods are well enough in their

way and fulfil adequately their only real purpose, which is to provide a readable newspaper paragraph, but they are *not* adequate to provide data for the spending of vast sums of company money in campaigns on which the company's whole future may depend.

A classic American example of the futility of over-simplified questioning arose from an experiment where a sample of people were asked, point-blank, whether they approved or disapproved of the Metallic Metals Act. Considerable proportions of them expressed positive views, either of approval or disapproval: a very large proportion, of course, as is always the case in such an enquiry, said they had no opinion on the subject—which in this case was hardly surprising, since the Act concerned had no existence save in the fertile imagination of the experimenter. And the experiment serves to indicate the pointlessness of asking questions of this nature without taking the trouble to find out what, if anything, lies behind the answers given.

Instances of the sort of information that can be obtained to serve as a base-line may be quoted from a series of enquiries carried out into the company images of different public utility corporations in the United States. One company was found to have an image which was warm, intimate, personal, friendly: it was liked and trusted, regarded with considerable enthusiasm, thought to be public-spirited. A second company, on the other hand, had quite a different image, characterized mainly by indifference, but also with much unfavourable feeling. The image in this case had a constant undertone of distrust and resentment and its rates—though no different from those of other companies—were viewed with suspicion. A third company was different again, being well thought of as reliable, dignified, and stable, but with an image suffering from a lack of personal identification and warmth, and with something cold, aloof and impersonal about it. And in all three cases the *reasons* underlying these attitudes could be traced back to the behaviour and policies of the companies concerned.

Obviously, the task required to be done by institutional advertising or public relations campaigns would be different for the different companies. But even when the existing situation is known, the policies which ought to be adopted are by no means always self-evident. What are we going to try to do, and why? A great manufacturing company, for example, might spend vast sums of money explaining to a not-particularly-interested public how seriously it takes technical research. Many such companies do precisely this, but it is not always clear what they are getting at—not always clear, that is, even to themselves. Are they trying to show themselves as full of civic responsibility, and therefore not appropriate for nationalization? Are they trying to sell their *products* at long-range, by creating an aura of confidence around the company's trade-mark? Are they trying to suggest that they are a good company to work for—doing, in fact, a *labour-relations* job? Are they trying to support the value of their shares on the Stock Exchange, or to create a favourable climate for a new capital issue? All these are quite legitimate aims, and highly laudable ones, but it does not follow that they can all be followed at the same time—or, indeed, that they *ought* to be.

Nor does it automatically follow, for that matter, that the particular institutional or public relations campaign in question is doing the designated job. This brings us straight back to the problem of copy research—what the advertiser thinks he is saying is by no means necessarily what the public thinks it is hearing. Indeed, it is not always certain that the public is hearing anything at all: a series of papers published in *Fortune* on this subject some years ago carried the general title 'Is Anybody Listening?', and the question is highly pertinent, because this is an area in which long-haired arty-craftiness often gets a fairly free hand. Straight 'selling' advertising, if it is ineffective, will usually reveal itself as such in the not-too-long run, but ineffective institutional or public relations advertising can very well run on for years with nobody being any the wiser.

As has already been suggested, this particular field of business communication is one in which Motivation Research is not only useful but essential. The basic principles involved are those which have already been explained in the earlier sections of this book: their application is simply a matter of the appropriate technical skill.

CHAPTER TEN

SOME POINTS OF CONTROVERSY

PROBABLY no new development of marketing techniques has created quite as much controversy around itself as has Motivation Research. Presented, in its early days and by its earliest exponents, as a universal panacea for all marketing and advertising ills, it eventually managed to stir up opposition from two groups of people. The first group consisted of those business and advertising executives who really were fundamentally opposed to *any* form of research, who grudgingly conceded that traditional market studies and retail audits might be of some limited use, but who felt that any attempt to *explain* or to *predict* was an infringement of their prerogatives of judgement and flair. The second group consisted of some established market research operators, who for one reason or another were quite satisfied with their existing methods and could see no advantage in the new techniques offered by Motivation Research.

The first group, of what may be called the 'obscurantists', never played a particularly important part, and since they are swimming against the tide of business practice in general too much attention need not be paid to them. Their voice is occasionally heard at business or advertising conventions—mainly in the United States, however, since their counterparts in Britain or on the Continent do not know enough about Motivation Research even to be able to talk nonsense about it.

It is the second group, the established market research practitioners, who are currently responsible for most of what opposition is still voiced. A third point of view has recently been put forward, however: this is the suggestion that Motivation Research

is *immoral*, since it takes an unfair advantage of the consumer. This particular attitude (which possibly need not be taken excessively seriously) will be further discussed towards the end of the chapter.

Most of the controversy revolving around the subject, however, is meaningless, except where Motivation Research is defined in a particular way. Much of the dust which is kicked up, for example, arises from the scufflings of two very prominent researchers operating in the United States—Ernst Dichter and Alfred Politz—and since these two gentlemen are frequently regarded (incorrectly, as it happens) as respectively the chief protagonist and the chief opponent of Motivation Research, their views may be looked at a little more closely.

Ernst Dichter, who runs his 'Institute for Motivational Research Inc.' at Croton-on-Hudson, is an indefatigable pamphleteer, and probably produces more promotional material relating to the work of his organization than any other five research operators together: this is at least one of the reasons why his name is so closely associated in the public mind with Motivation Research in general, though whether he can fairly claim to be called 'the father of Motivation Research' or whether this title more properly belongs to Paul F. Lazarsfeld is something which need not detain us here. But certainly (as he himself frequently points out) Dichter tends to be saddled with the responsibility for Motivation Research methods used by other people, and there appears to be a considerable difference between the methods he uses as they are described by himself and as they are described by his critics!

His more recent pronouncements indicate that he is paying at least lip-service to the need for adequate validation and quantification, for adequate study of the full circumstantial background of any marketing problem, and for the other safeguards which have been discussed in the earlier pages of this book: how far this affects his practice is something which can only be verified by his clients or his collaborators.

Leaving aside the particular position of Ernst Dichter, however, it is clear that a good deal of work is done under the title of Motivation Research which is both unscientific and unbusinesslike in its approach—though attempts to apply it may occasionally result in a successful outcome, as is also true of astrology and tea-leaf reading. The main criticisms of this type of operation have been summarized as follows:

> 'The analysis does not stem from the data, but often from the top of the analyst's head, and the practical business action recommended does not stem from the analysis but represents a logical and clever leap on the part of the analyst. What I am really saying is that such people do not do research. Rather they do intuitive thinking, some of which is very clever. Thus their reports may be great stimulators, but are also dangerous in that the reader must apply judgment in reading them to separate the chaff from the wheat. A survey may, for example, result in hundreds of recommendations. It is impossible to apply all these, but there is no guide as to which are important and which are trivial. Further, ninety out of every hundred may be quite impractical and off on the wrong track, and the other ten may be great, but the reader is not in a position to know which are which. There is often no true analysis of data, but rather a use of the data to support ideas antecedent to the research.'

It will be clear that the sub-species of Motivation Research which is so sharply criticized here is not at all the same as that which has been outlined in the previous chapters of this volume. And it cannot be too strongly emphasized that such criticism of Motivation Research as is based on this misuse of the term has very little relevance to the subject as it is conceived and described in these pages. It should be realized very distinctly that the name 'Motivation Research' is used at different times to describe a considerable number of different approaches, and it is for this reason that some operators have deliberately chosen *other* names (such, for example, as 'consumer dynamics') to describe their particular

methods.[1] This is something of a counsel of despair: the tendency now is for Motivation Research to abandon its youthful follies and to get on to a scientific basis, and it has been the aim of this book to outline that combination of Motivation Research methods which will best serve to this end.

Because of this, many of the criticisms of Motivation Research advanced by, for example, Alfred Politz, have little relevance to what has been described in the preceding chapters. Politz, who has probably done more to encourage the perfecting and refinement of 'classical' market research than any other operator in the world, and who has of recent years acquired at least the 'brand-image' of chief opponent of Motivation Research, argues very strongly against inadequate samples, failure to check statistically the results of projective tests, over-simplification of findings, and the interpretation of results by subjective judgement rather than by methodical analysis. With these, as with many other strictures on the early extravagances of Motivation Research, we need have no disagreement whatever. These very points have already been made, several times over, in the early chapters of this book. But modern methods of Motivation Research, as we have described them, are not open to such criticism, and the danger of the Politz approach is (as suggested in Chapter Four) that it is liable to throw the baby away with the bath-water.

Criticisms of this sort, relating to the reliability and validity of Motivation Research, may be made in good faith by skilled researchers who know what they are talking about, and warrant the most careful consideration. But for two other types of opposition there is rather less justification. The first of these is that Motivation Research is simply unnecessary, and that people's

[1] The technique christened 'Activation Research,' devised by Dr. George Gallup is not, however, an example of Motivation Research under another name, but rather an extension of the technique of asking informants, *direct*, to explain the advertising influences leading to a purchase. On the difficulties involved in this, see Chapter Two (particularly page 21).

reasons and motives can be accurately ascertained by straightforward question-and-answer. One Belgian practitioner of the conventional market research school has put the proposition rather more baldly than most adherents even of this school would dare to, in the following words:

> 'But if you want to know "why" housewives prefer this detergent or that soap, leave the psychologists alone and be satisfied with the straightforward answers given to simple questions by woman of all sorts—except bluestockings.' [1]

This is, of course, a point of view, but we now know so much about the utter meaninglessness of this sort of answer to this sort of question that we need not linger over it: the point has already been dealt with adequately in Chapter Two.

The other objection goes to the other extreme, and might be described as a somewhat 'long-haired' one. It protests that Motivation Research is untrustworthy because based on no 'general theory of motivation'. Most readers of this book will probably not understand what this means, in which they are at one with the author: it seems, however, to imply that the use of a radio set should be prohibited to people who don't understand electronics. Motivation Research is a working tool of management: if by its use business men are enabled to understand those *manipulable* factors which help to determine consumer behaviour, and to base profitable action on that understanding, it does all that can reasonably be required of it. Indeed, even on the academic level, it is not certain that this criticism is valid, since the combination of techniques necessary for any good Motivation Research study may be regarded as a manifestation of that 'renewed desire to reconcile high-level with low-level concepts of analysis, and to ward off that split between general and social psychology with which we seem at the moment to be threatened'.[2]

[1] Pierre Lacoste: 'La Motivation est à la mode', (*Le Crieur Public*, May 1957).

[2] A. J. Laird and A. R. Knight: 'Contemporary Studies of Motivation' (in *Current Trends in British Psychology*, ed. Mace and Vernon, 1953).

It is probable, indeed, that the very last thing Motivation Research needs is to be stretched on some Procrustean bed of a general theory, with everything explained in Freudian terms, or Jungian terms, or in terms of some other restricted theory. It has been said, for example, that it is always possible to tell which of half-a-dozen leading American Motivation Research practitioners has written a particular report: one sees everything in terms of sexual symbolism, another in terms of power-seeking, another in terms of social conflict, and so on. It is precisely this failure to spot, when faced with a particular commercial problem, those motives which are *relevant*—because manipulable in the circumstances—that constitutes the weakness of so much early Motivation Research.

This is all part of the problem of 'how deep to go' which has been discussed at some length in Chapter Three. The levels at which motivation occurs are many and varied, and it may be neither necessary nor profitable for a manufacturer to try to get down to basic human 'drives'. As has been suggested in that chapter, the commercial problem is concerned not with the mainsprings of human behaviour but with the escapements and regulators which can be adjusted in the interests of a manufacturer or advertiser. When it is suggested (as it sometimes has been) that Motivation Research will result in all advertising being exactly the same, because all manufacturers will eventually learn to appeal in exactly the same way to the same basic human drives, the suggestion is based on two grievous misunderstandings. The first is that advertising *ought* to be directed at basic drives—which in most cases it ought not, being concerned essentially with immediate needs. If a cigarette is seen, for example, simply as a combination of phallic symbol and breast-substitute, then obviously the scope offered for the creation of effective advertising is limited. But in fact a cigarette, and a cigarette of a particular brand, is very much more than that: the needs it satisfies are both wider and less profound, and the motives to which a

particular manufacturer can successfully appeal allow ample room for development.

The second misunderstanding is that all manufacturers will get the same advice. This is not likely to be the case, for one of two reasons. If a manufacturer turns for assistance to one of the 'wild men' of Motivation Research, to one of the specialists in facile and over-simplified generalizations, he will get a subjective assessment of the problem which would probably be the same as any other manufacturer would get. But his competitors will consult other practitioners, equally unscientific but with different predilictions, and get totally different (though probably no more reliable) assessments and recommendations. If, on the other hand, the Motivation Research which he commissions is conducted along the lines which have been described in this book (in particular, in Chapter Five), though he will get the same sort of analysis and recommendation whoever does the survey—it being an essential part of any *scientific* procedure that similar data will produce similar results in the hands of any competent experimenter—since the survey is concerned with *his* problem the recommendations will be appropriate to *his* product but not to those of his competitors.

It is the necessity for preserving the *scientific* approach—'observe, classify, measure, predict'—which is the crucial factor in Motivation Research as defined and described in these pages. Convenient though it would be to employ a psychiatrist as a medicine-man, as a *deus ex machina* who can put everything right with a nod of his wise old head, commercial life is just not as simple as that. Nor, in fact, are psychiatrists quite as reliable as that, either. Sam Goldwyn is credited with the remark that a man who consults a psychiatrist ought to have his head examined: had he been better acquainted with psychiatrists, his observation might have been applied not to the patient but to the doctor. The psychologist has a role to play in Motivation Research, but as has been indicated in an earlier chapter, psychologists come in

different breeds, shapes, and sizes, and it is a matter of some importance that the right kind should be used in any particular capacity. The monks of St. Bernard do not employ pekinese to rescue travellers from snowdrifts.

Indeed, a good deal of the controversy which has bedevilled the development of Motivation Research arises because the psychiatrists and clinical psychologists who have wandered into this field have tended to assume super-human powers and to deny the necessity for *proving* anything. This tends to be particularly true in respect of the use they make of projective tests, and in turn brings us to one of the very serious objections sometimes voiced against the use of these. Projective tests, say those of their critics who know anything about them, are extremely unreliable tools: furthermore, most of them have never been properly validated. And it is certainly true that as regards at least *one* test, the Rorschach (ink-blots), psychologists can almost be described as falling into two camps—those who regard it as one of the most useful of tests, and those (equally eminent) who regard it as a lot of nonsense.

The practitioner and the user of Motivation Research do not need to get involved in all this. From the point of view of practical commercial needs, if a particular test serves to discriminate between different groups of people, and if those groups are subsequently found to have different behaviour-patterns, then the test can be said to have a useful function, and can be used in conjunction with all the other data to explain a particular situation. An example has been given, indeed, in Chapter Four (page 84) of a case in which possibly the least respectable of all projective tests—the Szondi—played a useful diagnostic role in an enquiry where other, more reliable, tests would have failed to show anything at all. Motivation Research needs to be a catholic affair, and should not reject any tool that comes to hand—providing its use can be justified. But this last proviso is vital, since there are usually few or no *external* facts against which results can

be checked. In an ordinary market research enquiry, informants' statements about the extent to which they use a particular type of product, the brands they use, the quantities, and so on, can be matched against overall production or sales figures to provide some measure of what is called 'validation'. External checks of this sort are rarely available when it comes to questions of motivation, and their place has to be taken by *internal* checks—by what we have elsewhere called 'built-in controls'—a measure, as it were, of internal consistency, and of the extent to which cross-bearings from a number of different angles all indicate the same situation.

All this involves a good deal of work at the analytical stages. It also necessitates, as has been pointed out in earlier chapters, the use of adequately sized samples, since only *statistical* analysis can provide the required guarantees of reliability. And this in turn leads on to another vital consideration, which is the question of the reliability which can be attached to the primary material on which any particular study is based. If such a study is the single-handed work of a semi-divine psycho-analyst, who 'depth-interviews' a score of conveniently chosen people, stews their comments together in his own subconscious, and finally regurgitates a series of broad generalizations, this problem does not arise, since the greater error extinguishes all the lesser ones. But if it is intended to give any degree of precision or scientific validity to a Motivation Research study, then the task of collecting the basic information—interviewing the informants, in fact—must be passed to a field-force of investigators.

The sort of investigator who is likely to be required for any particular assignment will depend upon the nature of that assignment. It is sometimes argued that 'depth-interviews' can only be conducted by investigators who themselves are psychologists, and who alone can do the necessary probing into the hidden depths. As has been suggested in Chapter Four, however, this is probably both unnecessary and misleading: not even the most brilliant of

psychologists can get *very* far down in the course of a single interview lasting from twenty minutes to a couple of hours, and to use psychologists for this purpose is simply to provide a spurious mantle of precision for what is necessarily a very preliminary and unscientific operation. To some extent the existence of this fallacy is due to the unfortunate use of the term 'depth-interview': if instead we adopt the term 'free interview' or 'unstructured interview' we are likely to mislead ourselves rather less.

The functions of an investigator in such an interview have been described in some detail in Chapter Four (page 50). But though trained psychologists are not essential here, the qualities required for the conduct of a free interview are rather special, since the ability to 'draw-out' an informant, without intruding one's own views and personality, and to keep the conversation going while recording everything that is said, is not common. On the other hand, when a particular Motivation Research operation has reached the 'quantifying follow-up' stage, the qualities required in an investigator are much more the ability to adhere rigidly to a given questionnaire, and to follow procedural instructions with absolute faithfulness. And the sort of investigator needed for carrying out a 'methodological pilot' is different yet again.

In other words, the conduct of Motivation Research enquiries entails the ability to dispose of a trained and flexible field-force, comprising investigators of different types, and subject to the tightest supervision and control. Supervision and control are essential, not only to prevent those forms of cheating which are the continual preoccupation of all market research workers, but in order to eliminate—so far as is humanly possible—those variations in results, and in the conduct of the interview, which arise from the different personalities of the investigators. Such variations are serious enough even in standard market research enquiries: in Motivation Research, with its much longer interviews and its much more *sensitive* questionnaire-design, they can wreck the whole operation if they are allowed to get out of hand. In an

enquiry carried out for the British Government, for example, to discover how many of the men who had served in the armed forces during the War were likely to apply for the campaign medals to which they were entitled, it was found that the answers to certain questions obtained by such women investigators as were young (and presumably more attractive) were very different from the answers obtained by those of them who were rather older!

It is, indeed, not only the field-force which requires special training and supervision for Motivation Research enquiries. The processing of large numbers of questionnaires calls for special skills on the part of coding staffs, particularly when (as is normal) even the 'quantifying follow-up' questionnaire contains a good deal of 'open' material, such as sentence-completion or balloon tests. The incorporation of Motivation Research techniques into a market research operation may thus need a radical transformation both of the organization's field-staff and its internal staff, and requires a degree of flexibility which is not always available. Indeed, there is a distinct possibility that a good deal of the resistance to Motivation Research which arises on the part of some of the more old-fashioned practitioners of market research may be motivated (unconsciously, of course) by the fact that their procedures and organizational methods are not easily adaptable to these newly developed techniques.

This is a very great pity, for Motivation Research (as has been very clearly indicated in earlier chapters) does not supersede other research methods: it *complements* them. And in studying the findings of Motivation Research enquiries, and in formulating business policies in their light, it is necessary to take into account all existing information which can give any guidance as to the nature and structure of the market, whether that information comes from consumer enquiries, trade enquiries, retail audits, housewife panels, or anything else. No one research technique has all the answers, but it is as silly to dismiss any one as being

unnecessary as it is to claim that any one is the sole requirement. Motivation Research can answer many questions which otherwise cannot be answered, or cannot be answered satisfactorily, but it is only one of the tools which top management now has available to assist it in the formulation of business decisions. It is, however, an extremely powerful tool, since it can materially reduce the area of *ignorance* about consumer behaviour and motivation, and thus enable the manufacturer to base his policy-making rather more on knowledge and rather less on guesswork.

It is precisely this substitution of knowledge for guesswork, however, which has given rise to a relatively new objection to Motivation Research—the suggestion, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, that it is *immoral*. This point of view has been heard at odd intervals over the last few years, but has only recently been advanced in any major way, in a remarkably ingenuous book[1] by Vance Packard, and may be briefly summarized under three heads:

(1) Psychology is a science devised for the healing of the sick and should not be prostituted for commercial ends.

(2) Its use, however, permits the Motivation Researcher to go rummaging around in the subconscious minds of the consuming public and to discover exactly what hidden fears and desires may be played upon for business purposes.

(3) It is unfair, not to say immoral, to appeal to people's unconscious desires, rather than their logical requirements.

The first two of these points may be dismissed very briefly. Psychology is *not* the science of healing the sick: it is the science of understanding the human mind, and consequently (like any other science) morally quite neutral. It may be applied in various ways, included in which are attempts to heal the mentally sick (though the extent to which it succeeds in this is a matter of violent dispute among professional psychologists), but also including such things

[1] *The Hidden Persuaders*

as personnel selection and industrial psychology generally. And there is no reason at all why it should not be used for commercial purposes unless, from the shelter of a university or a government office, you take the line that commercial activity is immoral in itself.

The second point is naive in the extreme, since it accepts without question that claim to have the key to the human soul which is advanced by only the most extravagant and unsophisticated of the earlier Motivation Research practitioners. Some of these, it is true, *do* claim to have a magic formula which will open all doors, but it has been the concern of this book to show that such claims are quite untenable; criticism which is based upon their acceptance is equally untenable.

The third point, however, though no more valid than the other two, must be treated as being of rather greater importance, since it is a reflection of that hostility towards branding and advertising, and towards the *selling* function inseparable from increasing material welfare in a free economy, which currently manifests itself in many ways. Some of the arguments involved in this, though largely irrelevant to our present problem, are worthy of a moment's consideration: particularly so is the attack on material welfare. It is argued, for example, that people are no happier with two cars than they were with one: why try to persuade them to buy a second? This may well be true, if only we knew what we meant by 'happier': one might equally say that people are no happier with electricity than they were with oil lamps, no happier with bathrooms than they were with a zinc tub in the kitchen, and —in the ultimate resort—no happier with bronze axes than with flint ones. The people who criticize material welfare, in fact, take the standard of what they are used to as the norm of 'necessity', set arbitrary limits at this point, and insist that anything beyond this is unjustified extravagance, since people don't really *need* it.

It is, indeed, the difference between what people *need* and what

they *want* that is the crux of the problem. For that *satisfaction* that a consumer gets out of any commodity derives from far more than the *reality* of the commodity: it arises essentially from the *image*. So far as concerns food, for example, what a human being *needs* is a certain daily intake of protein, carbohydrate, vitamins, and so on: what he *wants*, however, is a selection of familiar and attractive dishes, prepared and served in acceptable forms, and eaten in the ritual situations (with dining-tables, linen table-cloths, china plates, silver cutlery, and so on) which for civilized man are as much a part of the meal as the food itself. One might argue that it is a wicked waste of human effort to produce linen table-cloths, since food will be quite as nourishing eaten off bare boards (just as female politicians in comic hats have argued that it is absurd to give people butter when margarine has quite as high a food-value), but this misses the whole point of the concept of *satisfactions*. There is no way out of the dilemma that either people get what they want or else what somebody else considers is good for them: in the latter case one is logically led to a Nineteen Eighty-Four situation.

What has all this to do with Motivation Research? The answer is, very simply, that since most human satisfactions are derived from *images*, and since one of the major concerns of Motivation Research is to discover what particular images are most acceptable, and how they can be created, Motivation Research plays its part in increasing the level of satisfaction. Whether this is done by altering the product, or by altering the consumer's attitude towards the product, is largely immaterial: the Mad Hatter could not see that 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like', but the world at large does not necessarily have to adopt the standards either of mad hatters or of sterile intellectual busybodies. If a motorist gets more satisfaction out of buying one brand of petrol rather than another, this provides adequate justification for branding, and the fact that the two brands may be virtually identical for all *practical* purposes is as much beside the

point as the argument that, since most women are fundamentally the same for all practical purposes, men should not be allowed to choose their own wives.

The type of attack on Motivation Research which has been discussed in the last few pages is, in fact, directed not so much at Motivation Research itself as at the commercial purposes for which it is used: the techniques themselves only come under fire because they are regarded as highly efficient tools to a basically undesirable end. With the desirability or otherwise of the commercial ends of a free-enterprise economy, or of the concomitant increase in material welfare, this book need not be further concerned—it is rather too big a subject to be dealt with at the end of a concluding chapter. With the efficiency of Motivation Research as a tool, however, we *are* concerned, and this chapter has demonstrated some of the areas of controversy involved in this.

To a considerable extent, as has already been pointed out, many of the criticisms of Motivation Research are meaningful only if it is defined in a particular way—and that way is not the way in which it has been described in the pages of this book. The particular concept of Motivation Research as a scientific tool of management, subject to the same general rules as any other form of market research, may itself be regarded as controversial by proponents of the more primitive forms of Motivation Research. In the author's view, however, though the early work of the founders and popularizers of Motivation Research must not be underrated, the gradual accumulation of evidence from the various studies, reports, and articles which have been carried out or published during the last eight years or so leads to the inescapable conclusion that Motivation Research is now out of its infantile stage and must accept adult responsibilities.

Just what those responsibilities are should have become clear from the earlier chapters of this work. A useful summary, however, of five points necessary in the evaluation of Motivation

Research enunciated by Professor Robert J. Williams of Columbia University, may be found relevant here:

1. Consider carefully the samples on which recommendations are based.

2. Don't go overboard for 'depth'—the interview situations are varied and complex, the areas for wrong interpretation and disagreement many.

3. Consider the possibility that the research results may be projections of the researcher.

4. Beware of the single 'reason why', as no act is the result of one simple cause.

5. Look for specific action recommendations.

To the careful reader of the preceding 229 pages, none of these five points will come as a painful surprise: nor do they provide a formula for the perfect conduct of Motivation Research enquiries. They are quoted here because, incontrovertible in themselves, they serve to emphasize the difference between the 'one-man-band' methods of the early nineteen fifties and that detailed, reliable, and scientific approach to business problems which constitutes Motivation Research today.

APPENDIX

THE LITERATURE OF THE SUBJECT

It was pointed out in the first chapter of this book that of writings about Motivation Research there is no end. A considerable proportion of them are superficial in the extreme: they see the light of day in business or trade magazines, and are then (very properly) forgotten. The task of compiling a bibliography to include all these is one from which the bravest author might well shrink.

Fortunately, part at least of this work has already been done, so far as concerns the earlier literature. The *Bibliography of Theory and Research Techniques in the Field of Human Motivation*, published by the Advertising Research Foundation of America in 1956, lists a very high proportion of the books, articles, and pamphlets having any bearing on the subject which had been published up to that date. With a few noble exceptions, all the references it quotes are American: this is understandable in those sections which deal with Motivation Research as such and with its applications, where very little work had been done up to that time outside the United States, but it represents a weakness in those sections devoted to the theoretical research techniques of the social sciences.

However, since the theoretician can find his own way around, and the ordinary student need not concern himself unduly with high-level theory, this xenophobic objection is sentimental rather than significant, and the reader who is anxious to explore the field further might well start by obtaining a copy of this bibliography and selecting from it those works which seem to him of particular interest: he will also get from it some indication of the various periodicals which habitually publish articles on the subject, and on which he can keep up-to-date. The American advertising magazines (*Advertising Agency Magazine*, *Advertising & Selling*, and *Printer's Ink*) do so pretty frequently, though it must be admitted that these are, perhaps inevitably, usually fairly superficial, and often bear signs of being intended by their authors as promotional pieces rather than as scientific contributions. Rather more detailed expositions are found in the *Public Opinion Quarterly* and (occasionally) in the *Journal of Marketing*—which published the celebrated Mason Haire study of Nescafé in 1950, a landmark in the literature of Motivation Research—while the *Journal of Advertising Research* frequently carries articles related to this field.

And *Business Week*, the *Harvard Business Review*, and *Dun's Review* sometimes publish articles on the subject, usually in rather broad perspective. Finally, the enormous number of periodicals devoted to psychology, anthropology, sociology, and the other social sciences also publish occasional articles which may have some bearing on the subject for anybody who has the time and patience to plough through them, and the ability to extract what is relevant.

There are, however, only three or four books (apart from the present one) which attempt to deal with Motivation Research in any comprehensive fashion. The earliest of these, George Horsley Smith's *Motivation Research in Advertising and Marketing*, was published in 1954 by McGraw-Hill (for the Advertising Research Foundation), and although so much has developed since then that it is now somewhat out-of-date, and although the author of this present volume is not always in entire agreement with Professor Smith, or with the emphasis he puts on various aspects of the subject, the book is undoubtedly required reading. A more recent work, Joseph W. Newman's *Motivation Research and Marketing Management*, published by the Harvard School of Business Administration in 1958, is devoted partly to describing the different approaches to the problems of Motivation Research and partly to the reporting in considerable detail of the case-histories of a number of studies carried out by various American research organizations for different clients. Although the exact techniques used are not always described in quite as much detail as might be desired, the work contains a great deal of information bearing on the problem which each study was designed to solve and on the decisions which were taken as a result of the findings. Thus, this book provides not only a broad view of the subject but also an extremely valuable picture of the way in which Motivation Research has been used in the past as a tool of commercial management.

Another extremely important work, Ferber and Wale's *Motivation and Market Behaviour*, was also published in 1958. This is a massive symposium, with contributions from nearly all the leading American research practitioners of the time (including, it must be admitted, some of the more eccentric among them). It also contains a very useful bibliography. The larger part of this book is devoted to depth research and to various projective techniques: those problems of quantification and of *segmentation* which this present work has demonstrated to be so important in the commercial utilization of Motivation Research receive rather scanty treatment. To this extent, therefore, much of its approach is somewhat out-of-date, but it is nevertheless a book which no student of the subject can afford not to read.

A fourth extremely significant book (though its value to the student must be very much a matter of opinion) is Ernest Dichter's *The Strategy of Desire*. To those people who have shared lecture platforms with Dr Dichter, or read even

a proportion of his voluminous contributions to the periodical Press, most of the material will be already familiar, and criticism of his approach to the subject has already been made explicit in Chapter X of this present volume. His book is valuable, however, in so far as it makes quite clear his attitudes towards the subject, so that it is easy to understand both these and the attitudes of his various imitators, who copy his methods without possessing his own intuitive gifts.

Another relatively early work, published by McGraw-Hill for the Advertising Research Foundation, is Wulfeck and Bennett's *The Language of Dynamic Psychology as related to Motivation Research.* This is essentially a dictionary of psychological jargon: the business executive who commissions and uses Motivation Research would be better advised to insist on his psychologists expressing themselves to him in plain language rather than to attempt to follow them into the morass of their own extremely imprecise terminology.

The description of these books as the only ones published which attempt to deal with Motivation Research in any comprehensive fashion does not mean that no other books exist having any bearing on the subject. For example, Louis Cheskin's book (published in 1957) *How to Predict What People Will Buy* was labelled by its publisher 'the key to Motivation Research'—a rather extreme claim, since the book covered only one very narrow sector of the field, and that not exhaustively. Consisting of reprints of twenty articles which had appeared in various trade journals over the previous few years, most of which said the same thing in different words and sometimes even in the same words, it made essentially just two points—first, that packaging is an important factor in influencing public attitudes towards particular products, and, second, that in testing pack-designs it is necessary to use indirect methods rather than to ask people to say what they prefer.

These two points are both very important—they are, indeed, dealt with at some length in Chapter VII of this present work—but they represent only one aspect of the very wide field which Motivation Research can usefully cover. Nor is it indicated that it may sometimes be sound business policy to design a pack for a specific group of the population, rather than for the population at large. It may be added that later works published by the same author do not, on the whole, add a great deal to what he has to say in this one.

A book published (McGraw-Hill) at about the same time, but possibly of rather greater interest, is Pierre Martineau's *Motivation in Advertising.* This book pleads, through over two hundred pages of elegant and liquid prose, for advertising to be based on real and unconscious motives rather than on verbal rationalizations, and it is difficult to see how any manufacturer who reads it can fail to be convinced of the need for and uses of Motivation Research. As an

evangelical and hortatory work it is a *tour de force*, but it gives very little guidance as to how Motivation Research should be conducted, or how the manufacturer who commissions it can distinguish good work from bad. It is not, in fact, a text-book, and does not pretend to be one. And if it somewhat over-simplifies the road to salvation, the same is true of most other evangelical works.

It is perhaps pardonable that Louis Cheskin, the Director of an organization specializing in package-design consultancy, should talk about Motivation Research purely in terms of pack-testing and that Pierre Martineau, the Director of Research of a great Chicago newspaper should see it mainly in terms of press advertising. This in no way minimizes the value of their specific contributions, but the student must beware of letting his own view of the scope and functions of Motivation Research be similarly circumscribed.

In Britain the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising published some years ago, as one of its *Occasional Papers*, a pamphlet outlining in broad terms the nature and significance of Motivation Research. Written by a panel of individual research executives from several different London advertising agencies, all of whom had slightly different approaches to the subject, it naturally represented something of a compromise, and was descriptive rather than elucidatory. But as a conspectus of the lines along which Motivation Research had developed in Britain up to that time, it can be regarded, within the limits imposed by its size, as a helpful document.

Papers relating to Motivation Research are occasionally read at the annual conferences of the European Society for Opinion and Market Research (ESOMAR), and are usually published in the *ESOMAR Journal*. Similar papers are more often read at the annual conventions of the American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) and are published, usually in summary form, in the *Public Opinion Quarterly*, while papers read to the Advertising Research Foundation can normally be found in the *Journal of Advertising Research*.

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