

HOW TO RESEARCH ADVERTISING ...AND STAY FRIENDS WITH THE AGENCY



Ad agencies think research 'kills' creativity, because it attempts to 'evaluate' an idea before it's even made, and gives consumers and researchers (what would they know!) the power to kill off an idea, or 'tweak' it beyond recognition...



If you're allowing that to happen, you're doing it wrong! Do it right, and you can counter the hostility and help the agency do their job. Some guidelines...



Research (esp. qual) is not done to 'test' ads, it is there to help in their development. Ideas are to be nurtured not dissected.



Accept the limitations of what you're doing - you're researching a proxy of an idea not even made yet!



Understand the difference between strategy, concept and execution. Focus on the idea and its message, not executional detail.



The only criteria for 'judging' an idea is the brief to which it was written! So ask for a copy of the creative brief.



Reactions not opinions. Do not allow participants to 'play creative'.



Make recommendations, but about the idea, not the execution. You shouldn't 'play creative' either.



Treat the creative team as the true 'client'...they don't pay for the research, but if they can't use it, it's been a waste of time and money!

