

A close-up, low-angle shot of a megaphone with a rainbow-colored, reflective surface. The megaphone is mounted on a metal stand and is set against a clear, light blue sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

# Using Qualitative Research in Advertising Development

A perspective

WHY?

# The case against research #1:

The effectiveness of an ad, especially in an unfinished form, can't really be predicted by research...so marketers should just trust their expert judgement

# The uncomfortable truth:

Marketers' own predictions of an ad's effectiveness are no better than the toss of a coin\*.

# The case against research #2:

Research kills creativity!



Yes, it can – if  
you do it  
wrong...

A man in a dark suit is seen from behind, standing at a podium and addressing a large, seated audience in a dimly lit auditorium. He is holding a microphone in his left hand and gesturing with his right hand. The audience is blurred, creating a sense of depth and focus on the speaker.

Doing it right: the case *for* qual research..

A close-up photograph of a hand wearing a white nitrile glove holding a clear petri dish. The dish contains a pinkish-red agar medium with a white streak. The background is a blurred laboratory setting with various equipment and containers.

**We are not TESTING anything!**  
(leave that to the quant researchers)



We are NURTURING an idea...

Use the research to  
*explore* the potential  
of an idea...



Either to:

1. Optimise an idea  
or
2. Point the way to new, better ideas



**WHAT?**

NB: this section is based on the thinking outlined in 'How Brands Grow', by Bryon Sharp, by Ch. 9

A close-up, black and white photograph of an elephant's head, showing its eye, ear, and trunk. The elephant is looking slightly to the left. The background is dark.

# How does advertising work?

Ads > Memory > Brand Choice

More precisely:

Advertising creates or reinforces memories so that in buying situations your brand comes to mind more readily than your competitors'



# Effective advertising creates memories by:

1. Getting noticed
2. Engaging its audience
3. Communicating:

(the brand, what it does, what it looks like, where, when by whom it's used, genuine 'new news' if you have any)

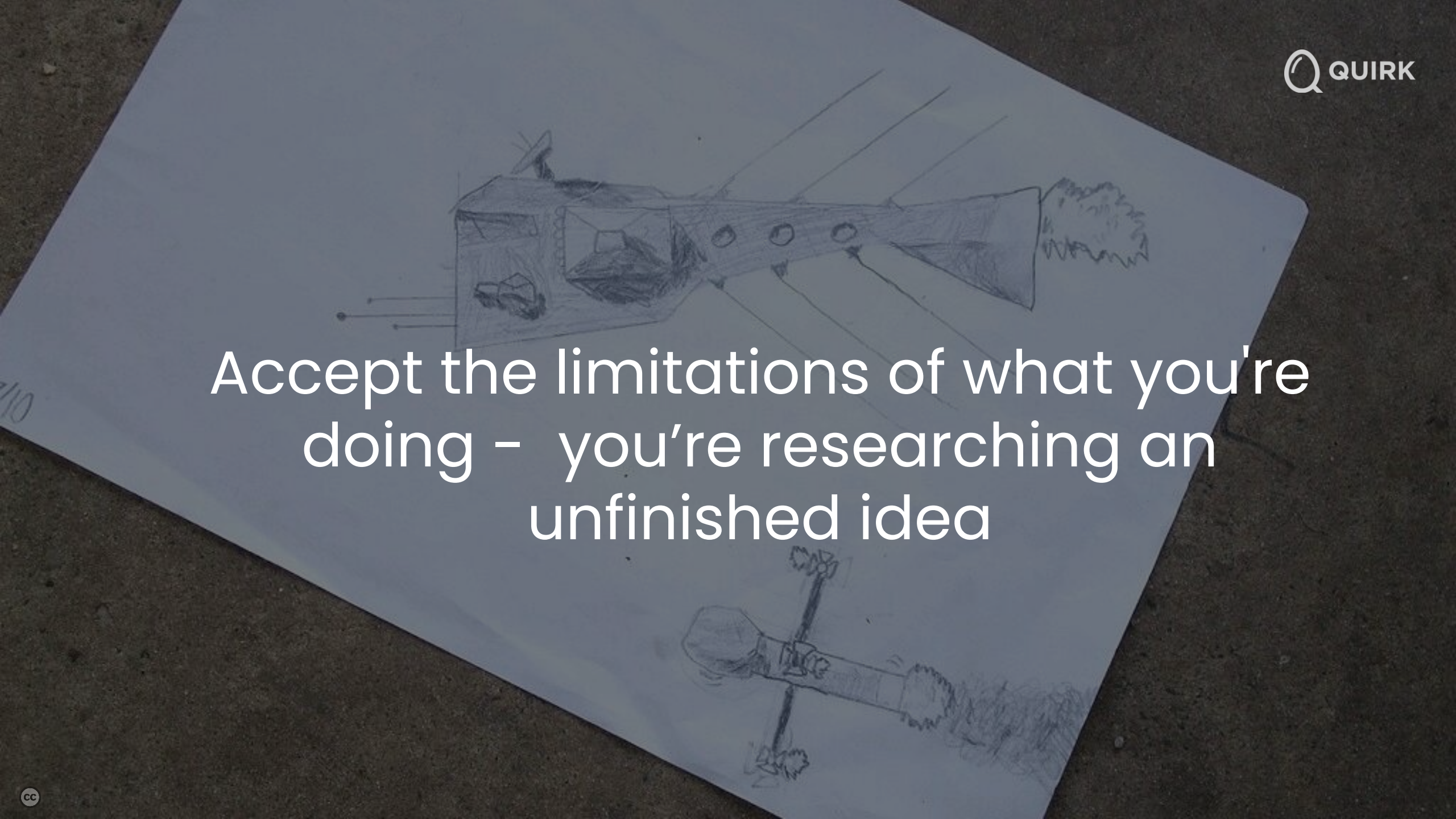
HOW



A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a person's face, focusing on the nose and mouth. The lighting is warm and dramatic, highlighting the texture of the skin and the contours of the features. The background is dark, making the illuminated parts of the face stand out.

It is *not* our  
role to tell  
the creative  
agency  
what to do –  
we're not  
creatives

Instead, think of the creative team as the 'true' client - if they can't use our research, it's a waste

A piece of white paper with pencil sketches is placed on a dark surface. The sketches are light and exploratory. One sketch shows a rectangular box with a satellite dish on top and several lines extending from it. Another sketch shows a horizontal cylindrical object with a textured, brush-like end. A third sketch shows a vertical rod with a bulbous middle section and a textured end. The text is overlaid on the paper in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Accept the limitations of what you're  
doing - you're researching an  
unfinished idea

# Use qual to understand:

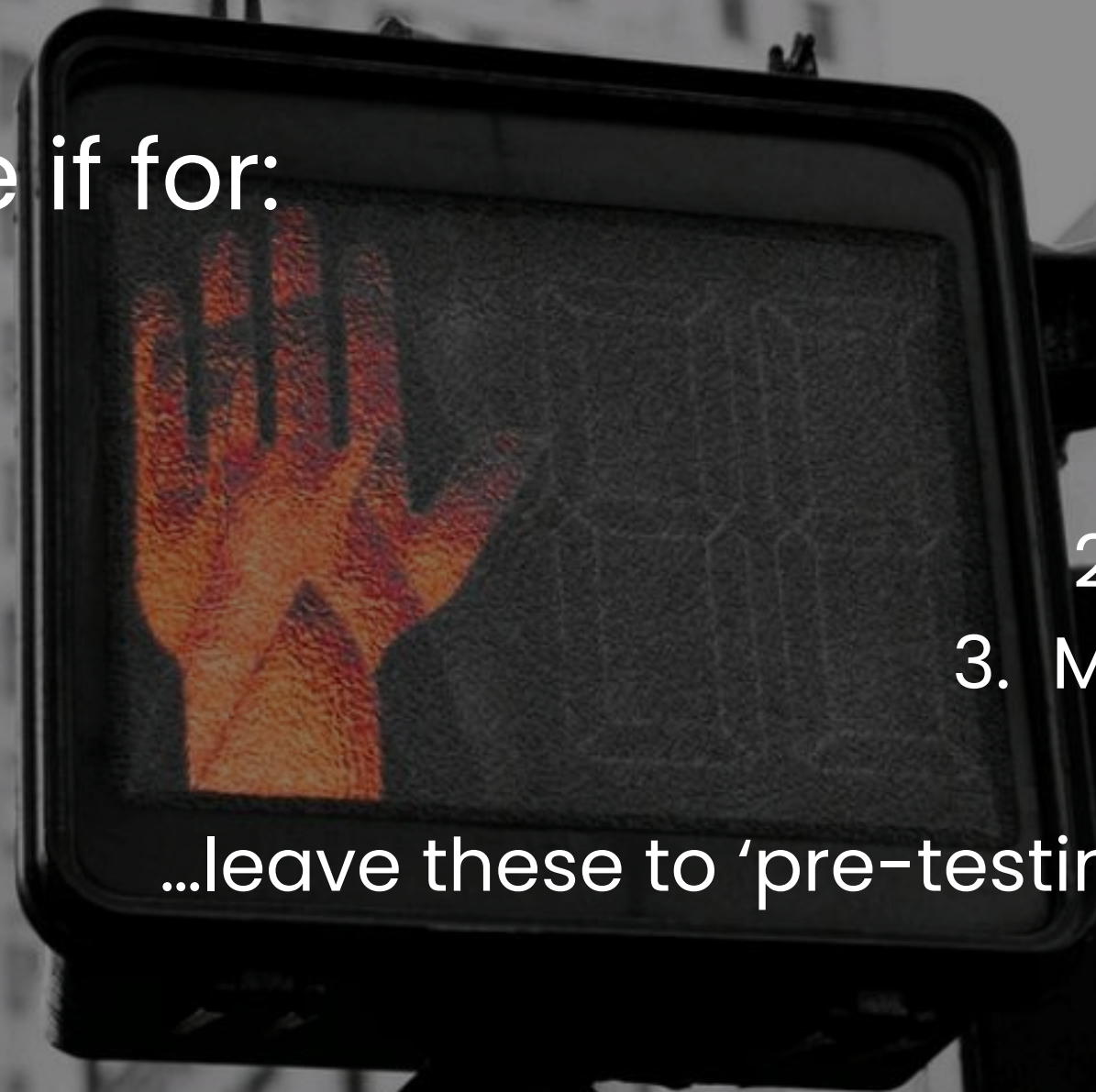
1. Comprehension
2. Reactions (emotional and rational)
3. Likeability
4. 'Fit' with brand



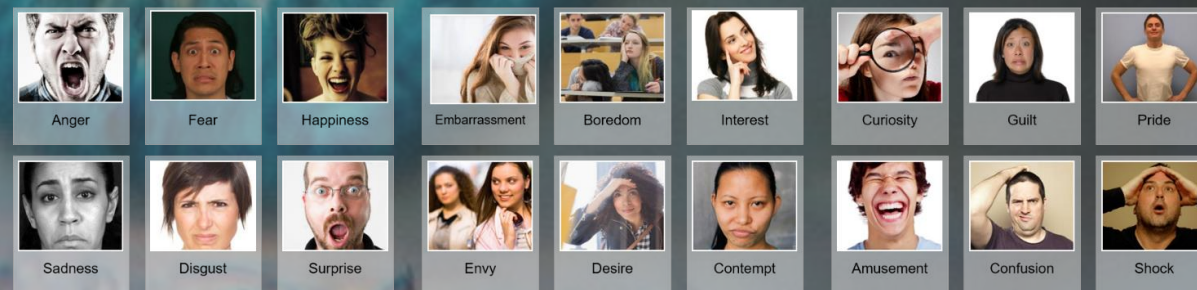
DON'T use if for:

1. Engagement
2. Brand Linkage
3. Memory Creation

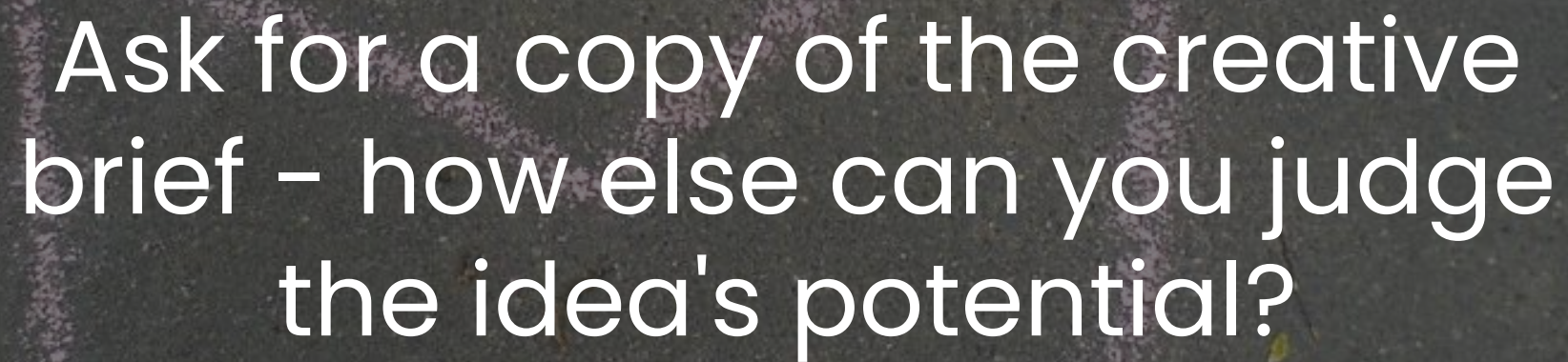
...leave these to 'pre-testing' or biometrics



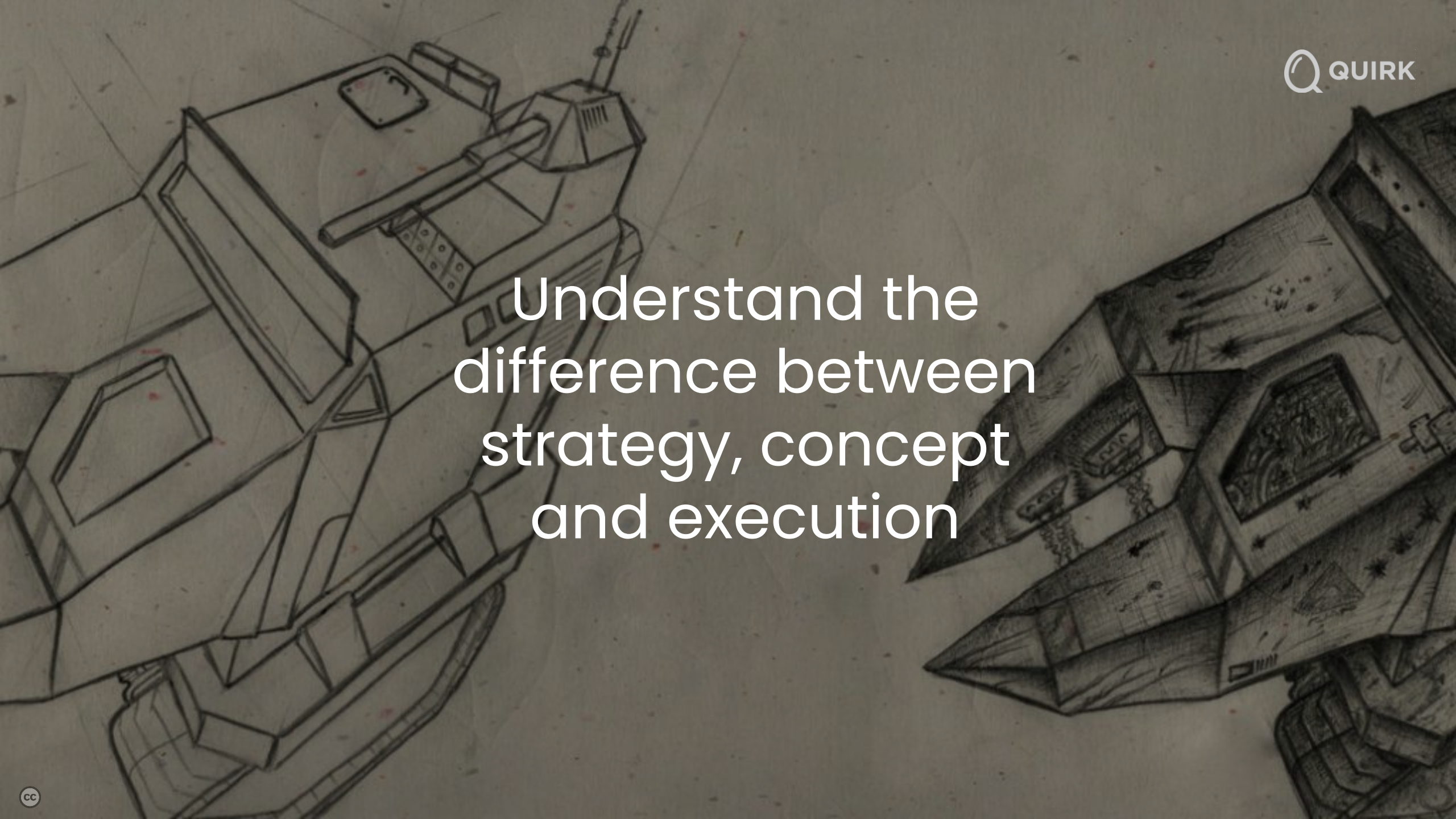
# Capturing emotional reactions in qual



Q. Now you've seen the ad, how does it make you feel. Circle as many feelings as apply (if any).

A large, faint purple smiley face is drawn in the background of the slide, centered behind the text.

Ask for a copy of the creative brief – how else can you judge the idea's potential?


The background of the slide consists of several pencil sketches of mechanical or industrial components. On the left, there are sketches of rectangular boxes with various ports and a control panel. On the right, there are more complex, angular mechanical parts with internal details and what appears to be a small display or sensor. The sketches are drawn in a technical, hand-drawn style on a light-colored paper.

Understand the  
difference between  
strategy, concept  
and execution




Reactions not  
opinions



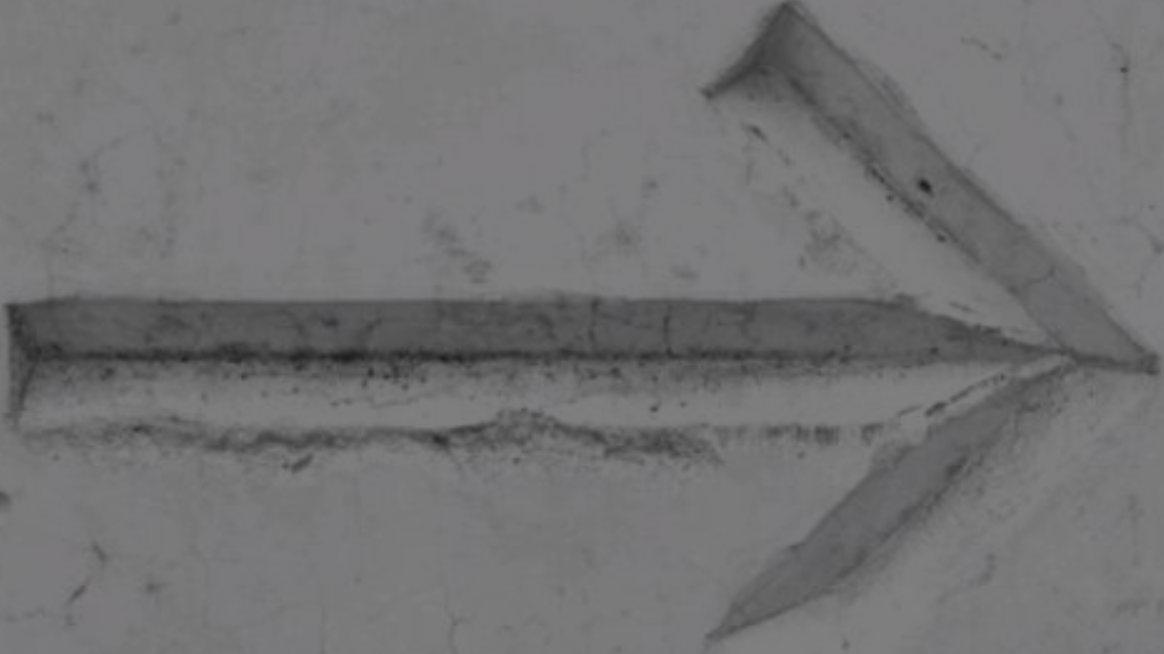
A grayscale background image showing a hand holding a pen, poised to write on a piece of paper. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights, creating a focused and professional atmosphere.

Individual responses  
before any group  
discussion

Participant suggestions  
are not welcome!  
Don't let them 'play  
creative'



SUGGESTION  
BOX



Make  
recommendations  
(but not creative  
suggestions)

# Quirk

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