

Introduction

This course is based around a project. The purpose of doing this project is to help you use what we learn in the class in the ‘reality’ of the business world. It will help you develop the skills in managing a piece of qualitative research.

There are some choices (given below) and a number of parts to the project. The first parts are described below. Some parts of the project are assessed. Later in the course I will give out the second part of the project brief.

Project choices

Choice 1 Chinese customers’ satisfaction and dissatisfaction with service

Understanding what makes customers satisfied and dissatisfied with service is important. Satisfaction often associates with customers deciding to come back to a service provider (i.e., to be loyal), to purchase more and to refer others (think “word of mouth”). These customer behaviours correlate positively with businesses ability to generate income. Dissatisfaction, by contrast, associates with many of the obverse behaviours. Customers have little desire to return to the service provider and spread negative word of mouth. All of which reduce businesses income. We should, therefore, see that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not opposite ends of a spectrum but rather are different concepts.

While we have some understanding about what makes Western customers satisfied and dissatisfied with service. We have, however, much less understanding about what and why Chinese customers become (dis)satisfied with their service experience. The aim of this project is to define an aspect of this problem to explore during this course.

Choice 2 Face in service

The way we present ourselves in social interaction has been called face. This idea is significant for people around the world since it connects out behavior (what we might call social acting) with how other people see and understand us. In Chinese society we have a special term for this (i.e., 面子 or 臉). The former (面子) refers to social status while the later (臉) more to our moral standing. In this project we are more concerned with the former and how this shapes behavior in the social interaction of service. The aim here is to understand the ways that face becomes relevant to service interactions in a Chinese context.

Research proposal *(Assessed)*

The research proposal sets out the objectives for the project and presents enough information to start the project. It should be credible and professional. This means that it shows your clients you understand the issue to be researched and makes people feel confident in your abilities. A good professional finish (take a look at any book to see headers, footers, titles, sections, cover page etc.) is important too.

There are two parts to the proposal.

Part A – paper

- The proposal should follow the structure we discussed in class
- I imagine it will take a minimum of five pages with the following (basic – please add the rest) format:
 - 1.3 line spacing; margins 2-3 cm
 - Section heads
 - Cover page (including who its for; your name; your student ID etc.)

Part B – presentation

In class 4 you will present your proposal. You should use Microsoft Word or/and PowerPoint. The presentation will last 5-10 minutes. It will cover the main parts of the proposal.

We will then have a question and answer session.