



GfK Custom Research



## **INTERNATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS**

International guidelines for quantitative fieldwork,  
face-to-face, telephone interviewing and control check

## The GfK companies agreeing to the guidelines



Austria, GfK Austria GmbH	Norway, GfK Norge A/S
Belgium, Significant GfK	Poland, GfK Polonia
Brazil, GfK Indicator	Portugal, GfK Metris
Bulgaria, GfK Bulgaria	Romania, GfK Romania
Croatia, GfK-Croatia	Russia, GfK RUS
Cyprus, CYPRONETWORK MARKETING RESEARCH	Serbia and Montenegro, GfK Belgrade
Czech Republic, GfK Praha	Slovakia, GfK Slovakia
Denmark, GfK Denmark A/S	Slovenia, GfK Gral-Iteo
Finland, Toy Research	Spain, GfK-Emer
France, GfK Custom Research France	Sweden, GfK Sverige AB
Germany, GfK Marktforschung and GfK Ad Hoc Services	Switzerland, IHA-GfK
Greece, GfK Market Analysis	Turkey, ProCon GfK
Hungary, GfK Hungaria	UK, GfK NOP Custom Research
Italy, GfK CBI S.p.A	Ukraine, GfK-USM
Netherlands, INTOMART GfK	USA, GfK Custom Research Inc.

## Aim of the International Field Guidelines

- The aim of the international guidelines for all quantitative ad hoc surveys conducted by GfK companies is to guarantee our clients the following minimum quality standards. Every GfK client and every GfK company can trust that the international guidelines ensure quality management of every survey.
- These guidelines form the basis of field quality standards for all GfK companies.
- Of course, every GfK company can increase its quality management in the way it chooses depending on client requirements for each survey. Many GfK companies already do much more than the following guidelines cover.
- Every country which has agreed to the guidelines must adhere to the quality standards. The guidelines are for Custom Research only and not for HealthCare.



# Data Protection

Data Protection criteria set up for residents of each individual country will be strictly observed by all GfK companies when they conduct research with residents in that country.

- Participation in interviews is always voluntary.
- If the respondents are children or young people (aged up to 14 years), we have to first ask the permission of the parents.
- Personal data passed on or known to the interviewer should be treated as strictly confidential. Passing data on to third parties is prohibited.
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers should not be punched in the data files. The privacy law is included in the questionnaire. Contracts of data protection should be signed if we send the personal data to a third party for controlling. The anonymity of the data must be guaranteed in any event.
- Interviewers sign to say they have kept to the procedure.
- GfK companies follow the ESOMAR rules.
- Whether or not respondents have consented to take part in future surveys, the names and addresses of the respondents are kept in accordance with the legislation of the individual countries and survey requirements.

## International Interviewer Guidelines Content



- Interviewer training
- Interviewer attributes
- Interviewer briefing
- Target recruiting
- Samples & Stimulus materials
- The Interview
  - the attitude of the interviewer
  - the development of the interview
- Supervision telephone

[ for telephone ]

[ for face-to-face ]

# Interviewer Training

- All Interviewers should be trained by the GfK agency before they work on the first “real survey”.
- The following content is the minimum of what every interviewer should know.
- It is up to the agency to raise the standard of the interviewer. Of course, the standards of the individual country should be considered.



# Interviewer Attributes

for telephone and face-to-face guidelines

## INTERVIEWER ATTRIBUTES:

- Competence
- Honesty
- Friendliness
- Politeness
- Conviction
- Persistence
- Neutrality
- Motivation
- Communication
- Behaviour



# Interviewer Briefing

## GOOD PREPARATION OF THE FIELDWORK STARTS WITH A BRIEFING OF THE INTERVIEWERS:

- Oral and/or written briefing by the project manager and/or supervisor
- Check and test by each interviewer individually
- Content of the briefing:
  - objectives
  - context
  - questionnaire
  - terminology

[ for telephone ]

- Check the questionnaire together with the project manager during the briefing to make sure instructions are comprehensible
- Supervisor (field manager) should be available to answer the interviewer's questions
- When necessary, supervisor (field manager) should discuss questions with the project manager

## Target Recruiting

- Respondents should be selected strictly according to the criteria for quota and random sampling.
- Only one person in a household may be interviewed on a particular topic, unless another procedure is utilised.
- Irrespective of the survey topic, a respondent may be interviewed again at the earliest between 3–6 months later.
- It goes without saying that neither members of the interviewer's own household, nor those of interviewer colleagues should be respondents. This also applies to the interviewers themselves and their interviewer colleagues.
- At the request of the client, any persons working in sensitive areas (i. e. market research, competitive businesses etc.) should be excluded from recruiting.



- The approximate length of the interview time should be given to respondents
- In making contact, whether direct or by phone, the survey content should never be discussed before the interview itself takes place, nor should brands or special product groups be named.
- The interview topic should always be referred to vaguely, for example by saying the survey is about buying behaviour in general. Care should be taken that the interviewer's attitude is absolutely 'neutral', so as not to influence the respondent's answer. Clues given in advance could lead to respondents unconsciously preparing themselves for the interview. They might, for example, pay more attention to the advertising or special shelf placement of the products or product groups in question. There are some exceptions when we interview in name of the client (e.g. satisfaction surveys)
- If the aim is to recruit users of a specific brand or service, for methodological reasons, direct questions should not be asked about that product or service. Instead, use should be made of the screener specially developed for this purpose.
- The interviewer ID card should be shown for face-to-face interviews.

## Samples & Stimulus Materials

- **ALL CARDS, LISTS, PICTURES** or other documents including concept/product samples should be **PRESENTED PROPERLY** (e.g. rotated order).
- Please note that the appropriate documents and samples should be shown only when information on the question is being given and should be removed at the end of the question/set of questions.
- Never present the complete set of lists all together!
- All stimulus materials such as concepts, product samples etc. should be treated as strictly confidential.
- All materials should be returned to the source, unless otherwise specified.

[ for face-to-face ]



# The Interview

## The attitude of the interviewer

- Interviewers should remain **NEUTRAL**. This means:
  - giving neither help nor clues – no prompting with help or clues
  - not stating their own opinion on the topic during the interview
  - not asking leading questions, i.e. questions that prompt the wanted answer
  - not interpreting vague answers or enquiring further about what was meant, always ask “What do you mean?”, “What else can you think of?”, “Anything else?”– to make the answer clear
  - questions should not be explained in the interviewer’s own words, nor should examples be given.
  - If a question is not understood, it should be read out again.
  - Changing respondents during consumer interviews is not allowed.

[ for face-to-face ]

- For face-to-face interviews only, make sure that:
  - the respondents cannot see the content of the questionnaire unless it is intended.
  - the respondents are not influenced by household members or other people



- **RESPONDENT'S MOTIVATION** by the interviewer is very important. The interviewer should:
  - give respondents feedback in a neutral fashion, if they ask questions
  - always be polite, friendly and helpful; where necessary, reading out the question again
  - adapt him/herself to the age/type of respondents
  - motivate the respondents to take an active part in the interview
- The interviewer should pay special attention to the **PROCEDURE FOR FILTERING/ROUTING**
- Encourage the respondents in giving answers.
- All of the information given by the respondents is important. The interviewer should not evaluate the information as "right" or "wrong".
- GfK is always the commissioning company, although in exceptional cases the team leader may provide the name of another client.
- If respondents tend to wander off the subject, they should be brought back to the topic in question.

# The Interview

## Development of the interview

- Read out the questions **EXACTLY (= 100 %)** as they are listed in the questionnaire. This applies also to possible replies/statements and to scale points. This means:
  - keeping strictly to the sentence structure
  - reading out the question/answer verbatim
  - making neither additions nor omissions to the text and giving no interpretation of the questions
- Keep exactly to the **QUESTION SEQUENCE AS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.**
- **THE INTERVIEWER SHOULD FOLLOW ALL OF THE INSTRUCTIONS** he/she receives – interviewer instructions and study details. These notes should never be read out to respondents!
- For telephone only: after the first interviews, the interviewer should give his/her feedback of strengths and weaknesses (misunderstanding of questions or attributes, etc.)



→ **CLOSED QUESTIONS**

- read out the question exactly as it is written
- enquire further if the answer is unclear

→ **AIDED QUESTIONS**

- read out all of the possible replies, even if the respondent has already answered
- read out the possible replies exactly in the order listed
- make sure you allocate the pre-codes correctly

→ **UNAIDED QUESTIONS**

- do not read out any possible replies. The pre-codes/list should not be read out
- give no clues, tips, examples and do not say what you think
- ask again, as far as the instructions allow (twice in general)
- ensure any pre-codes given are circled correctly
- record the answers in their entirety
- make sure instructions are comprehensible

→ OPEN QUESTIONS

- enter the complete and exact wording of the respondents' answers
- ask further with "What else can you think of?", "What more?" and other questions to motivate the respondents to give more information
- allow adequate time to answer
- where answers are too vague / general, ask "What do you mean?", "What else can you think of?", "What more?"
- the respondents cannot see the lists, cards etc. A magazine or anything similar may not be consulted in answering a question. Nor is it permitted, for example, to look in the bathroom to check what kind of toothpaste is used, unless the survey requires this

→ **RATING SCALES**

- explain scale points slowly and clearly
- read out the scale completely for face-to-face, the scale can also be shown on a card to make things clearer
- repeat the scale:
  - > every 2 or 3 statements (for telephone interviews)
  - > give a show card to the respondent (f2f interviews)
- make sure that respondents have understood the scaling correctly
- tell the respondents the possible range of answers, indicate where “ok” would be on the scale
- explain that scales allow the respondents’ opinions to be graded appropriately



# Telephone Supervision

- During the fieldwork, a supervisor is permanently present.
- Interviewers are permanently coached by means of listening in reports where they are given a score for the following elements:
  - recruitment
  - content of the interview (esp. correctness of asking questions; correctness of recording the answers)
  - friendliness
  - working attitude

There is room for positive remarks and elements to be approved.

- A minimum of 5% of the interviews of each project should be controlled this way.

[ for telephone ]



# Fieldwork Control & Checking Points

## THE AIMS OF THE CONTROL:

- Evaluation of fieldwork correctness according to the procedure:
- Evaluation of the value of the results:

The control system is based on a systematic and representative method of choice and rotation of interviewers. The results of the work of each field employee are checked at regular intervals. Furthermore, the results of each control are registered on the interviewer's record/data file, which is kept for documentation.



Minimum 10 % up to 20 %



Minimum 10 % up to 20 %

#### **METHODS OF FIELD CONTROL:**

Depending on the methodology, a minimum of 10 % and up to 20 % of the completed questionnaires are checked for all conducted studies at GfK. The standard for the control is to choose a random selection of questionnaires representative of the sample. But if necessary, there is a possibility of extending the range of control, e.g. control of 100 % of work carried out in a given region or by a given interviewer.

There are various methods of control for the completed interviews. There are different control methods among the field methodologies (i.e. where contact with a respondent is needed): phone and postal control methods.

**THE FOLLOWING FACTS ARE CONTROLLED  
(DEPENDING ON THE CONTROL METHOD):**

- Did the interview take place?
- Did the interview take place with the right respondents?
- Respondents basic demographic data/meeting screener requirements
- Completeness of questions asked
- Possible participation of other persons
- Possibility of asking respondents only some selected sections or questions from the questionnaire
- The attitude of the interviewer in accordance with the guidelines.
- The development of interview in accordance with the guidelines
- Duration and place of the interview
- Date of the interview
- Use of show cards and other materials

### LOGICAL CONTROL OF THE DATA

This control is based on the analysis of a logical connection between respondents' answers.

The logical control of the data is carried out as standard. This type of control applies to the whole sample (100 % of questionnaires is controlled). The aim of the analysis is to check:

- correctness of respondents selection to the particular section of the questionnaire
- compliance with the instructions (following correct routing)
- completeness of the questionnaires and percentage of no answers given
- correctness and frequency of using "special codes" reserved for answers: "don't know", "difficult to say", etc.
- percentage of refusal for each interviewer



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Brazil, GfK Indicator	Portugal, GfK Metris
Bulgaria, GfK Bulgaria	Romania, GfK Romania
Croatia, GfK-Croatia	Russia, GfK RUS
Cyprus, CYPRONETWORK MARKETING RESEARCH	Serbia and Montenegro, GfK Belgrade
Czech Republic, GfK Praha	Slovakia, GfK Slovakia
Denmark, GfK Denmark A/S	Slovenia, GfK Gral-Iteo
Finland, Toy Research	Spain, GfK-Emer
France, GfK Custom Research France	Sweden, GfK Sverige AB
Germany, GfK Marktforschung and GfK Ad Hoc Services	Switzerland, IHA-GfK
Greece, GfK Market Analysis	Turkey, ProCon GfK
Hungary, GfK Hungaria	UK, GfK NOP Custom Research
Italy, GfK CBI S.p.A	Ukraine, GfK-USM
Netherlands, INTOMART GfK	USA, GfK Custom Research Inc.

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