

# **How to get to know your supporters**

**Lesley Pinder – Head of Supporter Experience, British Red Cross**

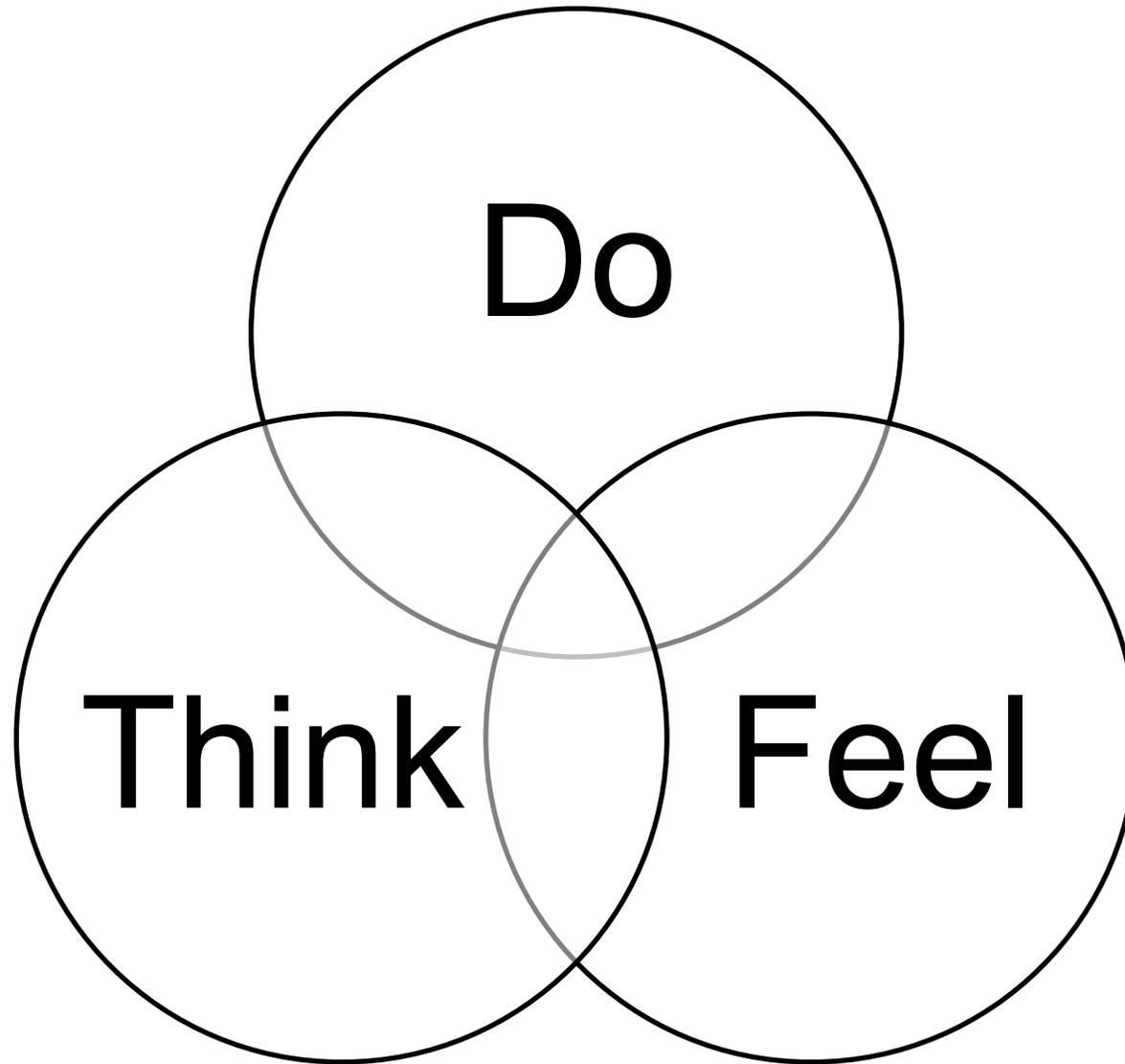
**You need to know who you  
are designing for and the  
situation they are in**

# Insight

*noun*

**UK** /'ɪn.saɪt/

(the ability to have) a clear, deep, and sometimes sudden understanding of a complicated problem, situation or behaviour



# It is about empathy



“Your customers don’t care about you. They don’t care about your product or service. They care about themselves, their dreams, their goals. Now, they will care much more if you help them reach their goals, and to do that, you must understand their goals, as well as their needs and deepest desires.”

*Steve Jobs*

# Where insight is useful....

- New product development
- Creative and proposition
- Supporter experience
- Strategy development

# What is getting in the way?

We don't have the time and we don't have the money

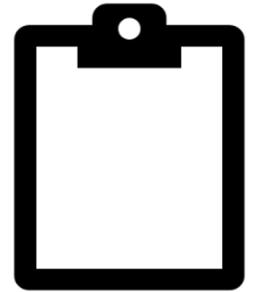
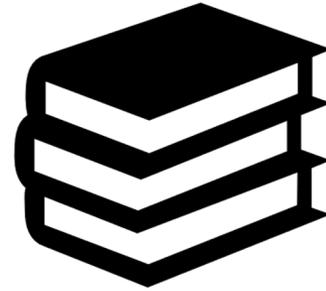
You need to be a research specialist

People say one thing and mean another

We're the experts

People are messy and complicated

# Research tools and sources of insight



# A poll

**Which of these tools do you use to understand your supporters?**

Data analysis

Digital Analytics

Qualitative research with supporters

Market research

Surveys

Supporter feedback

Other

# You might just want to understand supporters better....

“What motivates people to give to us?”

“What are their lives like? What do they care about?”

“How do they feel about this current issue/topic/problem?”

“Which areas of work are most inspiring and why?”

# Or you might have a specific challenge...

“How might we reduce the number of supporters who stop giving after 12 months?”

“What can we do to differentiate our charity shops?”

“Where are the pain points and high points of our supporter experience?”

“How might we improve the quality of our event experience?”

**“Research is simply systematic inquiry. You want to know more about a particular topic, so you go through a process to increase your knowledge. The type of process depends on who you are and what you need to know.”**

Erika Hall, Just Enough Research

# An example from us

“How can we create an engaging and relevant experience for people who donate to the British Red Cross during an emergency appeal?”



**Start with what you have**

# Mine existing sources



Supporter care calls and contacts, social listening



Data



Existing surveys, brand tracking, feedback, sector research



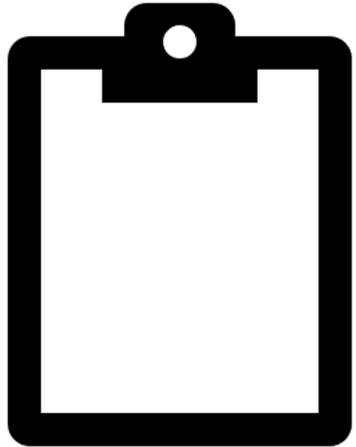
Your people!

# Map out

1. What you already know
2. What you think you know
3. What you want to know

**Do some research**

# Research tools



# Surveys



Volume

Statistics

Breadth

Speed

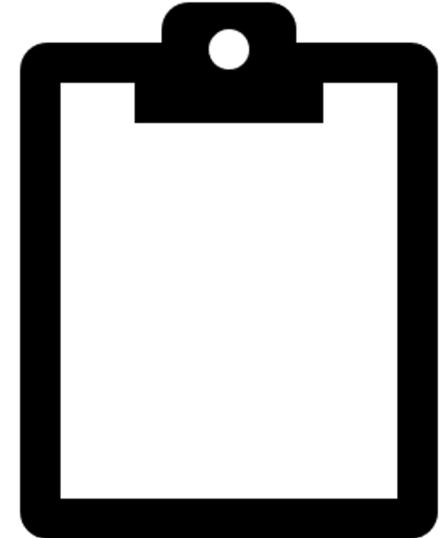
Consistency



Depth

Human insight

Why people feel certain ways





### Overall sentiment



moderately positive



15% positive    82% neutral    3% negative

# Don't be afraid of open text

“What three words....”

“Tell us about a time when...”

“Why did....”

“Tell us one thing....”

# Retrospective surveys



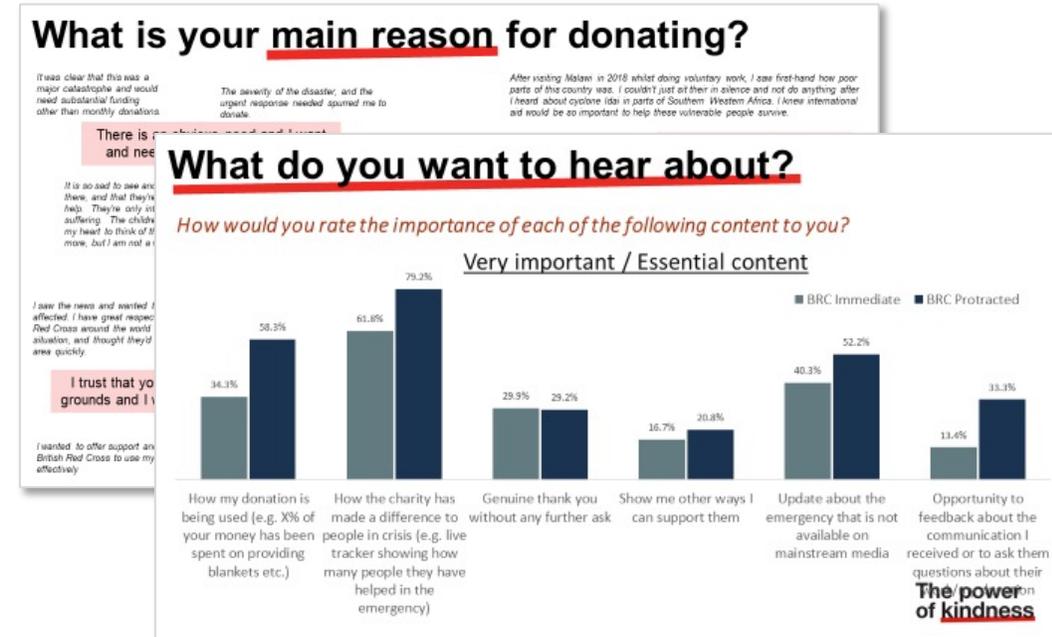
Can explore more questions



Segmentation and groupings



After the fact



# Pop up surveys



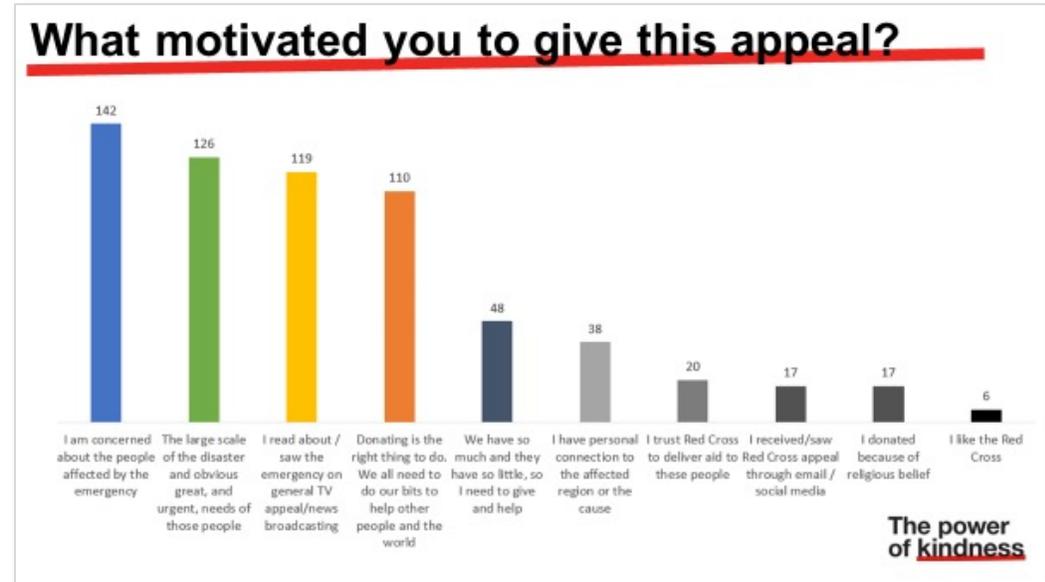
Capture in real time



Ease and satisfaction



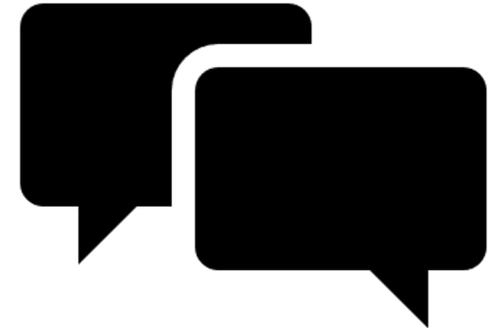
Have to be short



# The power of conversation

Talking to people is a powerful opportunity to gain deep insight into the lives and minds of your audience.

- 1-2-1 interviews
- Pairs/Triads
- Telephone or in person
- Online



# Some favourite research questions

## **Examples and stories:**

Tell me about a time when...

## **Describe feelings about a situation:**

How did you feel when...

## **Demonstrations:**

Show me / tell me how you ...

## **Think out loud:**

Tell me what you're thinking while you do...

Don't ask what they want.  
Ask questions that will  
help you uncover  
what they need and feel.

# What might you ask?



In small groups

Have a think about which questions you would ask supporters to help us answer our question

**“How can we create an engaging and relevant experience for people who donate to the British Red Cross during an emergency appeal?”**

**BREAKOUT**

**The most powerful word....**

**Why?**

# Video is a wonderful tool

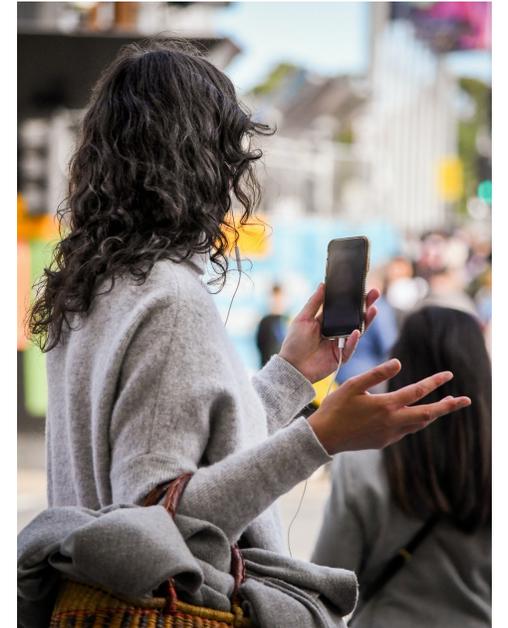
If you can't interview people, but want to hear and see them, video can be a great tool.



Their words  
Brilliant for internal  
engagement  
See and feel  
Getting much more  
accessible



You can't follow up!  
Can be time consuming  
to edit



# Observation

Observation is a great way to understand how people behave



Their world  
Uncovers behaviour  
Less bias  
Unknown unknowns



Time intensive in  
planning and delivery



Observation &  
shadowing



Mystery shop



Diary tasks



User testing

# Using what you learned

# Analyse and synthesise

**Group** post its in topics

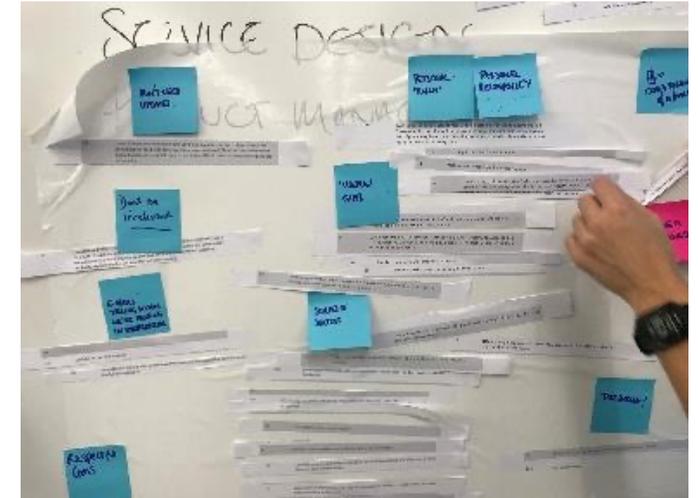
**Look for themes** pain points, common feedback, unexpected links, sentiment, tensions

**Keep asking why**

**Play back what you have seen and heard**, challenge assumptions, share with key stakeholders for input and fresh perspective

**Create hypotheses** and interrogate all your data sources to validate or invalidate

**Go speak to someone** - take a theme, question or hypothesis that has emerged and take it back to a customer



# Making sure insight is used

**VALUES / NEEDS:**

- Authenticity and transparency – "real people, real stories", "softcore"
- Flexibility / "On her terms" – "don't want to be committed"
- A compelling cause – "Something powerful, when I see it, will make me want to do something"

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Universities are fertile ground – passions and people wanting to learn and take action – "safe space"
- Show the relevance of a big charity like RC – "I prefer to support someone smaller, RC already has so much support"
- Use information and "Independent voices" to engage men – "things I see in the media, in documentaries"
- Events and real stories of the work – "not crafted"
- Recognise that I don't want commitment, but will support the right cause

**VALUES / NEEDS (continued):**

- The approach of the "sustainable" – come across as friendly, knowledgeable and transparent
- A "feminist" charity – we think it's important to support
- Charitable expression: understanding and professional
- Generally not a fan of street "fundraising" – "feels uncomfortable"
- I don't like being asked to donate – I would prefer to work them out
- Use many calls from charities asking for more
- Cancelled after 1 month – couldn't afford it

## Case studies

### Supporter overview

*"I hope I am helping to make the world a little bit better, especially for those worse off than me. I believe deeply in equality and worry about the state of the world right now. I trust the Red Cross have good values and that they make a genuine difference in the world though my support of them is quite passive."*

Demographics	Values	Lifestyle	Charity support
A mix of ages and an even split of gender. Mosaic groups A.O & G. Professional and informed.	Charitable with a global outlook and a strong belief in equality. Left leaning. Feminist.	Lead a full life, whether working or retired. Living ethically is very important to them.	Think carefully about who they support and need to trust that it will be spent wisely. Giving is personal.

**Media:** Interested in world news. Typically Guardian, BBC (TV & Radio) but also some international news

**Social Media:** Active sharer of charitable and campaign content

**Charities they support:** Amnesty, Oxfam, Shelter, Water Aid, Greenpeace most popular. Refugees an issue that they worry about

**Charitable activities they will consider:** Giving, donating to a charity shop, volunteering or fundraising (if time)

**The power of kindness**

## Personas

### Experience principles

Authentic communications

Opportunities not asks

Show me the impact

Our values are our USP

Give me the inside scoop

## Experience principles

### "I need to see that there is still some good in the world"



*"I switch on the news and everything is so awful. It makes me despair and feel so hopeless."*

*"I read about that campaign asking for people to go and have a cup of tea with a lonely old person. It is sad that people don't look after each other any more."*

*"All the mail I get from charities is about bad things happening. Is anything even getting better? Seems to be getting worse. Makes me wonder what the point is."*

How can we celebrate the good acts that people take and encourage more?  
How might we show people that there are good people in the world?  
How can we demonstrate impact and that things are getting better?

## Need Statements

# Experience principles

Authentic  
communications

Opportunities  
not asks

Show me the  
impact

Our values are  
our USP

Give me the  
inside scoop

# Top takeaways

**Research is worth the investment.** It will save you £ in the long run

**Know your question.** Know what problem you are seeking to solve

**Use what you have.** Customer service calls, complaints, mystery shopping, past research

**Speak to people.** Seek to understand the 'why'

**Use it!** Present your insight so it is actionable. And take action

**Be open** Be prepared to hear things that you don't like or that will challenge you