



The Good Sex Guide (to insight)

Sex and research don't often make comfortable bedfellows. Yet the problems of bad research are in many ways the same as the problems of bad sex. The sex therapists will tell you that there are three causes of bad sex;

Laziness

Function over pleasure

Marriage

And these are the same symptoms that plague the consumer insight business. Lazy insight is two groups in the south, two in the north, missionary position discussion guide. Functional insight gathering is box fill research, lights off, twice a year (anniversary and birthday). Marriage isn't a problem in itself, it's when the relationship has stopped evolving, is taken for granted that you get no insight, no sex.

So what would the sex therapists recommend to ensure that your insight pillow never cools?

Deviance is perhaps too strong a word, but a bit of spice is sure to liven things up a bit. Good sex doesn't happen by accident, often it needs a nudge and research is full of innovation looking for a night out. Adding in some new approaches has two effects; a new perspective means you're looking at a problem in a new way and discovering things that have previously remained hidden, you are also becoming a *bricoleur*, merging and integrating multiple sources and getting a truer, more rounded picture.

Don't force it; good sex isn't about suddenly going rubber-only or getting Ashley Cole's mobile number. Insights don't come if you try to force them out, they come with ease, almost incidentally. Rarely do you see a big hulking, process driven research system churn out something amazing. It's the smart bit of thinking, the in home video diary, an open ended. This is the stuff that costs two grand and takes a week, not a hundred grand and two quarters.

Threesomes; it's a bit radical but why not introduce a third partner to the bedroom? Research is a big world and there are experts out there; neuroscientists, economists, students, bloggers, authors, journalists, captains of industry, innovators. Non-marketing experts have a way of cutting our world of marketing down to size and in doing so getting us to refreshed insights.