



Making an audience profile

Everyone has a different understanding of your research, and on top of this people speak different languages, have different beliefs, voices and opinions, some may have different barriers and challenges to overcome. To understand your audience- *I mean really understand them*- your communication skills will become so much more powerful.

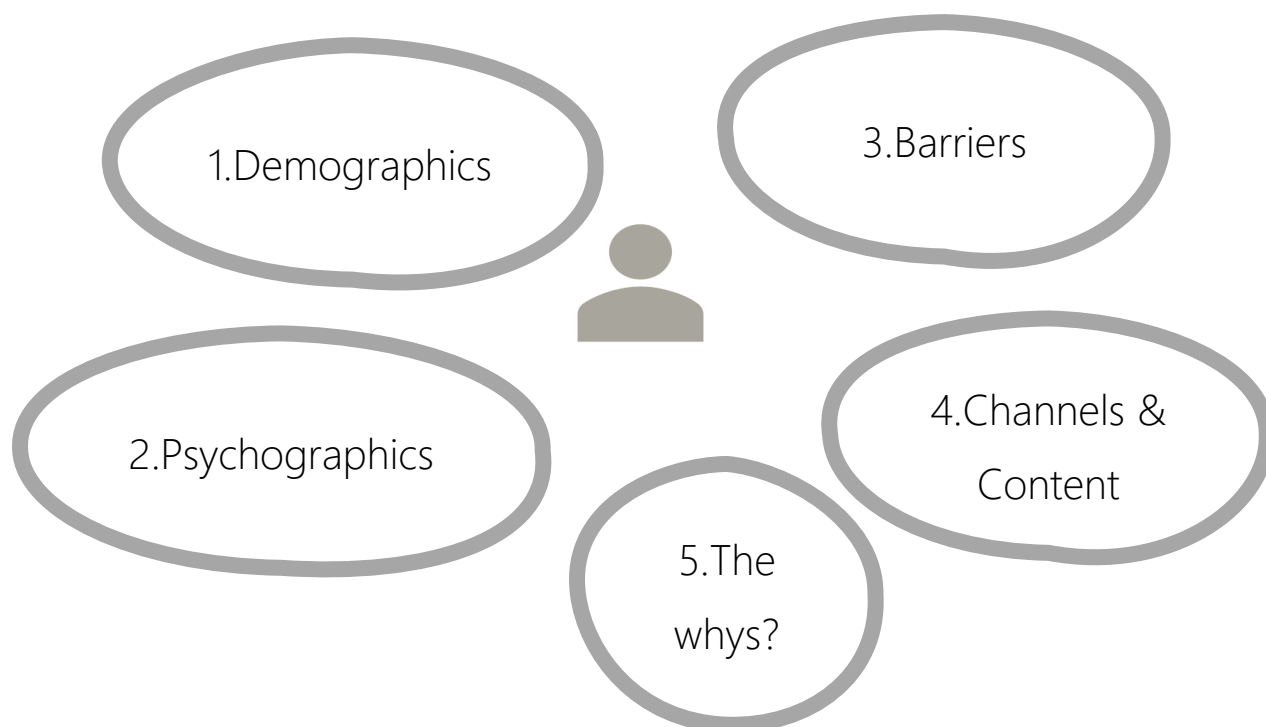
By getting to know your target audience you will be a much better communicator. You can tailor your communications to your audience- making it way more engaging and impactful. How can you get to know your target audience I hear you ask?...Well, by making an audience profile. An audience profile is a way to really put yourself in the shoes of your target audience.

So what does an audience profile look like?

An audience profile

With an audience profile you are essentially coming up with a fictitious character that you model on your target audience.

An audience profile has five main elements:





1. **Demographics:** are characteristics that can be used to describe your target group.

For example, it can include (but is not limited to):

- Age and generation groups
- Sex, gender or sexual orientation
- Nationality
- Race
- Education level
- Occupation
- Household income

Understanding the demographics of your audience will allow you to answer some of the following questions:

- Where does my audience live?
- When do they have leisure time?
- What exposure have they had to my topic of research?
- What might they know/not know about my research?

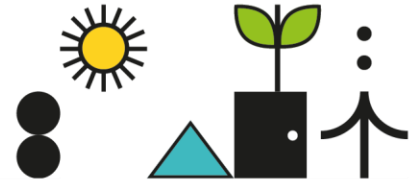
2. **Psychographics:** looks at people's attitudes, aspirations, interests, values, opinions and lifestyles

Understanding the psychographics of your target audience can help you to frame your communications to get the most impact. It can help with what language you might use, what aspects of your communications you might focus on, what imagery you might use and what parts of your research you may emphasise. It really allows you to assess what is on their priority list- and maybe you will be able to make connections to your own research.

3. **Barriers:** this is all about putting yourself in the shoes of your audience and to think if there are any barriers that they may face when communicating with you. It allows you to consider the diversity and needs of your audience and to consider how you can be as inclusive as possible.

The question to ask yourself here is "What barriers might people face when engaging with me?"

Barriers can include: physical, resource availability, geographical, financial, language, support and assistance requirements, accessibility of venue, internet



accessibility, beliefs and cultures, transport, childcare, event timing, awareness of event.

Once you have identified some barriers, the next thing you can consider is “How can I alleviate some of these barriers?”

4. **Channels and content:** this part is all about figuring out, when it comes to communications and seeking information, where your target audience likes to “hang out”.

I.e. what channel do they tend to use for content? For example: social media, newspapers, festivals, talks

The next thing to consider is, what content type do they prefer? For example videos, written articles, face-face interactions

Check out the resource on “Finding out about your audience” for ideas about exploring this. We will also explore channels and content further in the “Platforms and methods” module.

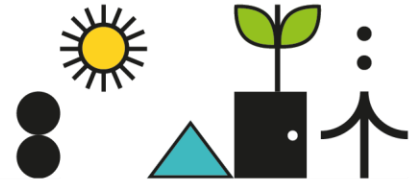
5. **The Whys?:** This is essentially asking yourself the question “Why do they care about what I am saying?”.

You can ask yourself questions such as “What is in it for them?”.

This is where you can give something of value to your target audience- for example something that might help their life/career/family/friends/values/beliefs etc

By bringing your audience profile to life, you can really get a hold on the context of your research story. You can frame your research story to your target audience. It is such a beautiful and impactful tool!

Remember- you cannot and will not know everything about your target audience- and that is ok, but this is a really good place to start!



Finding out about your audience

The next thing you are probably thinking is- this all sounds great but how do I actually gather this information?

Well, more on this in the resource “4.6 Finding out about your audience: what you can do and who can help”.

Example audience profile

Take a look at an example audience profile below. You will see that it is pretty detailed but does not actually include everything you might want to know about your audience- and that is ok!

Hopefully you can already see how much you are starting to get to know your audience, and therefore how you can tailor your research story to them.

