

Food Standards Scotland

'Follow the families'

Discussion Guide for in-home confessional interviews

Version 1

Date: 11th January 2016

Timeframe: 90mins

Introduction to the discussion guide

- This is a discussion guide to help ensure that the flow of the confessional interview covers all of the key objectives of the study
- Please keep in mind this is a *guide* for the moderator to follow not a script to read out

Key objectives this study must answer

- First and foremost this study must allow us to build up a full and thorough picture of what discretionary eating is amongst our sample – notably;
 - extent of the issue;
 - the types of discretionary foods being eaten
 - what is driving this discretionary eating
- However, it was clear from the session at The Union that this study must go further than just behavioral insight
- The Union and FSS already have numerous hypotheses about what could be effective means to foster behavior change in this space, and this discussion guide will ensure that we gain deep insights around the following 6 potential 'ways in';
 1. Extent to which discretionary eating is entwined with rituals and mood/occasion
 2. What is a more effective motivator for change – collective vs. individual action
 3. What role environment plays in discretionary eating
 4. To understand the role which children can play in changing behavior in this space
 5. Extent to which discretionary eating is mindless
 6. To explore which is more motivating – benefits of change vs. consequences of not changing
- At the end of these confessional interviews ICM will have a robust understanding of what discretionary eating is; what is driving it and what could be effective 'ways in' to changing

this undesired behavior

Background to the confessional interviews

- **Pre-Task:** each participant will have been pre-tasked to take photographs of everything eaten and drunk for 1 day on their smartphone/tablet
- **Context:** 8 of the 10 interviews will include both parents of a family unit and will work together and separately over the course of the session

'Way in' exploring

1. Introduction and warm-up (5mins)

Aim: inform, manage expectations, build initial rapport

- Welcome/thanks/introductions
- Outline of why we're here/confidentiality
- Explain the content of the discussion
- No wrong or right answers
- Tell me a little about how you feel about your diet

2. When discretionary eating happens (15 min)

Aim: to build up a total picture of when high-sugar/high-fat discretionary eating happens throughout the day

- Moderator to explain that we want to get a true idea of what you eat – nothing to be ashamed of just looking for honesty
- **Eating on a clock task**
 - o Each participant will get post-it notes and a clock face
 - o Each participant will be given 5 minutes to go back over all of the photos they took of all of the food they ate on their phones and to;
 - Write down all of the meals you ate on yellow post-its
 - Write down all of the other items you ate on pink

'Way in' 1:

Discretionary eating and rituals

post-its

- *Place each on the clock face at the time eaten to build up a strong idea of when they typically eat/drink each*
- *Moderator to probe around whether were aware they ate this much?
Surprise/shock/embarrassment?*
- *Moderator to get each participant to talk us through their high-sugar/high-fat times of eating, focusing on;*
 - *Where they are at the time of eating this*
 - *What the environment is like*
 - *Who they are with at this time*
 - *How did they feel at this time*
- *Moderator to probe around how this changes throughout the year*
 - *What are the differences in summer, spring, autumn*
 - *Are there any periods which are higher/lower consumption*
 - *Why? What is going on?*
 - *Do you agree with your partner? Do you notice any times when eat more/less high-sugar/high-fat items*
- *Moderator probe around how participants measure their health*
 - *Do you keep track of your health in any way? If so, how?*
 - *Size; Weight; Measurements; How you feel; How you look; In comparison with friends/family/celebrities/models/ how you used to look*
 - *Do you keep track of what you eat in any way? If so, how?*
 - *Tracking apps; memory; shopping bills; etc.*
 - *How do you think your weigh/diet compares with the rest of society?*
 - *Moderator to probe around whether it is similar and therefore acceptable/how it would compare with say, their parents when they were growing up*

3. What discretionary eating looks like (15 min)

Way in 1:

Aim: to understand what high-sugar/high-fat items are being regularly eaten in the lived environments our participants exist

Discretionary eating and rituals

Kitchen raiding task:

Way in 3:

Role of environment

- Moderator to ask participants to take us into their kitchen
- Moderator to get the participants to go through their fridges and cupboards taking out all of the items they eat/drink outside of main meals
- Moderator to then get the participants to talk through the high-sugar/high-fat items in their home telling us;
 - When would eat these items (occasions)
 - Who would eat these items (family)
 - How often would eat these items (occasions)
- Moderator to then probe around how participants would describe these items
 - What words would you use to describe these types of foods?
 - What would your friends/family call them?
 - What is the purpose of this food for you and your family?
 - Moderator to probe around *snacking/rewards/escapism/fun/sharing etc.*
 - We have a couple of ideas we would like to get your opinion on...
 - *Discretionary foods...*
 - *creeping calories*
 - *forgotten foods*
 - *empty calories*
 - *guilty pleasures*
- Following this, the moderator would ask participants to think about the following timeframes
 - At work
 - On-the-go
 - Social
 - Family time
 - When alone?
- Moderator to get each participant to write down everything they eat outside of main meals in these locations on post-it

notes and tell us

- When would eat these items (occasions)
- Who would eat these items with (family)

4. Why discretionary eating happens (25 min)

Aim: to understand why families make the choice to eat discretionary foods they consume the most of

- **Categories of discretionary food task**
- Moderator to put on the table images of c.30 types of discretionary foods /drinks
 - o Each couple have to work together and first throw out any they do not eat and add in any that they do eat that aren't there on post-it notes
 - o Mapping the foods into as many types of categories as possible which explain **why** they eat/drink these discretionary items as a family i.e. boredom; love; film night on a Friday; Strictly on a Saturday night
- Moderator to then probe around each of the different categories
 - o *Tell me about when/where you eat/drink [x]?*
 - o *Do you enjoy/not enjoy eating/drinking [x]?*
 - o *How do you feel during/after eating [x]?*
 - o *Do you want to reduce eating/drinking [x]?*
 - o *Do you think you could give up eating/drinking [x]?*

Way in 1:

Discretionary eating and rituals

Way in 3:

Role of environment

Way in 5:

Mindless discretionary eating

5. How can you reduce discretionary eating (20 min)

Aim: to understand what approach participants would think could help them and their family to reduce discretionary eating

- Moderator to probe around appetite to want to reduce discretionary eating and any previous attempts made;
 - o *What extent have you considered cutting down discretionary eating in the past?*
 - o *What caused you to want to reduce the amount of discretionary eating that you do?*

Way in 1:

Discretionary eating and rituals

Way in 2:

Collective vs. Individual action

Way in 3:

- *What did you try to reduce?*
- *How was the experience?*
- *Did you set a goal?*
- Moderator to probe around any other 'big changes' participants have made in their lives
 - *What did you want to change?*
 - *What made you make this change?*
 - *What was your goal?*
 - *How was the experience?*
- Moderator to probe around whether parents have made any big attempt to change anything in their children's lifestyle
 - *What have you tried to change?*
 - *What motivated you to make this change?*
 - *How did you try and make the change? Locations? Occasions?*
 - *Tell me more about how successful the experience was?*
 - *Moderator to specifically ask about reducing/replacing discretionary foods if it doesn't fall out naturally*
- **Task to reduce the discretionary food your partner eats**
- Moderator to explain that each participant has been given the mission of reducing the amount of discretionary food/s their partner eats
- Each partner has 5 minutes to think about;
 - What discretionary food/s and/or drink/s you would focus on reducing and the reason/s why
 - How you would convince/motivate your partner to reduce/stop eating/drinking this type of discretionary food
- The moderator will follow-up with the partner afterwards to understand the extent this approach would resonate and the reason why/why not
- **Task to reduce the discretionary food you as a family eat**
- Moderator to explain that both participants have been given the mission of reducing the amount of discretionary food/s they as a family eat
- Each couple have 5 minutes to think about;
 - What discretionary food/s and/or drink/s you would focus on reducing and the reason/s why
 - How you would convince/motivate your family to

Role of environment

Way in 4:

Role of children to motivate change

Way in 5:

Mindless discretionary eating

Way in 6:

Benefits of change vs. consequences of not

reduce/stop eating/drinking this type of discretionary food

- o For both tasks the moderator will specifically probe around;
 - *Would they change their diet if their children asked them too?*
 - *Explore the role of children in a lot more detail*
 - *Would you feel prepared to without some of these items to your child/children?*
- The moderator will follow-up with the partner afterwards to understand the differences in person vs. family
 - o *Moderator to come away with a strong sense of whether participants would prefer to reduce or replace – what items would be the easy wins – how they would feel if they had to follow this – what the consequences would be (positive/negative)*
- Moderator to probe around what role the retailers have in the choices they make
 - o *Where do you buy your food/drinks from?*
 - o *Do you think [retailer] plays any role in the items you buy?*
 - o *Tell me more about how they play a role -*
 - *Examples of items you feel they push/what they do to influence you/how they could help you make different choices/whether you want the retailer to help you make different choices*

6. Reaction to our early ways in (10 min)

Aim: to gain early insight into appeal of the early approaches identified to hone creative thinking

- Moderator will show each couple the following possible approaches and give a brief explanation of each
- The stimulus needs to be just a headline and one sentence explanation
- ICM have suggested the below but these can be changed
 - o Snacks do count
 - Talking about the true impact of snacks

Way in 1:

Discretionary eating and rituals

Way in 2:

Collective vs. Individual action

Way in 3:

Role of environment

- Drop a snack and drop a stone
 - If you drop a 140 calorie snack/day you could lose a stone without trying too hard
- Consequences (1)
 - Cancer; Diabetes
- Consequences (2)
 - Amputations; Blocked arteries; problems giving birth/having operations; strain on joints
- Showing Health Benefits (1)
 - Having more energy; feeling better; sleeping better; having fewer illnesses
- Showing Health Benefits (2)
 - Weight loss; Glowing skin; Better hair
- Showing Lifestyle Benefits
 - Being more active with children; able to run for and catch the bus;
- Collective Action (1)
 - Family/friends/work colleagues working together to improve
- Collective Action (2)
 - What if everyone in Scotland made changes to diet
- Replace
 - Replace a naughty item with a healthier alternative
- What your parents ate
 - Comparison of your children's diet vs. your parents diet when they were growing up

Way in 4:

Role of children to motivate change

Way in 5:

Mindless discretionary eating

Way in 6:

Benefits of change vs. consequences of not

- Love – Like - Loathe Task

- Moderator to get each couple to put each of the above creative routes into one of 3 piles – like – love or loathe
- Moderator to probe around reason/s why – understanding the aspects that work/don't work and extent to which it would assist them in making changes
- What do you think is the best approach;
 - *Fun/humorous or serious/informative etc.*

- Over to you...

- Do you have any creative ideas about how we could get people like yourself to change the amount of discretionary items they eat/drink?
 - *More creative the better*

7. Wrap up and close

Aim: to pull together all of the key insights and capture some final face-on vox-pops of important insights

- Moderator to summarise the key insights
- Thanks and Close

