

Reading a Report

Marketing

Checking a study before you act on it.

Questions to ask of any study.

Method questions

Who was sampled, and how

What was the response rate

What exactly was asked, verbatim

What was the base for each figure

Who commissioned it

Reporting red flags

Percentages on very small bases

No question wording published

Charts with truncated axes

Correlation described as cause

Only favourable findings shown

A base size under about a hundred should be reported as a count, not a percentage. Percentages imply a precision that is absent.