



## The DO's & DON'Ts of Category Appraisal

### Do:

1. **Discuss your business objectives and previous research findings with the research team.** In addition to helping you understanding the scientific process and data analysis, the research team ultimately seeks to help you make strong recommendations that answer business questions.
2. **Diversify the sensory space by including products that represent a wide variety of sensory characteristics.** This will help you to achieve a holistic understanding of the category and find product gaps and new product opportunities in the market place.
3. **Remember that Drivers of Liking are calculated within the space defined by the products included in the test.** Therefore, it is a good practice to include at least one competitive product that you think may perform better than your product if you are looking for opportunities to improve your product.
4. **Use the same serving protocol for Consumers and Trained Panelists.** Panelists may additionally test products in non-consumer ways (e.g., eating syrup without a waffle).

### Do NOT:

1. **Push the Trained Panel to profile on sensory characteristics that your team believes are important.** The Panel Leader can address your concerns during training, but it is best to not bias the Panel.
2. **Schedule consumer testing and sensory profiling more than a couple of days apart.** The age of the samples should be the same for Consumers and Trained Panelists.
3. **Include too many or too few products.** The ideal number of products to include in a category appraisal is eight to fifteen.
4. **Include samples that are extremely different or that profile on the opposite spectrum from samples selected for category appraisal.** The data extreme characteristics of the sample profile do not allow for good differentiation of other samples and can skew the data to one side.

Thank you for your interest. We welcome all inquiries.  
Please contact Avishan Amanat, Director, at [aamanat@sensoryguidance.com](mailto:aamanat@sensoryguidance.com).