

Writing Assignment #4
PSYC 2202
Thinking Like a Psychologist

Overview

In this assignment, you will develop a creative method for answering a research question. You will summarize your method in a 2-3 paragraph proposal.

Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate an ability to think analytically and creatively

Why Do this Assignment?

- Immediate Benefit: This assignment provides practice at thinking through a research problem
- Long Term Benefit: You probably will not go into a research-based career. However, the type of thinking needed to design a good experiment will help many types of problems in many different career areas.

Specifics

The owners of the on-line store are pleased with your work. They feel like they have (at least) *a clue* when it comes to understanding statistics. They are seeing benefits to their business from collecting and analyzing data.

They assign you to a new project.

The owners have noticed that some items are not selling very well. In fact, customers are not viewing the items. The owners want to know why customers are not viewing the items. Are they not interested in the items? Or do they not know that the items are available from the on-line store? The items are taking up space in the warehouse. Since the space could be used for storing better selling items, the unsold items are costing the company money.

The owners have identified the problem: some items are not being viewed by customers, the items are not selling, the unsold inventory is a cost to the company.

The owners have identified the question they are interested in: Why aren't these items being viewed by customers?

They want to know the answer to that question so they can decide whether to discontinue the items or better promote the items.

Your task is to devise a creative means for determining if the items are not selling because a) customers are not interested in the items, or b) customers do not know that the company sells the items? You can conduct a survey! Think about how you would answer this question using an experimental design. Then propose the experiment to the owners.

You do not have to write a detailed method, just a 2-3 paragraph description of what you are proposing. Use lay language.

- Start by restating the problem and the owners' question
- Identify what and how you plan to manipulate, measure and control
 - Identify how long you would conduct the experiment
 - Is it a dependent or independent design?
- Explain what evidence would support the hypothesis that people are not interested in the items?
 - What recommendations would you make?
- Explain what evidence would support the hypothesis that people are unaware of the items?
 - What recommendations would you make?