

TC - Mww - Julia episode

Learn About

03:15 - Psychology of lies.

14:00 - Differentiate data from analysis.

18:34 - People lie. Proof doesn't.

22:00 - Science behind consumer research.

Transcript

Vani 01 : 50

What I know you feel most passionately about, which is consumer research. You are a consumer research professional, a very, very thorough professional, which I found out. My great delight. And so, you say this many times over and over again and very unabashedly so that all consumers lie or that all people lie. It was a big headline of your presentation. Talk to us a little about that. Why do you feel or why do you believe that all people lie, is that actually true?

Julia Izmalkova 02:28

Well, I think the most passionate about is psychology, not actually consumer research because I'm very passionate about making psychology practical because from my perspective I believe that nothing is more practical than understanding the human mind and human behavior. And I'm happy that I found a way how I can connect what I love so much into practical things because business to me is very practical and at the end of the day, nobody's reading psychology or doing research in business just because it's pure interest. It needs to be ROI. It needs to have Return On Investment, it has to be money. And I really like it because I see how it works and that gives me satisfaction. So when it comes to that, everybody lies about human beings from a psychological perspective. As humans, we are very gentle. Our construction, emotional construction is very gentle. We would never be able to survive this world, if not lies. That's why very often when we complete it, Americans are so American. You ask how they are and it's like, I'm fine. I'm this. It's like, you can say it's a lie, but it's also like something that you cannot in Poland is the opposite and it's way more difficult in Poland. You ask them and they'll suddenly tell you all the life story from a negative perspective and they start complaining and suddenly

feel like a mountain is crashing on you. And it's just very heavy very often when you like to go around with people because everybody has a bad life. And so from this perspective, I wanna have a lie. I'm like, because people when you ask how are you, it's already a lie because most of the time we're not really interested. It's a kind impression. So then you either have to tell the truth, which is like nobody interested or you just have to lie because it's a convention.

Vani 04:23

I'm fine, I'm good. I'm not really good, but I don't wanna tell you my life story.

Julia Izmalkova 04:30

I don't wanna hear your life story. When I'm asking what you meant before I really wanna know how you are and you know that I wanna know so we can honestly talk about it. With this, you need a special connection and most of the time you do not have a special connection. We're social beings, so we need to interact and we need somehow stay together without insulting each other and without killing each other. So that's why life is the social glue that keeps us together as a society whereas I said also in my presentation in relationship as a marriage, you don't always tell the truth. When I say to my husband, after giving birth, did I put on weight? Like I do not expect him to tell me the truth. This is the last thing that I need and he absolutely knows about this. And the same when he's asking me like, do you think I put on weight when we ate so much for your pregnancy, it's like, absolutely not like you look stunning, like always. And well, and he can say that it is either a lie or which is much better, that we do see each other this way in a relationship, then it's the truth. But when it comes to business, you cannot have convention because this is not how it works. You need to know facts because you need to make business decisions. So that's why, in business, you don't wanna be nice. You need to know the truth. And this is what I do in my work, no matter if it's, you know, research or consulting or when I push Ferguson, you know, into like briefs when he's doing it, he needs to know facts. He needs to know how people really think and he needs to know how people really, you know, act. Because when I ask did I put on weight, which is very sensitive, usually the subject for females. Also, the most interesting question is why do I need to hear the lie? Why do I have so much resistance to hear the truth? Why do I actually even need this information? I could ask, well, do you think I'm still as smart as I was before? Do you think I'm as funny as I used to be? But I do not ask that. So when you research, it's very important that not only do you catch somebody online, but to understand why exactly he's using this line, but not that one. Why does he need this glue to feel good and how then brands can use it or not use it in order to get

to people. So this is why it's so important to acknowledge the fact that life is not only bad intentions, it's just the way we define it. It's something that is not true with reality for whatever reason.

Vani 07:20

What have you found about the reasons that men lie versus women lie? Do you find that it's more difficult to get men talking versus the women talking? And do you see that there is a difference in cultures? Because I know you've done research across so many different countries. So I'd like you to pick an example of how Americans respond to versus how the Polish respond but we'd love to hear from you on exactly that, which is a) how do women and men lie differently and differently across cultures.

Julia Izmalkova 07:50

Well, why do men, women lie differently? We already know it's from science, so this is something that we just use as a preparation process for researchers. Women have to lie usually, the main reason for women to lie is to protect. They usually protect themselves and usually protect somebody else. They just don't wanna insult somebody. They don't want anybody to feel bad. That's why women like orgasm, for example, because they just don't want somebody to feel bad. Like this is something that men would never understand because from their perspective, like, what's the point? It's like, why would I like something that I did not have? They're really like physically not able to understand why women would do that, and because they're not able to understand that, that's why they always believe in their lies. And this is why it's important to understand the human mind so you actually can have the truth for yourself because if you don't believe and don't understand why somebody lies, you can't discover this. So they build their value by how much pleasure and happiness they give to somebody else. So this is why they would lie and they don't think it's anything like bad very often. And they say women would lie about, you know, doing shopping, that it was on sale, on something because in their head they have to protect the budget and they don't like when they have the image of a person who just does not protect the family budget. So that's why even so very often, especially in a good marriage, men just do not give a shit. If you buy dishes on sale, off sale, like they don't care, but they don't even ask you. But a woman has to lie just because she thinks he cares. So she's saying, well, I put it on sale. It's like, okay. And that was like 70% sales, like it doesn't matter to him. And it was like a great example of the company who's selling shoes and in the end she's asking, do you wanna be attached to a receipt that is 50% off for your husband? And then I thought it's a great thing. Yeah. It's a simple thing that comes from

understanding. The woman has this inherent need to lie on the subject that men sometimes don't even care about. Some men care, of course, in some marriages, but the masses do not. So, this is why women lie and they really have to do it from this perspective, men very often lie to build the ego, to build their position, to build their power and that is crucial to understand this relationship because this is what women very often do not understand. They say, well, if you have problems, why don't you talk about this? Why don't you talk with me about this? If you don't wanna talk with me, fine. Why don't talk with your friend, with the therapist, with anybody. But for men talking about his failures like that he was fired, that he did not get a job that he lost on the court. It means he has to admit that he's weak. Admitting the man is weak, hurting his ego, and it's again, not good, not bad. It's just a fact. And for a man who has a very sensitive ego, this is something so painful that he also needs to protect it. So that's why he built a wall against this ego. So he feels safe. That's why there's no point in pushing a man to talk when it's very rare, even with the friends that man openly says, well, I have a problem with my boss. My boss does not treat me nicely. He just humiliates me from, he's just saying he's such an asshole. He does not see this, he does not see that because they need to build the ego, so they don't feel weak and that is why it's a very big difference. So that's why, when we do research, we always have to check what actually, like, whatever they tell the truth about what kind of car they really buy or what kind of engine they really have. Because again, from my perspective, I don't even know anything about cars. So I don't ever judge men based on the cars, because for me, cars exist based on color and that's it. So it's black, white, whatever. I dunno. So when this starts saying that is the engine of this and this and that, it's like great. But then when you do research with a man, then somebody else says like, well, does not really have that engine or like, in this car you don't even have that big engine. So what you're like, you can see that they have this need to boost some things to make it bigger and that is like always explaining to my clients, it's a little bit like this. Whatever a woman's doing, she needs to make it smaller, like about her weight, about her age, about whatever, her feet, even if it's smaller. That's why she is constantly walking in small shoes and whatever man is doing, he needs to have the opposite. He needs to be big. Everything. Like he's taller, he earns more money, he has bigger car, has more lovers, had more sex, get on more holidays, he had more rewards. So knowing this, you know how to judge when people are talking. So you need to actually compare it to reality because we know that women are a little bit too small, men a little bit too big.

Vani 13:53

Like I as a client, have always or not always, that would be incorrect, but many times look at research very skeptically.

Julia Izmalkova 14:03

And you should look very skeptically. As like we should do it. Have you ever had an operation in your life?

Vani 14:11

Yes.

Julia Izmalkova 14:13

Do you think the operation that you had any doctor would do with the same result as you had? Would you trust any doctor?

Vani 14:20

No, no way.

Julia Izmalkova 14:22

And in the same way, we should be treated as researchers just because we are researchers, we're not the same. I would never trust on, you know, an operation on my baby or myself, a doctor who does not have experience, who I do not talk to and don't know his methodology, his way of thinking, how he's gonna cure us. The same with the researcher. Just because we are researchers, just because we use the same technology, just because we use focus groups, just because we use ethnography, we're not the same. And it's very important because a slogan said that medium is a message and research is the message. Research is also a medium. It's already proven in ethnography and anthropologies that the fact that research is in the field in a research is also the influence of what kind of how he collects this data. So if you don't choose a researcher that is trained to differentiate data from analysis, because it's two different steps, then you don't get good research. If you don't get researchers to understand what strategy means and then research is not the end result. It's the beginning for the client. So he's not interested in transcription because this is monkey can do, you know, every stupid can learn how to ask questions like you don't need that. So if you don't actually understand what clients need, what is the strategy that clients need to earn money, that clients cannot just do whatever consumer wants, because at the end of the day, it's like, you know, it's money and we need to have a product to earn money. So it has to balance what somebody needs and what we can do. So if you have a researcher who does not have enough knowledge in the marketing and the client side, that is not probably the best researcher. If he does

not have methodology, when he can differentiate gathering data from analyzing data, he's probably not a very good researcher. If you don't have a researcher who has, you know, somebody who has, like you said, very fancy methodology and it's all great, but at the end of the day, you need to know what was said and what was interpretation. On the level of basic researchers, so the one who is going on the field and the right basic report that is not going to the client, even on this level, we have methodology of four colors that he has differentiate what he saw and what he heard from quote of the person from writing the story from what is his recommendation or interpretation, because this is the last thing, client has said, well, I don't agree with this. And we say, okay, we can discuss this, but with rest, he cannot discuss because this is the fact and why is it so important to put facts and interpretation? If you don't put facts, if you don't agree, you don't know the basics. You don't know how to discuss. It's like when you go to the doctor every day, you cannot say, well, this other doctor said that my backbone is not well and I really need this operation to straighten it up and put nails there. Can you please show me a photo of your spine? You need to trust me. It's just not good. Just open it up and do it, said, no. I need to see the basics. That's why as far as methodology you need to deliver the basics. You need to see what is semantics, what is simple. You need to have proof for the client. Why did you do this interpretation? But you also need to do interpretation because the client does not wanna then order research and then spend another month thinking what to do about this. He needs to have the information like we always say that I do research and on my analysis or even consultation, whatever, do like a strategist to a strategist, so I need to deliver him full data so he can just choose, he can decide because that is what is gonna be easy for him to decide what to do.

Julia Izmalkova 18:34

Everybody lies, also researchers, so you need to know if he's gonna deliver what he wants. If you have, if you are from the same tribe, if he thinks the same way as you think, if he understands you clearly, if he understands what he wants, if he just wants you to transcribe the person, that is not research. People do not often know, and this is your job as a researcher to dig into this and to get to know, not just based on declaration, because we can say anything. It's just words, anything. And any client who can do it for themselves is gonna be cheaper just to go and ask the reason why he hires. So somebody can dig deeper.

Vani 19:15

Very nice. So you said something very interesting, even in what you explained. You said it's important to have the observation. Like you said, here I'm showing

you a picture of my backbone, and then you decide why you need this sort of surgery. So you're saying one must have the observation and then one must have. Here is why I'm telling you what I'm telling you. So you're presenting both and then, you know, people lie, but proof doesn't, which means that we are actually saying we want not just the interpretation, we also want the proof. One of the things that I've found when I speak with clients is that they feel, you know what we talk to our consumers all the time, we are looking at consumer reviews all the time. There's nothing about our consumers we don't already know. You know, why do you need to do this research? We've been in business for so long or, you know, I was working with a wealth investment platform and they were looking to hire wealth advisors and so they were actually interviewing almost 20 to 30 wealth advisors every day and yet trying to figure out what's the right profile of wealth advisors that we'd like onboard. And they actually agreed doing a consumer research to figure out what goes on inside the minds of wealth advisors and why would somebody want to join us. At the end of the research, they admitted that we learned so much. So many new things that we never did realize despite actually sitting in front of them and talking to them day in and day out because they're doing interviews every day. So one of my big questions to you, you as a researcher, is do you find your clients actually telling you. But we've spoken to a lot of our consumers, you know, we've been in business for so long, we know this category really well. We know how people buy baby food or we know how women buy cosmetics, what works, what doesn't work. We don't really need research to figure this out, you know, we just need to get to the strategy very well.

Julia Izmalkova 21:25

I have it all the time and this is my one reason, like why the research is cut off during Covid because they think they have so much research that just uses what we have because we know everything. And you know, I always respond to this. If you know everything, how come you're not the king of the jungle? How come you are not the best at what you do? If you know it so well? I don't see it on your market shares. And even if you are the leader, for me, the leader is somebody who has 90%, then you can say, well, I know everything but most of the time this is not what is happening and people say in a very not smart way because I understand saving. I also believe that we should save money because at the end of the day, you know companies want to earn money, I understand that. But we need to do it in a very smart way and to know where to say where not to say. We train people how to talk. I was trained in interviews for five years doing my psychology and then I have so many classes about interviewing and diagnosis. So I'm trained, diagnosed, so I can draw conclusions about people's mental health, which is very difficult. So I was trained how to talk to get subtle hints, so I can move my hypothesis forward and clients do not train every time

they think they're good in this and every time we do workshops, because now, I do mainly workshops and the basic exercise about listening and asking question and they fail and I have to tell you, 90% of the time after strategic workshops, 90% of them, I always follow up with the one day workshops about listening and asking questions. Because it's a competence. You need to be trained on how to do well. Every time I do a three day workshop and we have an exercise where I actually get people to talk to and then draw conclusions and then they have to present it in front of me with a conclusion on what to do. It's always the biggest failure, always and I don't blame them because I would never be able to do a good market plan because I'm not qualified to do this. It's not my job. I don't have the competence to do this. So I don't think they should have the competence to do this. But if they do research, if they ask questions, if they wanna draw a conclusion, they have to have this competence. So either they have to train, this is another thing they would do for the last two years very often we train people inside the company. To create the inner research department, so at least if you decided to do it, train them with the best possible people that they actually trained. Just because you know how to speak does not mean you know how to ask questions, just because your peers do not know you know how to listen. Just because your brain does not know you can draw conclusions. It has to, right? So it very, very, very often happens, what are you saying? And it's very difficult sometimes to get through this, and you need to actually prove them and to show that it's something different. You need to have fresh eyes very often and you need somebody who sees from a different perspective. You need that to feel attached to us. You're training with their clients. It's fair and sometimes it's very simple how we start with the clients. For example, they need to be near the shelf for the product and competition and just observe and that's it, and draw observation and listening. Nothing more. And you know, they can't handle this when somebody's doing this like, why are you choosing this? No, it's not the best. This is the best. I like them and I understand them. If you work on the packaging for like the last three months, you feel pain because it has less sugar. Did you read this? It does not have less sugar. This is what it says, like why did not compare? So they are almost very often yelling at these poor people, you know, and this is how it works. I understand that because I probably would yell too, if that would be my thing like I'm very passionate about what I do, so I understand that they're passionate. It's sleepless nights and so I understand that, but that's the reason why we're not born as humans to know and to do everything by ourselves. You have people who do different jobs, so you can do your job the best possible way. I'm not the best CEO. I don't know how to earn millions on running corporations, but somebody is, and in order for him to do his job the best you need to hire me so I can deliver him everything he needs so he can earn this millions.