

Self-Reflection

1. PROCESS

1.2 Define the topic

When I started to think about my dissertation topic, I didn't know where to look or what to look for, so I decided to make lists. They were composed with what I like and dislike:

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AREA OF BUSINESS	Tourism, Travel, B2C, Music	Sport, Fashion, Medical, Finance, Bank, B2B, Law, Technology, Art
AREA OF MARKETING	Communication, Events, Advertising, PR, Marketing Sensorial	Operational Marketing, E-marketing, Management
FURTUR AREA OF WORK	Events, Advertising, Communication	Internal Communication, Marketing, E-marketing, Community Manager

As a result, I found that I was more attracted by communication than marketing. Yet, as I'm studying Msc Marketing, my dissertation topic needed to be marketing oriented. So, I decided to choose advertising since it belongs to the "P" of promotion, and because the "4P's" is an essential marketing theory. Yet, I had to be more precise, so I selected a communication channel: hoarding. It's visual and popular for big companies.

Then, I had to link "advertising" with an area of interest that will remain important to me, which is lasting and not trendy. So, I checked the "hobbies section" of my CV. I realized with the timeline that finally the most important thing to me and the thing I always worked for was: travel. I worked hard to get in Dublin Business School because I wanted to live abroad. I took my student jobs to finance my trips in foreign countries. But, I was wondering: why I like travelling? I enjoy meeting new people, tasting different food, listening different music, discovering others habits and way of life. In the end of the day, I like discovering different cultures and trying to understand and to adapt to them. So, I decided to include the "cultural" element in my dissertation.

Besides, I had to choose a geographical area. First, I thought about compared French and Irish advertising. But, as its two Europeans cultures, they are close even though there are some differences. Second, I thought about compared European and Asian advertising, but it was too

broad. Finally, I decided to focus on France and China. France is my native country, so I know and understand the culture, and China is an important market in the business world.

1.2 Find information

I had to be more specific about my topic. I didn't want to precise the geographical area by choosing cities for example, because I was afraid about not finding information. So, I decided to select a communication place: public transport area (bus shelters, subway, tramway and train stations).

Plus, I had to choose a business market. I started to search for books, articles and previous research on French brands advertising in China. I discovered that French brands were famous in China for fashion, luxury and alcohol. I didn't want to choose a market which will not take into account the Chinese culture. In fact, most of these industries use the "French benefit" for their advertising, so it wouldn't fit with my topic. Then, I looked for the "Top 20" power brands in China, and found that "L'Oréal" was at the 15th rank. I looked for more information about French cosmetics in China, and I found a lot of relevant documents. So, I decided to focus my dissertation topic on French cosmetic brands.

2. USE OF SOURCES

2.2 Identify Resources

I didn't find academic information about the communication place (public transport area). In fact, all articles that I had found weren't considered as academic ones, so I wasn't able to use them as resources for my dissertation. Consequently, I decided to remove the communication place variable since it wasn't really relevant for my topic and too precise for finding data.

2.2 Evaluate Resources

I learned that all the information I was supposed to find for my topic had to be academic in order to be included as a reference for my dissertation. Also, I had to move outside my discipline in

marketing to find sufficient sources. In fact, I had to look for economical, political, sociological and psychological information about China to introduce my literature review.

3. DISSERTATION FORMULATION

3.1 Support Dissertation

Articles allowed me to find broad information on my subject. Books helped me to find theory and framework for my methodology. Academic articles provided precise information for my literature review. Web site brought recent figures to justify my subject. Survey helped me to provide statistic to support findings.

3.2 Understand Findings

The survey allowed me to collect data and analyse it. I was able to discovered findings. These findings were different from the literature since I surveyed French respondents and my literature mainly focused on Chinese consumers. This permitted to compare the two views. I expected much more contrast between my literature review and data analysis. In fact, I though they will be huge disparities between Chinese consumers and French respondents. Actually, French cosmetics brand are appealing for both type of consumers.

4. OWN LEARNING

4.1 Learning Outcome

I employed the learning style “diverger” (Kolb, 1981). Indeed, I’m a “feel and watch” person, who liked having concrete experience and then have a reflective observation on this experience. I can definitely say that I’m knowledgeable about China and its culture now. Also, I’m aware of advertising strategies. Moreover, I’m feeling confident about managing a survey again. I think I have sharpened my international advertising skills in general. Since I’ve started to work on my dissertation, I have noticed evolution in my work attitudes. In fact, I think I’ve become demanding regarding my work thanks to the fact that I was always rework and trying to improve my dissertation all the time.

As a French student, the main barriers to change that I've experienced and that I had to overcome were those regarding the learning and working techniques. In fact, during 5 years of studies in French business schools, I was told to think by myself and "outside the box" to produce an assignment. Here, in an Irish business school, I've been told that no one cares about what I think, and that I have to stick to academic articles and to what researchers had said to build my assignments. I was surprised by this new working technique that I had to assimilate, but most of all, I was surprised by my own adaptability to this technique that shake up everything that I learned.

4.2 Learning Improvement

I think I still need to learn to manage my time better and to improve my work organisation in order to be able to manage more easily mishap that happened in every type of work. If I had another chance to write my dissertation, I think I would focus less on the literature, and more on the methodology and the data collection to be able to provide more accurate results.

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