



DESCRIPTIVE PANEL LEADERSHIP (Introductory level) 2-day course



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Course No 4 in a series of courses, designed to meet your continued professional development requirements. During this 2-day course you will learn about the basic principles of descriptive analysis and acquire the skills and tools to recruit, screen and use a descriptive sensory analysis panel. This course should be attended by those within your organization who are embarking on the challenging role of becoming a sensory descriptive panel leader and have the ultimate responsibility of recruiting, training and using a descriptive sensory panel. There are no prerequisites for this course other than a passion to become a descriptive panel leader.

Part 1: General introduction to sensory science

A brief overview of sensory analysis including definitions and applications will be given. Sensory analysis answers questions in three main areas: Preference/hedonics, discrimination and description. A broad outline and explanation of each area will be given, and the kind of panel required for each will be discussed.

Part 2: Overview of the practical considerations in sensory analysis explained

The physical environment for sensory testing must work to minimize bias, enhance assessors' sensitivity and eliminate variables unconnected with the products being analysed. Important considerations such as testing location, sensory laboratory design and general physical environment etc. will be discussed.


When sensory tests are conducted, the sensory analyst is looking for some treatment effect - such as the effect of an ingredient or formulation change, or a change in packaging materials or shelf life. It is the responsibility of the sensory analyst to ensure that no extraneous variables are introduced so that the real treatment variables are seen clearly. We will show you how this can be done by careful control of the handling, the preparation and the presentation of samples.

Part 3: Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis as a sensory technique will be explained. Its aim is 2-fold; firstly, to identify all the attributes in a sample that can be perceived, and secondly, to measure them on a scale. A comprehensive picture of the overall sensory properties of a sample is thus obtained, the information from which can then be used by food manufacturers and researchers in a number of different ways which will be outlined and discussed

A brief explanation of the main categories of descriptive techniques such as Flavour Profile® (FP), Texture Profile® (TP) Free-Choice Profiling, Quantitative Descriptive Analysis® (QDA), Hybrid Descriptive Sensory Profile methods and Rapid Sensory Profile methods will be given.

For further information please email info@srlresearch.com



Part 4: Descriptive analysis in practice

Descriptive sensory profile panel recruitment and screening will be discussed in detail under the following headings;

- Advantages and disadvantages of internal vs external assessors
- What makes a good assessor?
- Identification of suitable personality and attitude factors when recruiting assessors
- Importance of testing sensory acuity.
- Selection and application of panel screening tests, e.g. those aimed at determining sensory acuity, those aimed at determining impairment, those aimed at evaluating assessor's potential to describe and communicate
- Interpretation of the results of the screening tests
- Documentation review

Part 5: Basic training for the descriptive sensory profile panel

- The level and type of training appropriate for assessors to undertake descriptive profiling will be discussed.
- You will start to formulate a training program to suit the final selection of your specific profiling panel.

Part 6: Sample Evaluation

Upon completion of training, the next task for the descriptive panel will be to evaluate a full set of test samples. The protocol for setting up a full descriptive analysis project from initial lexicon development, to sample training, monitoring/feedback, final product assessment and data output will be outlined.

The basics statistics required for sensory analysis will be explained