

MKTG202 EXAM STUDY –

SECTION 1: Research Methods

PROBLEM DEFINITION

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The Process of Defining the Problem

- *Problem Definition: The crucial first stage in the research process – determining the problem to be solved and the objectives of the research*
- *Process of defining the problem:*
 - 1. Ascertain the decision-maker's objectives
 - 2. Understand the background of the problem
 - 3. Isolate and identify the problem, not the symptoms
 - 4. Determining the unit of analysis
 - 5. Determine the relevant variables
 - 6. State the research questions (hypotheses) and research objectives

The Process of Defining the Problem

- *1. Ascertain the decision-maker's objectives*
 - Research investigators must satisfy the *decision-maker's objectives: managerial goals expressed in measurable goals*
 - Technique for researches to get clear answer of what the marketing manager's objectives = present manager with each possible solution to a problem / ask whether he or she would follow that course of action
 - *Iceberg principle: the idea that the dangerous part of many marketing problems is neither visible to nor understood by marketing managers → omission of important information or faulty assumption about the situation can be extremely costly*
- *2. Understand the Background of the Problem*
 - Vital
 - When information about what has happened is inadequate / managers have trouble identifying the problem, *a situation analysis: a preliminary investigation or informal gathering of background information to familiarizes researchers or managers with the decision area*
 - Gaining awareness of marketplace conditions and an appreciation of the situation often requires exploratory research
- *3. Isolate and Identify the Problem, Not The Symptoms*
 - Anticipating influences / dimensions of a problem = impossible task
 - Management job to isolate and identify the most likely causes

