

In partnership with



THE F.A.I.R. METHODOLOGY

- THE F.A.I.R. TEAM

THE
F.A.I.R.
PROJECT

8one

PREFACE

The F.A.I.R. Methodology is a four-step process which can help an individual arrive at a conclusion which is both fair and benefits all and not just a few. The steps of this Methodology include:

Step 1: Fact-find and Familiarise ('F')

Step 2: Advocate for the Alternate Viewpoints ('A')

Step 3: Introspection and Interrogation ('I')

Step 4: Reason and Rationalise ('R')

Fact-find and Familiarise is a process of researching, collating, organising, and thereafter analysing data to ensure that adequate amounts of facts have been found to form an initial position.

Advocate for the Alternate Viewpoints includes identifying all the relevant stakeholders, understanding their arguments and perspectives, and thereafter advocating for their viewpoints to compare it with one's own initial position.

Introspection and Interrogation is the process of validating and re-validating the information gathered through , 'F' and , 'A'. It involves self-criticism, accepting that one could be wrong, and acknowledging the existence of multiple perspectives to ensure an outcome that is fair.

Reason and Rationalise ensures that the final conclusion is a fair conclusion which is based on factual evidence, alternative considerations, rigorous introspection, logical actualisation, and effective communication.

This document is a compilation of the methods, processes, tools, key considerations, and limitations for each step of The F.A.I.R. Methodology.

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01

**F:
FACT-FIND AND
FAMILIARISE**

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Step 1 of the methodology is aimed at gathering data using different tools to ensure an informed decision. While this is a foundation step, it is important to remember that 'F' is a continuing process that remains relevant through all the other steps as well.

Effective fact-finding must ensure that information is collected for both the supporting, as well as contrary positions, to develop a holistic insight into the different aspects of a topic.

What?

The first step towards fair decision-making is aimed at familiarising oneself with a given theme, premise, problem statement, situation, or an ideology, by undertaking research. This research should be aimed at discovering, examining, analysing, and organising available information, without any bias.

Why?

This step allows one to learn and unlearn any assumptions, biases, or preconceived notions. It is important to remember that 'F' is not divorced from context and should be conducted taking into consideration the cultural, social, economic, and historical factors.

Objectives for fact-finding can include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Fundamental research:** This is conducted for the purpose of gathering knowledge and answering questions of 'what', 'why' and 'how', amongst others. The objective of this research is to expand on one's own boundaries of knowledge and to familiarise oneself with the subject matter.
- 2. Applied research:** This is conducted with the purpose of finding solutions to a specific problem. It includes gathering existing data, analysing it, and thereafter developing a methodical way of addressing the problem.
- 3. Increasing knowledge:** This is conducted with purpose of adding to existing knowledge on those areas that have not been already explored.
- 4. Theory testing:** This is conducted with the purpose of testing the reliability and validity of existing theories and their application. The objective is to understand the applicability of existing knowledge on real-life situations and examples.

1.2. METHODS FOR FACT-FIND AND FAMILIARISE

While fact-finding is a method of research in itself, there are different methods that can be used to ensure a thorough preliminary research. The chosen dataset may already exist, or one may collect their own data.

The methods of research should depend on the premise being researched, as well as the existing information. One may use and explore more than just one method to undertake research.

The list given below provides a brief understanding of some methods and

methodologies. The list is only indicative, and not exhaustive:

- 1. Secondary research:** Secondary research is information gathered from pre-existing research studies. In this type of research, an individual depends on already available data to inquire into the premise.
- 2. Primary research:** Primary research is information gathered first hand, by self-conducted methods of research. In this type of research, an individual is directly involved in adding to existing data through different tools.

3. Quantitative research: Quantitative research involves a measure of values or counts and is mostly expressed in numbers. In other words, this type of research is about the numeric values of variables.

4. Qualitative research: This type of research can be understood as textual research or non-numerical research. It helps gather an in-depth understanding of individual experiences, thoughts, opinions, and trends. The data collection can range from structured to semi-structured to completely unstructured techniques.

5. Descriptive research: Descriptive research describes the subject matter on which the research is being performed. Some types of descriptive methodologies include, but are not limited to, surveys, historical literature,

content analysis, ethnographic, narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, and case studies, amongst others.

6. Associative research: Associative research is geared towards finding information that helps one form an association between two subjects. Some types of associative methodologies include, but are not limited to, correlational (assessing the statistical relationship between two variables) and causal-comparative (assessing the statistical dependence of variables on each other), amongst others.

7. Intervention research: Intervention research examines the effect of an intervention. Some types of intervention research designs include, but are not limited to, experimental, quasi-experimental, and action-research, amongst others.

1.3. TOOLS FOR FACT-FIND AND FAMILIARISE:

While there is no one tool for fact-finding, the following are some reliable sources that one can use to conduct fact-finding:

1. News articles: News articles are a good source for fact-finding. However, it is important to read beyond the headline, assess the source, analyse the publication's other content for bias, check the date and time, and the author of the article. It is also important to validate the information and narrative from other sources.

2. Government documents and websites (.gov):** Government records and documents are usually authoritative and credible sources of information. The information here can include data collected by the government and its bodies, as well as laws and policies passed by the government.

Most government records and reports can be found online on their respective websites. The URL for government websites end with '.gov'.

3. University websites (.edu): University websites often give access to resources and reading materials produced by students and

academics at the university. This information can range across subject matters and represents multiple perspectives.

4. Journal articles: Journal articles are usually academic and include detailed research on the subject matter. These articles also provide reference lists which are useful for verifying information, as well as for future direction.

5. Social media: Various social media platforms including, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, have seen a rise in the sharing of information and opinions, usually regarding on-ground issues. Due to the nature of social media, it is important to be cautious of collecting relevant information. If you see and read something on social media, always check other sources to validate whether that information is true or false.

6. Surveys: A survey is a set of questions aimed at a specific group of people to gather data on identified subject matters. The objective of a survey is to be able to understand and analyse the responses of a target audience.

7. Interviews and conversations: Interviews

are primarily used in qualitative research and involves more personalised discussions aimed at understanding the interviewee's behaviours, perspectives, and experiences, amongst others.

8. Investigation: Investigation is a tool of fact-finding that is useful in attempts to procure underlying information, which is not easily available, to provide a more comprehensive picture of one's research.

9. Historical archives: Historical archives are

useful for context. They allow for understanding the history, pre-existing debates and contexts of a given premise, thereby adding to one's understanding of the premise

10. Websites: Websites are a useful tool for data collection and can be evaluated by their URL. For instance, URLs such as '.edu' and '.gov.**' are usually 'factual' websites which can provide relevant and credible information. The credibility of a website can also be indicated by checking if the website is updated regularly.

1.4. PROCESS FOR FACT-FIND AND FAMILIARISE

Based on one's problem statement, and the objective of research, the fact-finding process can vary case-by-case, as well as from individual to individual. Indicative steps for fact-finding are provided below.

1. Identify a problem statement: A problem statement is a succinct description of the subject matter. It includes identifying the different areas of the problem statement, as well as setting out the desired outcome of the research. The problem statement, as well as the objective, should be flexible and open to updates as more information comes to light.

2. Literature review: Good research can be ensured by reviewing existing literature and understanding prevailing ideas and theories. The aim of any literature review should be to gather a holistic insight to provide a foundation to the given premise.

3. Narrow down the problem statement: The initial problem statement is usually a broad category around which the study is structured. After reviewing the current literature and developing an understanding, one should try to narrow down this statement into different parts or themes to better structure research. For instance, 'Well-being' is a broad category under which you can choose to work on a

number of different themes, such as, mental illnesses, mental health, or physical illnesses, etc.

4. Develop an instrumentation plan: An instrumentation plan refers to the tools that one would use to conduct their research. For example, the use of surveys, secondary research, interviews, etc. It includes answering the 'what, why, how, when, where and who' of research.

5. Data collection: This step includes gathering comparative, consistent, and reliable data that is geared towards the problem statement. It is important to remember that data collection is a continuous process which does not necessarily stop at any particular step.

6. Data organisation: Data organisation is the process of arranging, cleaning, transforming, and shaping the data in order to assemble relevant information for fairer decision-making. It is important to maintain data in an organised manner to ensure its utility in the future as well.

7. Data analysis: Data analysis includes analysing and critically engaging with the data by forming informed opinions. This step is crucial for interpreting data and applying it in the context of the research question.

8. Data storage: It is important to store and preserve data in an organised manner to ensure

easier access to information as and when required. Properly structured and annotated data can be ensured by following steps such as structuring the names of folders in a more organised way when storing resources, using standard file formats, and securing your data files, amongst others.

1.5. KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR FACT-FIND AND FAMILIARISE

1. Verify source of information: Always check the sources of your information. A reference list/bibliography/works cited attached at the end of an article is a good way to check credibility.

2. Author verification: Check whether the article is peer-reviewed and if the author has cited their credentials. Also check whether the author is a credible voice on the subject, and if possible, check to understand if they hold any biases that could skew their perspective by skimming through their previous work.

3. Relevance to research: It is very easy to get distracted by tangents when researching, and therefore, it is good practice to analyse the relevance of the data to one's problem statement. One way to do this is by reading the abstract or the summary of the article you plan to read.

4. Citing crowd-sourced content: Avoid using and citing crowd-sourced content from platforms such as Wikipedia as the only source for your research. While such platforms could be a helpful place to start, verification of the source of information is extremely important. For one's own personal information it is good practice to also note the date and time of when this article was accessed since it is likely to be updated.

5. Comparative information: Find credible information for all viewpoints of an issue. Be careful of perspectives when reading an article. One should avoid using opinion pieces for fact-finding. While biased sources can help develop positions, fact-finding should entail finding sources that allow you to understand the other viewpoint as well.

6. Language: Be careful of the way in which an article is written. Always analyse whether the

article is making absolute statements which are backed by evidence, or statements that are opinionated and based on assumptions. For example, words such as 'may', 'could', etc. indicate uncertain and presumptuous information.

7. Use multiple sources: Always validate information from multiple sources before arriving at a conclusion. One should read multiple angles to a premise to develop a better and holistic insight. This also helps avoid confirmation bias, which is when one only talks to people and look at literature that reiterates and supports their own viewpoint.

8. Manner of speaking: Manner of speaking includes the volume, tone, and speed of speaking, amongst others. It is good practice to analyse the manner of speaking to identify biases and incomplete information. For example, key points are usually communicated with emphasis and pauses, thus revealing those aspects which are of relevance to the speaker.

9. Popular narratives: It is important to be wary of popular narratives to prevent one from being swayed by one perspective and pushing beyond to explore more.

10. Research bias: Different types of biases can come into play while researching. Biases can range from cultural to sampling bias. A good research study must not be biased and should be backed by the relevant facts and evidence.

11. Online data: Key considerations when it comes to online data are:

- a. Lower response rates
- b. Unrepresentative samples
- c. Non-observational data
- d. Lack of follow-up data

02

A: ADVOCATE FOR ALTERNATE VIEWPOINTS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Step 2 of the methodology is aimed at ensuring that all viewpoints are considered in a balanced manner. Doing so includes using the research from 'F' to first identify the stakeholders and thereafter understand their viewpoints.

This step is especially important in cases where the other views are opposing or contrasting to one's own initial position. Exploring alternate views will not just increase conceptual clarity, but also strengthen one's conclusion due to an increased understanding.

What?

The module on Advocating for Alternative Viewpoints (A) includes understanding the relevance of the theme, identifying all stakeholders, assessing the different viewpoints, viewing the facts from each of their perspectives, and thereafter comparing them with one's initial position to either validate, amend, or refute it.

Why?

Step 2 of The F.A.I.R. Methodology is crucial to complement data collection, for only data is not enough to form a conclusion. It is also important to challenge oneself to think differently, by giving due consideration to different viewpoints.

Therefore, the objective of "A" is to:

1. Put oneself in the others' positions and advocate for their viewpoint to evaluate their perspective.
2. Evaluate the fairness of an outcome by assessing the impact on all stakeholders.
3. Develop an argument that does not aim at directly opposing the other viewpoint but considers all aspects with nuance and with the aim of collaboration.
4. Prevent one from taking a position, which though may be on the fair side, does not advocate for the fair objective.

2.2. METHODS FOR ADVOCATE FOR ALTERNATE VIEWPOINTS

Methodologies for A include those systems and processes that are important for identifying the crux of an argument, understanding the alternative viewpoints, and thereafter building it out.

This section therefore presents a few methods that can help one in this process:

1. Compare and contrast: To formulate a view, it is important to make oneself aware of the different and contrasting views, to understand multiple perspectives. This helps increase the engagement with the topic, as well as refine one's thought process, contributing to conceptual clarity.

2. Consider limitations: Given that there is usually no one right or wrong, it is important to consider the limitations of one's existing

viewpoint. Doing so gives one the opportunity to address concerns and think of solutions and/or alternatives to those concerns.

3. Non-binary approach: It is important to recognise that despite there often being only two sides to a debate, any issue or topic rarely has only two sides. It is therefore key to build a nuanced view and approach which aims at collaborating and including all the other sides.

4. Stakeholder data: The points that one develops should consider the professional and educational background of the stakeholders, their age range, language, as well as, if possible, the prominent ideological leanings of the stakeholders. Tailoring one's viewpoint while keeping demographics in mind helps develop a holistic understanding which accounts for context, as opposed to the popular and generalised understanding of a group.

5. Listen: Listening to and understanding the operative points of other's arguments, making notes of the questions being popularly asked, and thinking of pointed answers to those questions is important when formulating a perspective.

6. Keep context in mind: While points and facts do stand true, the contemporary social, political, and cultural context is an important aspect. This does not mean that one's narrative needs to change, but that one needs to be careful of how it is being formulated to ensure that it is not misconstrued.

7. Historical data: Where relevant, it is extremely important to consider the historical background

of a particular topic to put one's viewpoint on a timeline. This helps develop an overview with respect to aspects that have been considered before, events that have predated the present, and briefly understand strategies that have and have not been effective.

8. Factual backing: While concepts and ideas are important, presentation of research is one of the key aspects of an argument. Everything one says and all those factors that have contributed to one's decisions need to have adequate factual backing.

2.3. TOOLS FOR ADVOCATE FOR ALTERNATE VIEWPOINTS

This section provides an indicative list of some of the tools that can help one in advocating for alternate views better. It is important to note that these tools should be used based on context and the type of position that one is trying to advocate for.

1. Conduct interviews and surveys: Interviews and surveys are helpful tools to understand alternate viewpoints at a personal level. They help with developing context, understanding cultural and emotional influence, the tone and tenor of individuals, as well as how personal the subject matter is to them.

2. Read, watch, and listen: While at this stage a majority of the research has been conducted, familiarising oneself is a continuous process and should not stop in this step. Doing so will help you update your viewpoint in real time and be holistic in your considerations.

3. Revisit research: To prevent oneself from getting lost in the research spiral, consistently revisiting research is instrumental in ensuring that you don't have to start all over again. It also helps one understand when to stop or pause research for that time.

4. Stakeholder maps: It is good practice to visually map stakeholders and their viewpoints through flow charts, word clouds, categorisations, and pointers, etc. This helps one view all the information succinctly and in one place, making it easier for analysis.

5. Scenario-based exercises: Scenario-based exercises include placing yourself in the other's shoes to examine a situation from their lens. Doing so will help one understand context and viewpoints more holistically. However, this exercise should be conducted after researching the stakeholders effectively.

6. Inquiry: Using inquiry includes asking those questions that can help bring out the truth. This is especially helpful if one has adequate surety, through research and facts, that the claim being made has gaps, missing and/or incorrect information.

2.4. PROCESS FOR ADVOCATING FOR ALTERNATIVE VIEWPOINTS

1. Identify the operative aspect: Upon finding facts for a topic, it becomes crucial to review them and narrow down on the operative aspect of that topic. The operative aspect is the crux of the issue, addressing which is crucial to ensure a fair outcome.

2. Identify the relevant stakeholders: Each topic has more than just two sides. Each of these different viewpoints are represented by different stakeholders who are both directly and indirectly affected by the decisions and positions taken on the topic. To ensure that one's initial position is accurate, it is first important to list out all possible stakeholders and identify which stakeholders are being represented by you and consequently, which aren't.

3. View the operative aspect from different viewpoints: Upon identifying both the operative aspects as well as the different stakeholders, the next step is to understand the topic from each of their viewpoints. Doing so helps in ensuring that one has considered and had an overview of all possible outcomes of a conclusion. To ensure this, one needs to map out both, how the different stakeholders will be affected and what an argument from their perspective could be.

4. Review facts under different contexts:

While facts are largely objective, they can be misconstrued. Therefore, upon identifying the stakeholders, viewing the facts under different contextual situations could help understand the facts and their relevance better.

5. Compare and contrast: The next step would be to compare and contrast these views against your initial position. While it is not necessary to align with only one viewpoint, it is important to review them all to see if your initial position can either be changed, amended, validated, or refuted.

6. Formulate an effective viewpoint: The final step of this process includes formulating a viewpoint that focuses on the crux of the topic, is clear and effective in its communication, and is one that has considered all other viewpoints. It is also important to remember that despite arriving at a final conclusion, one should continue to introspect the key considerations and keep their mind open to either facts that may not have been found, stakeholders whose viewpoints may not have been considered and/or relevant aspects that may not have been identified.

2.5. KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADVOCATE FOR ALTERNATE VIEWPOINTS

1. Context: A key consideration for most arguments is context. Context includes the circumstances that form the social, political, cultural, and economic setting that inform the topic of discussion. Context is significant to an argument because it helps determine the relevant aspects of a topic and identifies those aspects that should be given importance.

2. Language: Language forms the crux of communication thereby making it an important

aspect for formulating a viewpoint. This includes both the words being used as well as the sentence structure of the points being made. Language could be used as an indicative tool to understand how other stakeholders perceive the topic.

3. Attention to the topic: This refers to the attention span of the stakeholder on the topic and can be determined based on the stakeholder's age, educational/professional

background, familiarity with the subject, belief systems, and ideological leanings, amongst others. This is an important factor because losing momentum on the topic might hamper one's understanding of other viewpoints.

4. Manner of speaking: Manner of speaking includes the volume, tone, and speed of speaking, amongst others. This is indicative of how the arguments are perceived by different stakeholders. For example, key points are usually communicated when spoken with emphasis and pauses, thus helping one understand what the other stakeholders consider to be relevant.

5. Keep notes: While each one has different ways of making notes, it is important to maintain them. Keeping concise notes can be helpful in preventing one from re-visiting resources. Additionally, it is also important to familiarise oneself with these notes so as to ensure that references and points can be easily accessed, as and when required.

6. Ethical appeal: Ethics can be a key component of one's argument. In cases where arguments have a strong ethical basis, the use of morals to strengthen the positives of one's conclusions can make the argument effective. However, while ethics may seem more straight forward in some cases, they can be equally tricky in others, given that ethics can vary from person to person.

7. Be aware of bias: Biases can occur in the position being taken, the source that influenced that position, resistance and/or openness to other positions and the impact that one thinks they may have by making certain statements and claims.

8. Tangents: Since topics can be vast with multiple viewpoints, it is possible for the focus of the topic to shift to tangents. This can lead to one getting distracted from the core of the topic leading to lack of adequate discussion, and possibly affecting the end conclusion. Therefore, while it is crucial to explore related themes, one should keep assessing and link tangents back to the relevant premise. However, this could be difficult and would depend on the importance that other stakeholders have attributed to that tangent.

9. False balance: It is possible that certain arguments and viewpoints are presented just for the sake of balance. This could lead to distraction from the operative aspects of the topic. While it is difficult, it is crucial to try and recognise these viewpoints and prevent them from clouding one's judgement.

For example, when discussing government action to combat climate change, is it important to nod to those who do not believe in climate change in the first place?

03

I: INTROSPECTION AND INTERROGATION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The third step towards fair decision-making is introspecting and interrogating oneself after collating the relevant facts and advocating for alternate viewpoints.

Introspection is the practice and process of looking inward to examine one's own thoughts and emotions to question one's own subjectivity and biases

In this step, one should focus on treating each belief and the subsequent decisions without prejudice, thereby ensuring that one enters any conversation with a neutral perspective.

What?

Introspection is different than the first two steps because it requires one to dig deeper within themselves to understand the issues of subjectivity that can cloud one's judgement. This allows one to process decisions objectively and unlearn any biases.

Furthermore, introspection is about assessing the process and activities of one's experience of the world and understand that each belief and the subsequent decision is subjective.

Why?

Introspection allows one to focus on interrogating themselves in order to strengthen their conviction and assess the objectivity of their judgement.

In introspecting and interrogating yourself, it is important to critically examine whether you have balanced each belief, that you have held for every decision, with a counter view.

Self-interrogation should always be objective and at the same time, inclusive of all the various perspectives one develops throughout 'F' and 'A'. Self-criticism, acceptance of being wrong, and acknowledging that there are multiple perspectives which are all equally relevant are some of the essential aspects of introspection and interrogation.

3.2. METHODS FOR INTROSPECTION AND INTERROGATION

Introspection is a technique that can be understood as a method of self-observation. It involves analysing oneself internally while simultaneously understanding that the external would always affect the internal. Introspecting and interrogating is about understanding how one's mind works in a systematic way.

The following are some of the methods that can be used to introspect and interrogate previously learnt notions, be it in 'F' or 'A', or otherwise. The list given below is only indicative and gives a brief understanding of some of the more prominent methods for introspection.

1. Attention and control: It is important to be attentive of one's biases as well as emotions and learn to control them from clouding your final judgement.

2. Observation: Observing the gathered information with the view of determining one's

final decision. The objective is to review the information from a third-person perspective.

3. Self-reflection: Self-reflection refers to increasing self-awareness by understanding one's own context, thoughts, motives, feelings, reasoning processes and beliefs. Observation and reflection are closely related and should be done in parallel to each other.

4. Revisit thoughts: Recording and verbalising one's thoughts to map out the different positions allows one to objectively analyse and understand one's position in comparison to others. Additionally, revisiting thoughts is important to identify patterns and to update one's viewpoint.

5. Create thought units: Segmenting one's thoughts into smaller thought units by grouping can help in identifying gaps and re-evaluating beliefs and the subsequent judgements.

3.3. TOOLS FOR INTROSPECTION AND INTERROGATION

1. Confrontation: Confronting one's thoughts and critically examining ways to deal with conflicting viewpoints is a good way to approach any decision or belief. Since introspection is about being able to balance different perspectives neutrally, confronting prejudices helps in ensuring a fair judgement.

2. Interrupt denials: Denying is easier than accepting that one could be wrong. Interrupting such denials and developing the practice of acknowledging that they could be wrong is important.

3. Use uncertainty: One should use their uncertainties to confront and question themselves. It is important to remember that introspection and interrogation are meant to disbalance one's rigid conclusions and opinions.

4. Hold on to facts: It is important to reiterate that one needs to keep the gathered facts in mind, with all the other considerations, while

introspecting. This ensures that one's own biases do not come in the way of introspecting and the ultimate judgement is based on relevant information.

5. 'What', 'why', and 'how': In order to question and examine oneself and your thoughts, it is important to answer the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of each belief that makes up one single decision/judgement. While 'why' allows one to analyse the rationale of a belief, the 'what' and the 'how', allows one to create a roadmap for future actions.

6. Use solution-based questions: One should question and interrogate themselves in a manner that gives more solutions than additional questions. Such questions not only reveal the potential solutions and answers to a given problem, but also increases one's confidence in their ability to solve future dilemmas by introspecting systematically.

3.4. PROCESS FOR INTROSPECTION AND INTERROGATION

There is no one correct way or process to introspect and interrogate oneself. However, the following presents some of the steps that one can take into consideration:

1. Document the process: It is important to maintain a record of one's introspection to map thought processes. Doing so is beneficial in the longer term as well, as it will help one conduct this process more easily.

2. Review previous steps: Introspection would require one to begin with reviewing 'F' and 'A' to assess how you view them and understand the topic. This is important develop a personal opinion on issues and increasing an understanding of personal ethics.

3. Critically examine pre-held beliefs: Having reviewed previous steps, it is important to self-critique to identify gaps in logic and beliefs. This will help one in being more open and flexible to amending viewpoints.

4. Balance perspectives: While introspecting and analysing, one must balance the original positions with other positions and most importantly, ensure that you are comfortable with the conclusion.

5. Develop insights: Introspection gives access to understanding oneself and encouraging self-reflection. This allows for the development of an inclusive insight into things and is usually a follow-up answer to self-reflection and interrogation.

3.5. KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR INTROSPECTION AND INTERROGATION

1. Understand personal context: Introspection is different for each individual and is subjective. As with 'F' and 'A', the social, cultural, economic, and historical context plays an important role in the way in which one perceives themselves and their beliefs.

2. Ask the right questions: While understanding and answering the 'why' is an important aspect of introspecting, it is essential to remember that it is the 'what' that one should also concentrate on. In other words, while asking questions that start with 'why' traps one in the past, questions that start with 'what' can help map out the path for the future.

3. Avoid appropriation: Appropriation refers to assuming things on behalf of another community, culture, and society, amongst others. This often leads to incorrect beliefs and stereotyping of the 'other' and should be avoided at all costs. An introspection without appropriation correctly validates whether 'A' was conducted properly.

4. Avoid pre-emptive judgements: While dealing with all the comparative information that has been collected, one should ensure that they approach it without any judgements or prejudices. It is important to reiterate that every belief and every decision is equally relevant.

5. Dig deeper for 'insights': It is important to be patient with yourself while self-reflecting and introspecting. Do not try to fast track the process of developing insights without questioning the validity or value of that insight.

6. Avoid confirmation bias: As with fact-finding, introspecting could result in a confirmation bias while looking for insights. While sometimes the answer to your questions might be simple, it is important to analyse whether you are actually digging deep within yourself or whether you are tending to search for the easiest and the most plausible answer.

7. Inclusion: Introspection should be based on inclusion rather than exclusion. While self-interrogating, one should always be aware of their surrounding and approach the self in relation to the 'other'. This allows one to identify exclusionary practices, if any. In other words, while analysing and examining the self, one should be inclusive and thoughtful of the 'other'.

8. External resistance: External stimuli affects every decision. It is possible to reach a conclusion that is not in sync with what the larger society believes in and could hence meet with resistance from one's external surroundings.

9. Cognitive dissonance: Introspection could lead to cognitive dissonance, which can be understood as the inconsistency in thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes. Since introspection and interrogation require one to constantly question themselves, it is possible to fall into a trap of cognitive dissonance which can lead to an inability to come to a final judgement or decision.

04

**R:
REASON AND
RATIONALISE**

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Step 4 of The F.A.I.R. Methodology acts as the final set of checks and balances which includes ensuring that one reviews all of the previous steps and arrives at their final conclusion by reasoning and rationalising their way through it. This includes reviewing facts, ensuring that all other viewpoints have been considered, introspecting to verify that all key considerations have been taken into account, and finally, making sure that all of these contribute to a conclusion that is reasonable and rational.

What?

A well-reasoned and rational conclusion is one that has been validated with objective factors, has considered all aspects of a topic, recognises limitations, and is able to map out one's own thought process. It is a conclusion that is logically sound and is at that point, an almost obvious final decision.

Why?

Oftentimes, the conclusion that is rational and reasonable is not always one that is considered to be correct. This understanding stems from that fact that conclusions are not always dichotomous

in nature. They are multifaceted, especially when the objective is to arrive at a fair conclusion. Additionally, it is possible that what is popularly considered to be right is not so because of factors such as inaccurate communication, misrepresentation of facts, and ignorance of certain viewpoints, amongst others. Therefore, this step emphasises on reason and rationale for they are objective mental faculties that can help one see through such pitfalls.

The objectives of this final step are to:

1. Review one's research thoroughly to check the validity of the facts and identify potential gaps, if any.
2. Review one's thought process to ensure its logical flow and conceptual consistency.
3. Ensure that each of the relevant aspects have been considered appropriately.
4. Communicate the conclusions accurately, and in a manner that facilitates good understanding.
5. Ensuring that one's final conclusion is unbiased and as objective as possible.

4.2. METHODS FOR REASON AND RATIONALISE

Methods of reasoning and rationalising includes ways to both rationally reach one's own conclusion as well as ways to present this conclusion.

While each method is effective on its own, factors such as context, topic of discussion and the individual's preferences are also important when deciding which method is best suited.

It is also important to note that these methods can be used simultaneously.

1. Presentation: Preparing presentations to put forth one's viewpoints can be a good way of communicating effectively and keeping the

audience engaged. It is important to remember to keep the information succinct and concise. Additionally, it is also crucial to present the information in a consumable format which includes bullet points, graphs, statistics, images, and videos, amongst others.

2. Speech: Making a speech which solely relies on one's own oral commentary is both effective, yet tricky. Different styles of speeches include but are not limited to extempore, impromptu, and memorised. Different types of speeches include motivational, persuasive, and informative, amongst others. Several factors should be considered in a speech including the topic of discussion, familiarity with the topic, audience

demographics, and duration of speech, to name a few.

3. Visual communication: Visual communication includes pictures, videos, signs and/or imagery, amongst others. With respect to reasoning and rationalising, visuals can help one sort their thoughts as well as view a topic holistically. For communication, one can both wholly, or in part communicate via visuals. This can be beneficial with respect to audience engagement and ensuring an increased understanding.

4. Deductive reasoning: Deductive reasoning/ logic (top-down logic) is a method of reasoning whereby one applies general rules and statements on more specific situations to reach a logical conclusion. It is a way of rationally linking the premise with the conclusion or position being taken. For example, all men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

5. Inductive reasoning: Inductive reasoning/ logic (bottom-up logic) is a method of reasoning whereby the general principles and conclusions are derived from specific situations. Common

aspects of this method include generalisations, analogies, causal inference and in some cases predictions. For example, the cats I have interacted with purr. Therefore, all cats must purr.

6. Stress test: Stress test is a method of checking the fairness of one's conclusions by testing them against outliers and extreme situations. This method helps test the validity of one's position as well as ensure that the objective is consistently achieved even in conditions that are less likely. Additionally, it helps strengthen one's argument as well bring to light points that may not have been considered before.

7. Categorisation: Categorisation is a method of organising one's information to both assess, analyse, as well as present it. This is beneficial in understanding the correlations between different aspects of a topic and at the same time helping the audience understand the topic and the points being made better.

4.3. TOOLS FOR REASON AND RATIONALISE

Tools for reasoning and rationalising include those aids which can help one, both communicate better as well as reasonably arrive to one's conclusions efficiently and effectively.

1. Visual aids: Visual aids include graphs, charts, images, signs, videos, and models, amongst other media. They are often used to supplement written and spoken information as well as to view information in a different manner. Visual aids also include presenting written information in a manner that is appealing and helps communicate the objective of that document without a thorough reading.

2. Audience engagement: Audience engagement can be achieved by either directly interacting with the audience, or indirectly, by engaging with the content. Direct engagement can occur through question and answer sessions, raise your hand questions, and live polls. Indirect engagement can occur via storytelling, personal experiences, and

touching upon contemporary experiences, amongst others. Audience engagement is significant for ensuring that attention is being paid, viewpoints and conclusions are being understood, and information is retained.

3. Talking points: It is always beneficial to make talking points which indicate the key aspects of one's communication. This is helpful in ensuring that all points are covered without one having to necessarily read all of them. This method is most effective when one is completely familiarised with the topic and the premise in question.

4. Stories: Stories are a tool of communication which help explain a particular point. They are crucial because engagement with stories are generally higher, which ensures a better and lasting understanding. This is applicable when communicating with someone, as well as when understanding a topic for oneself. Stories are

more effective if they are based on real incidents and especially so if they are first-hand accounts of the individual relaying the story.

5. Handouts: Handouts include information which is summarised in an easy to read manner. They are a good way of making notes that can be easily referred back to at a later point. Additionally, providing handouts to the audience before or after talks are also effective for retention and further deliberation on the information.

6. Mind map/flowchart: Mind maps and flowcharts visually organise information in a methodical manner. They are helpful in brain storming, problem solving, memory retention and visual thinking, amongst other benefits. There are various ways of organising information which include doing so hierarchically, by association, by importance and by categories, amongst others.

7. Evidence: Evidence based information via facts are important for strengthening one's reason and rationale. They are important tools in rechecking and supplementing the conclusions and positions that one has arrived at. This is helpful in reasoning

with oneself, as well as when explaining it to an audience.

8. Analogies: An analogy is a comparison between two similar concepts or situations and is utilised for the purpose of clarification. An analogical argument is a type of thinking that relies upon the accepted similarities to indicate that further similarities could exist. While analogies are a common way of thinking and explaining, the effectiveness of the analogy being used would depend on the context it is being used in.

9. Narration: Narration includes storytelling to deliver information. The narrator does not necessarily need to be a participant of the story. This includes providing commentary and descriptions of an incident that are either directly or indirectly relevant to the topic of discussion. Depending on the story, the narration could include both subjective and objective points of view. A third-person subjective point of view could be considered unreliable. Narration helps increase one's engagement and understand facts, concepts, and the premise of the topic better.

4.4. PROCESS FOR REASON AND RATIONALISE

An indicative process that ensures that one's final position is a fair position can be attained by considering the steps provided hereafter:

1. Review facts: The first step of reasoning and rationalising includes reviewing all of the facts methodically. This is important for ensuring that one has gathered accurate facts, collected adequate data for all viewpoints, and has analysed them effectively. It is important to try and view these facts from a fresh perspective and in light of the developments in Steps 2 and 3. Additionally, one also must be on the lookout for information that they may have missed.

2. Review viewpoints: Reviewing viewpoints includes stakeholder mapping and testing one's own conclusion against each of their viewpoints.

It is important to ensure that each and every factor that contributes to other's viewpoints are kept in mind.

3. Review key considerations: It is important to ensure that the key considerations that one has listed while interrogating and introspecting are revised and reviewed. Not only should one check if all of them have been considered, but also that each of these considerations have been given adequate importance based on its relevance.

4. Viewing all 3 steps holistically: While each of these steps individually would validate different beliefs that help form a conclusion, it is important to review them more holistically. This is crucial to help understand how different parts come together to form a conclusion, thus

providing oneself more conceptual clarity. This conceptual clarity helps when researching for future topics, as well as when presenting one's views.

5. Reason and rationalise: A reasonable and rational conclusion is one that is objective, logical, factual, and analytical. When conducting a review, it is important to keep this aim in mind and proceed accordingly. In order to do this, it is important to recheck for all of the limitations that have been previously listed to avoid common pitfalls which include bias, ignorance, and unawareness. In this step, it is also key to remember that oftentimes, the reasonable conclusion may not necessarily be what is considered to be "right". Which is why, it

is important to rely on reason and rationale to arrive at what is fair.

6. Present the conclusion: Once the conclusion has been formulated, it is important to present it. As is mentioned in the previous section, there are several ways to present this conclusion but what is important, is to remember to stay focused. Oftentimes, with respect to topics, especially those with multiple stakeholders, it is possible that several sub-topics emerge and while these are important, they can distract one away from what has previously been defined as the operative aspects of a topic. Therefore, it is crucial to only allot time and importance as is required according to relevance.

4.5. KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR REASON AND RATIONALISE

Certain objective factors are extremely important when reasoning and rationalising. This section provides an overview of some of these considerations. While these factors have been listed below, each factor should be tailored to one's own topic and argument.

1. Manner of speaking: With respect to verbal communication, the manner of speaking includes the volume, tone, and speed of speaking, amongst others. One's manner of speaking determines how the argument will be perceived by both the participants and the audience. For example, key points are better communicated when spoken with emphasis and pauses. It is important to balance each component of this factor given that one has to create an impact and communicate an understanding in a limited time frame.

2. Structure: Structuring research by placing adequate relevance on the different aspects of a topic and reviewing it in an effective and efficient manner is important to arrive at a reasonable conclusion. One way to execute this is by marking research by level of importance, taking into account time, and strategising the review accordingly.

3. Body language: Body language refers to nonverbal signs which include hand gestures, facial expressions, and posture, amongst other factors. These signs are important since movements and expressions help increase the impact of crucial points and indicates one's familiarity with the topic of discussion. For example, a stiff posture with limited hand movements may lead to a decrease in the audience's attention.

4. Audience demographic: The points that one brings forth and how those points are presented should consider the professional and educational background of the audience, their age range, the language that is prominently spoken, as well as, if possible, the prominent ideological leanings of that group. Tailoring one's presentation to specific audiences helps structure points in a manner which ensures that what is being said, is what is being understood. The agreement or disagreement of the audience is up to each of their thought processes.

5. Rational, not emotional: It is possible that certain topics may invoke a more emotional response which could cloud one's rational

judgement. This may be due to past experiences, personal biases, and social and personal beliefs, amongst others. As an outcome of this, it may become difficult for one to arrive at rational conclusions. Therefore, reviewing all of the previous steps with equal importance is crucial in preventing this from happening, at least to a certain extent.

6. Self-contradiction: Oftentimes, the premise and concepts of a topic can lead one to make self-contradictory claims. This can especially happen when the topic is dynamic. Conceptual clarity and the identification of a clear premise are key in preventing one from making statements that contradict one's own position.

7. Context: While points and facts do stand true, the contemporary social, political, and cultural context is an important aspect that needs to be considered. This is important when reasoning and rationalising and thereafter presenting one's conclusion. This does not mean that one's narrative needs to change, but that one needs to be careful of how it is being presented to ensure that one is being heard and that what is being said is not misconstrued.

8. Historical data: The historical relevance of each topic should be thoroughly considered given that history is key in determining the developments of that topic thereafter. Historical data helps one get an overview of the issue with respect to aspects that have been considered before, events that have predated the present, and briefly understand strategies that have and have not been effective.

9. Current events: Current events include developments that have and are taking place in a more recent time frame. Staying updated is very important to ensuring that one is being full proof in their conclusion. This not only includes being aware, but also incorporating those developments and taking them under consideration prior to arriving at the final conclusion.

10. Information collation: Given that this step includes reviewing all of the information, it is possible for one to get overwhelmed when collating it. Which is why it is important to remember that the objective of reasoning and rationalising also includes reviewing to get better conceptual clarity. Therefore, it could be helpful to ensure that reviewing includes drawing connections between different steps.

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