



LEADERS IN FOOD INNOVATION

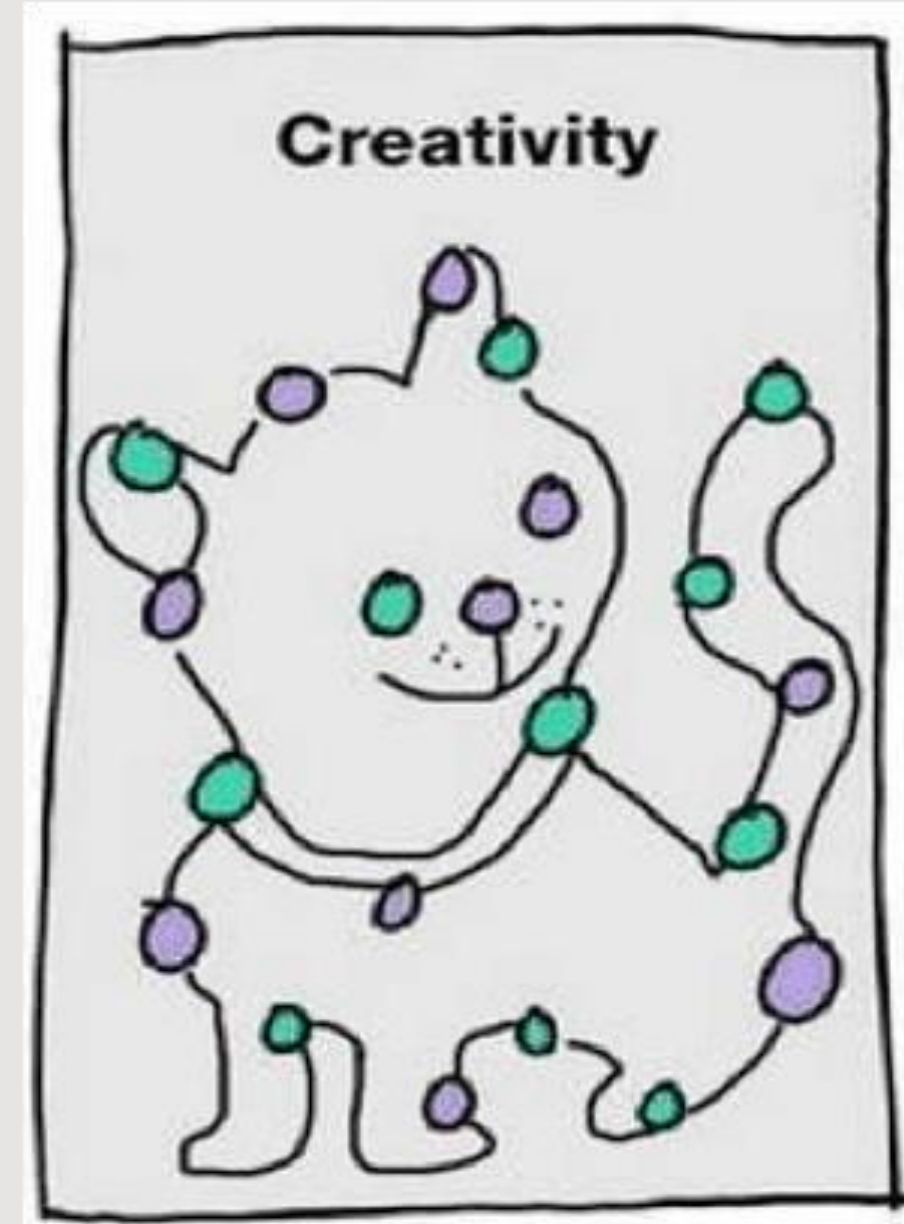
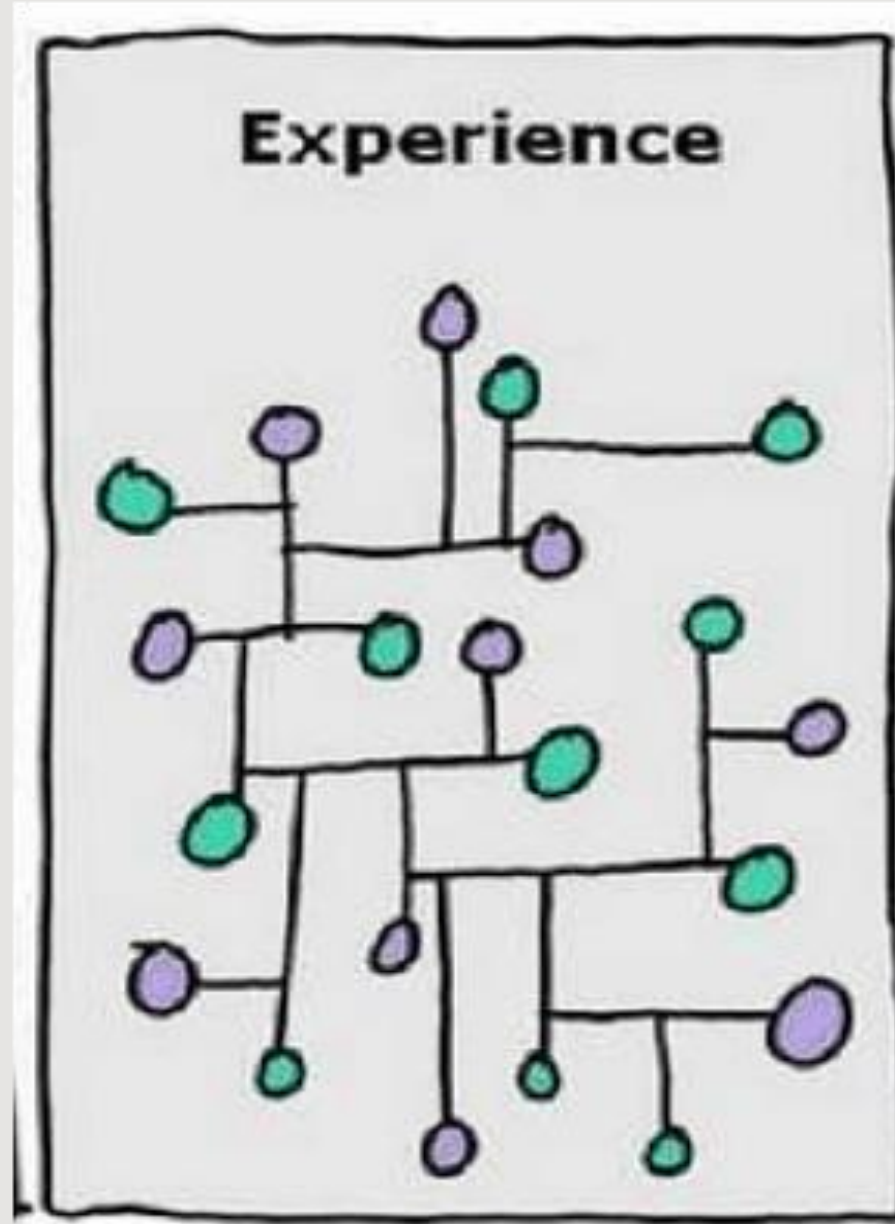
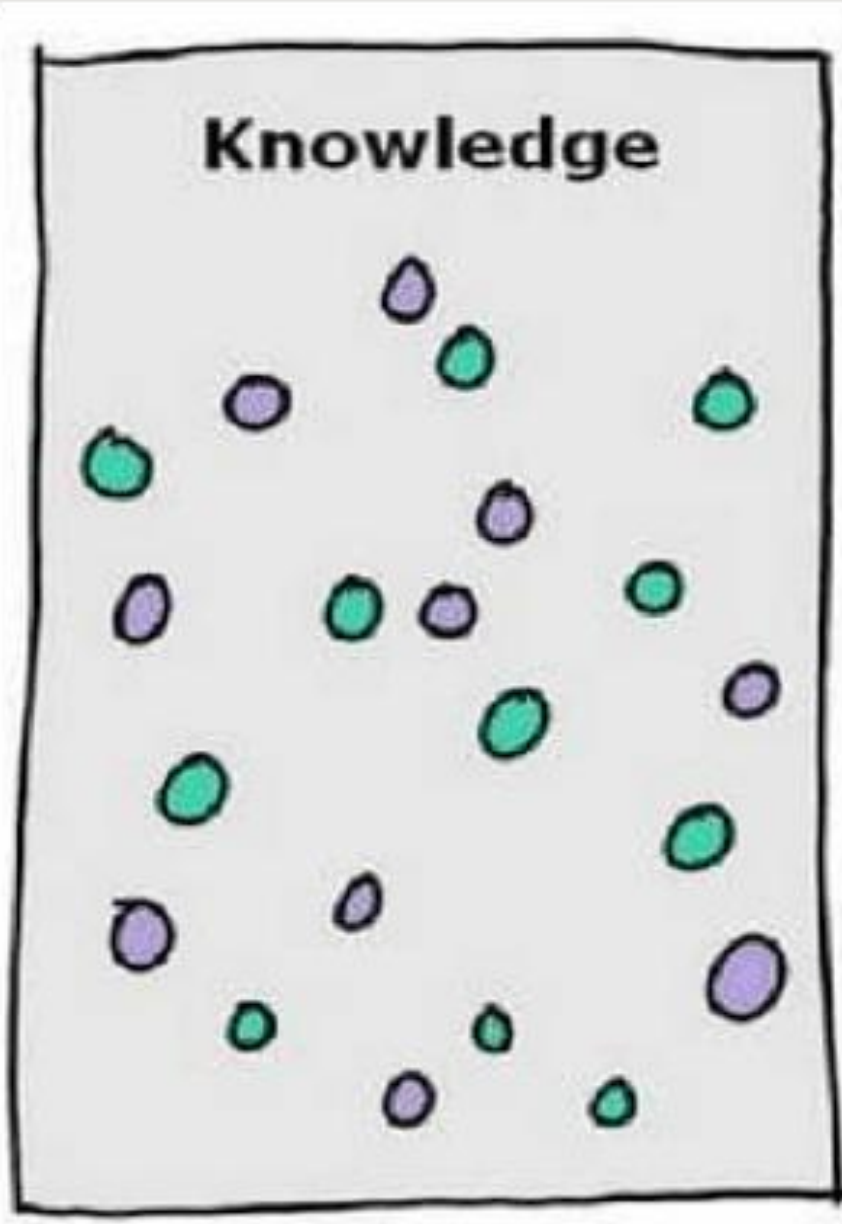
SASDT

Cheese sensory day

Evaluation Standard & Score Sheet

25 June 2026

CONNECTING: The dots already present



INTRODUCTION

In food processing, sensory or organoleptic evaluation normally occurs at 3 different spheres or planes.

Each one, in its own right is important and fulfil a specific role i.e.

(1) Product design:

- Widest horizon
- Limited by regulations only



(2) Manufacturer:

- Narrower horizon
- Own standard is the gold standard



(3) Competition:

- Narrowest horizon
- Best of Best



SENSORY EVALUATION @ MANUFACTURER

Purpose of sensory evaluation at the manufacturing stage:

To determine the final destination of each batch i.e. Release or Reject



Requirements for a meaningful sensory evaluation must...

1. Use an established and agreed reference norm i.e. a **standard** for that product's sensory evaluation
2. Use an **evaluation** sheet which is aligned with the sensory evaluation standard
3. Participants **trained** on the interpretation and use of the Standard and Evaluation sheets
4. Be **simplistic and easy** to use with minimum grey areas i.e. areas of possible disputes
5. Be **documented** for reference and recall purposes

STANDARD FOR PRODUCT EVALUATION

Criteria for the product Standard:

1. Based on insights from customer, end-user and consumer expectations
2. Established at the design stage i.e. not suppose to be an after thought or changing regularly
 - The standard is product specific
3. Remains a living document which can be adjusted based on consumer feedback and internal agreement
4. It is the guideline for the sensory evaluation score sheet
5. Reference a recognized lexicon
 - Main purpose of a recognised lexicon is to provide a common vocabulary for evaluation purposes

STANDARD EXAMPLE

White mould Cheese	Desired / Positive characteristics	Non-Desired Negative characteristics
Appearance	1. White moulds must be a consistent white colour 2. White mould must be thick, mat, with a fluffy look 3. Surface of moulds must be dry but not dried out 4.	1. Ideally no browning visible 2. Zero bald spots visible 3. Mould must not appear thin and insufficient 4. No dampness or loose moisture on surface 5.
Texture in hand	1.	1.
Aroma	1.	1.
Texture in mouth	1.	1.
Taste	1.	1.
After taste	1.	1.
Functional	1.	1.

LEXICON: Basic for Cheddar

Appearance	Texture in Hand	Aroma	Texture in Mouth	Taste	After-taste	Functional App.
• Colour • Glossy • Mat • Fused • Cracked • Damaged • Crystals • Wet	• Dry • Weak • Soft • Springing • Crumbly • Sticky • Eyes • Flexible	• Buttery • Smokey • Stable • Cabbage • Unclean • Yeasty • Burnt • Straw	• Chewy • Crumbly • Rubbery • Melting • Smooth • Sticky • Creamy • Astringent	• Sweet • Sour • Salty • Sharp • Nutty • Savoury • Brothy • Rancid	• Bitter • Earthy • Mushroom • Musty • Peppery • Fruity • Itchy • Pungent	• Cutting • Grating • Dicing • Melting • Crumbly • Solid • Loose • Crystals

PYRAMID: SENSORY EVALUATION ATTRIBUTES

APPEARANCE

As is

± 15%

TEXTURE

In
Hand

In
mouth

± 30%

FLAVOUR

Aroma

Taste

After-Taste

± 55%

Functional application and Properties

SEQUENCE of EVALUATING the SENSORY ATTRIBUTES



1) Appearance



2) Texture in hand



3) Aroma



4) Texture in mouth



5) Taste



6) After-taste

DESCRIPTORS: SENSORY EVALUATION ATTRIBUTES

1) Appearance		• Evaluation of the cheese as it is, removed from packaging • Evaluate it, ideally without touching it, record what you observe
2) Texture in hand		• Refers to any type of evaluation where your hands are involved cut, spread, shred, melt, etc. • After a few mechanical interventions observe the performance of the product
3) Aroma		• Start with the aroma, in through the nose out via mouth, • Aroma is the early indicator of the direction into which the flavour has developed
4) Texture in mouth		• Refers to evaluation while chewing or masticating it • After a few bites observe how the product performs in your mouth i.e. palate, gums, teeth, tongue
5) Taste		• Most important attribute of flavour evaluation, take enough, relax mouth flush over all taste buds • Once completed best to spit out and not swallow product to reduce negative impact on evaluation
6) After-taste		• After spitting out and registering flavour notes breath out via both mouth and nose • Wait $\pm$ 10 sec to observe flavour notes (often negative ones) which become prominent only later on
7) Functional		• Does this product meet the expectations of me as the consumer fully or partially? • If we ignore price will I as a consumer re-purchase this product in near future?

SCORING LEGEND of SENSORY EVALUATION ASPECTS

- 0:** Minimum criteria for an attribute is not met. Any 0 scores means full rejection. Product is rejected.
- 1:** Min criteria for an attribute is met. However corrective actions are required. Attribute qualifies for release.
- 2:** Target criteria for an attribute is met. No corrective actions required. Attribute qualifies for release.
- 3:** Target criteria for an attribute are exceeded. Attribute qualifies for release.

→ If target criteria for all attributes are exceeded, then product is considered to be **BoB** i.e. **Best of Best**.

RELEASE / REJECT DECISION

ATTRIBUTES	Product 1	Product 2	Product 3	Product 4	Product 5	Product 6	Product 7
Appearance	1	1	1	2	1	3	3
Texture in Hand	1	1	0	3	2	2	3
Aroma	1	1	1	2	2	2	3
Texture in Mouth	1	1	0	3	1	3	3
Taste	1	1	1	1	3	3	3
After-taste	1	1	2	0	2	3	3
Average score	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.8	1.8	2.6	3.0
Functional App. Y or N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Release	✓	~	~	~	✓	✓	✓
Reject	~	✓	✓	✓	~	~	~

EVALUATION SCORE SHEET: Example

White Mould Cheese	Cheese 1	Cheese 2	Cheese 3	Cheese 4	Cheese 5	Cheese 6
Appearance: White colour, Fully covered, Dry surface, Consistent shape						
Texture in Hand: Firm as for WM, Clean cut, Thin rind						
Aroma: Clean, Fresh cheesy, Diacetyl notes						
Texture in Mouth: Smooth, Creamy, Soft, Swallow easy						
Taste: Cheese notes developing reminding of earthy, fresh straw, cabbage notes						
After-taste: Clean, creamy, diacetyl notes						
Average score						
Functional App. Y or N: Meeting the speciality cheese requirements for the application						
Release ✓ // Reject x						
Decision maker						

Score legend: 0 = Failure: 1 = Release with Corrective action: 2 = Release: 3 = Release BoB



THANK YOU

HEAD OFFICE

58 Main Road

Klapmuts, Cape Town, 7625

Tel: +27 21 879 1681

info@synercore.co.za

www.synercore.co.za

LinkedIn



SYNERCORE OFFICE LOCATIONS

HEAD OFFICE

58 Main Road,
Klapmuts, Cape Town, 7625
Tel: +27 21 879 1681
Email: info@synercore.co.za

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Groene Weide Farm,
Protea Road, Klapmuts, Cape Town, 7625
Tel: +27 21 879 1681
Email: info@synercore.co.za

OPERATIONS

Steyns Industrial Park,
433 van Riebeeck Street, Hermanstad, Pretoria, 0082
Tel: +27 12 940 8665
Email: info@synercore.co.za

