Abstract

About this book: It is now fourteen years since we collaborated in the writing of our first research methods book. In 2009 the fifth edition was published (Saunders et al., 2009). The success of that book suggests that research methods is a popular subject with business and management students. This may be so. But we think that it has more to do with the fact research methods is a complex area: one where it is easy to do things, but much less easy to do things right. When we planned the first book we had one overall mission in mind. That was to write a book in a way that came as near as possible to the way in which we taught our students. By this we mean that we wanted to be clear and straightforward, and explain things in a way that lost none of the complexity, or academic rigour of the subject. Over the years this mission has not altered. We feel just as passionate about clear communication as we did back in 1997. However, things in the world of business and management education have changed since 1997, and this book reflects those changes. In 1997 the normal requirement was for undergraduate students in their final year, to undertake a large piece of research which involved them in collecting their own data and was assessed by means of a written project report. This is now often not the case. Although some degree programmes still require students to complete an assessed research project, they may be told that, rather than collect their own data, they should use only data that have already been collected for some other purpose (secondary data), or alternatively, write an extended review of the literature. For a second category of students on undergraduate programmes the extent of their research work is a research methods module which is assessed by a research proposal. There is a third category, those business and management students who opt not to do a research project.
To Planning Your Project book you are also motivated to search from other sources. Research - Wikipedia Research Comprises "creative And Systematic Work Undertaken To Increase The Stock Of Knowledge, Including Knowledge Of Humans, Culture And Society, And The Use Of This Stock Of Knowledge To Devise New Applications." Kiss, Bow, Or Shake Hands: The Bestselling Guide To Doing Your research project should be fun! Mark and Phil Reference Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009). Your research proposal. We explain how the process of writing clarifies your ideas and we emphasise the importance of treating the research proposal as an item of ‘work in analysis of data is explained with particular emphasis upon the use of different software packages. We also discuss ways in which qualitative data may be prepared for analysis and conclusions are believable. Chapter 6 gets to the heart of the research process: the collection of data. We explain how to: choose a sample; draft an effective upon the possibility of mixing strategies in one research project. We end the chapter with a discussion about the importance of validity and reliability: ensuring that your research issues concerning gaining access to work organizations from which you may collect your own research data. In this chapter we also consider the issues of self-management you may face in conducting your research, particularly the effective use of resources such as time. The management of other aspects of the research process is also discussed, such as your supervisor, university and those from whom you collect your data. We also help you to think about the ways in which you adhere to the code of research ethics that you will be required to observe. In chapter 4 we consider the use of secondary data. We discuss the valuable role which secondary data may play in your research and the reasons you may use secondary data. The ready availability of a wealth of secondary data, particularly as a result of the growth of the Internet is considered. We also warn you about some of the pitfalls inherent in the use of secondary data and how to assess its value to your own research project. The subject of chapter 5 is research strategy. This involves a consideration of the main philosophies you may adopt and the ways in which they affect choice of strategy. We discuss the different types of research strategy, with an emphasis upon the possibility of mixing strategies in one research project. We end the chapter with a discussion about the importance of validity and reliability: ensuring that your research results and conclusions are believable. Chapter 6 gets to the heart of the research process: the collection of data. We explain how to: choose a sample; draft an effective questionnaire and conduct effective interviews in various forms, including electronic means. In chapter 7 we deal with the process of data analysis. We discuss the two types of data: quantitative and qualitative and the ways in which these data may be prepared for analysis and actually analysed. The use of statistics in both the presentation and analysis of data is explained with particular emphasis upon the use of different software packages. We also discuss ways in which qualitative data may be prepared for analysis and analysis. As with the analysis of quantitative data we emphasise the way in which you may develop theory from the analysed data. Chapter 8 is devoted to the writing of your research proposal. We explain how the process of writing clarifies your ideas and we emphasise the importance of treating the research proposal as an item of ‘work in progress’ by constantly revising it. The chapter also includes a discussion on what content the proposal should contain; how it may be structured and the appropriate writing style to be adopted. Finally, we suggest some of the criteria against which the quality of your research proposal may be assessed. We hope you will learn a lot from this book, that’s why it exists! But we also hope that you will enjoy reading it. Doing your research project should be fun! Mark and Phil Reference Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009). Research Methods for Business Students. (5th edition). Harlow: FT Prentice Hall.