

# 8

# Research Proposals



Research Methodology  
2009

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# 8.1 Research proposals

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## References:

1. Cooper, Donald R., C. William Emory, *Business Research Methods*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed, Mc-Graw Hill International Edition, 1995, ch.4 & 18
2. Cooper, Donal R., Pamela S. Schindler, *Business Research Methods*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed, Mc-Graw Hill International Edition, 2006, ch. 4& 21
3. <http://business.nmsu.edu/~mhyman/>

## Topics:

1. Request for Proposal (RFP)
  1. Types of Research Proposal
  2. Structuring the Research Proposal
2. Written Reports

# Purpose of Proposal

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- ❑ To present the **problem** to be researched and its importance
- ❑ To discuss the **research efforts** of others who have worked on related problems
- ❑ To suggest the **data** necessary for solving the problem and how the data will be gathered, treated and interpreted

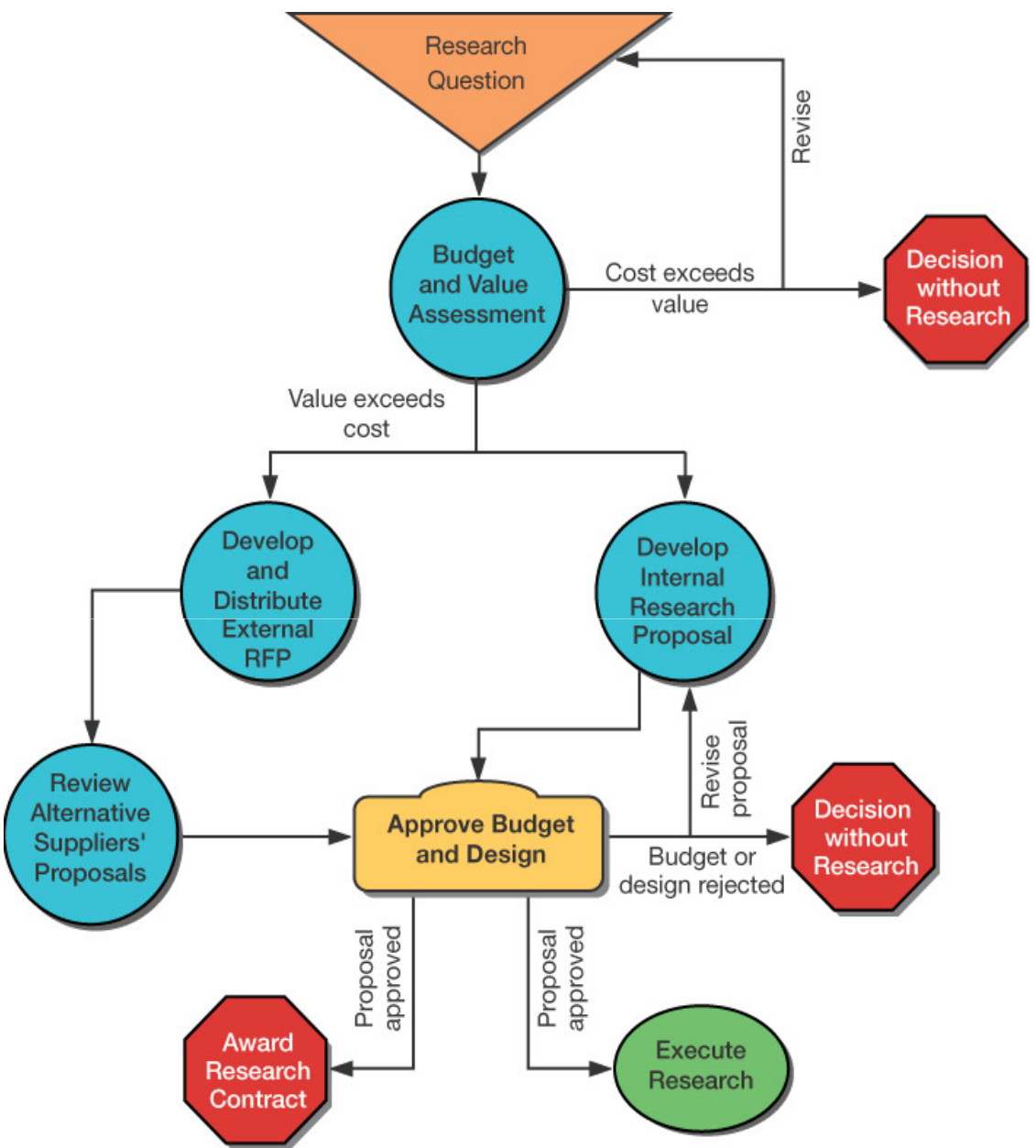
# Purpose of Proposal (cont)

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A proposal is also known of a work plan that tells:

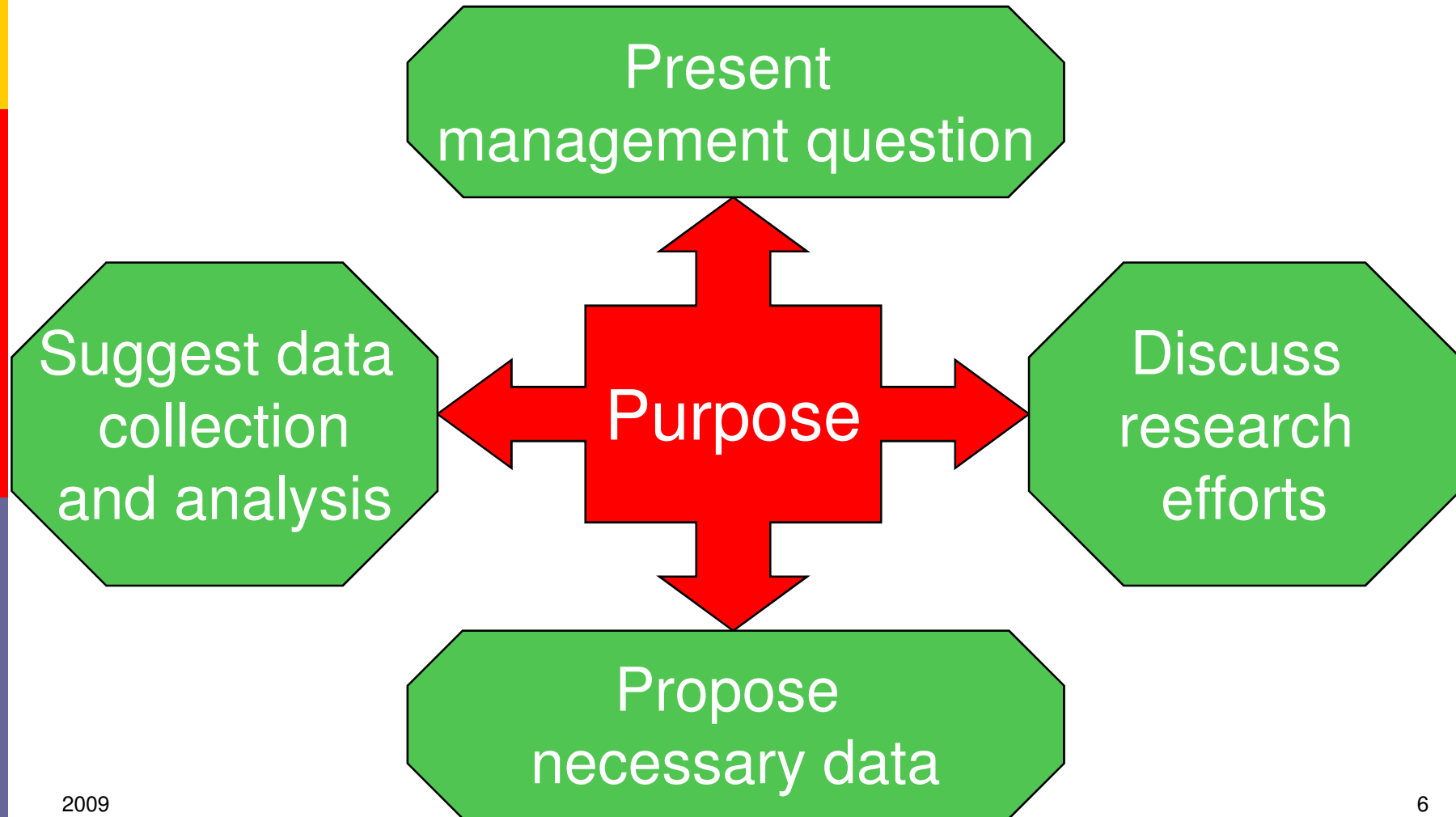
- **What** will be done
- **Why** it will be done
- **How** it will be done
- **Where** it will be done
- **To whom** it will be done
- What is the **benefit** of doing it

# The Research Proposal Process

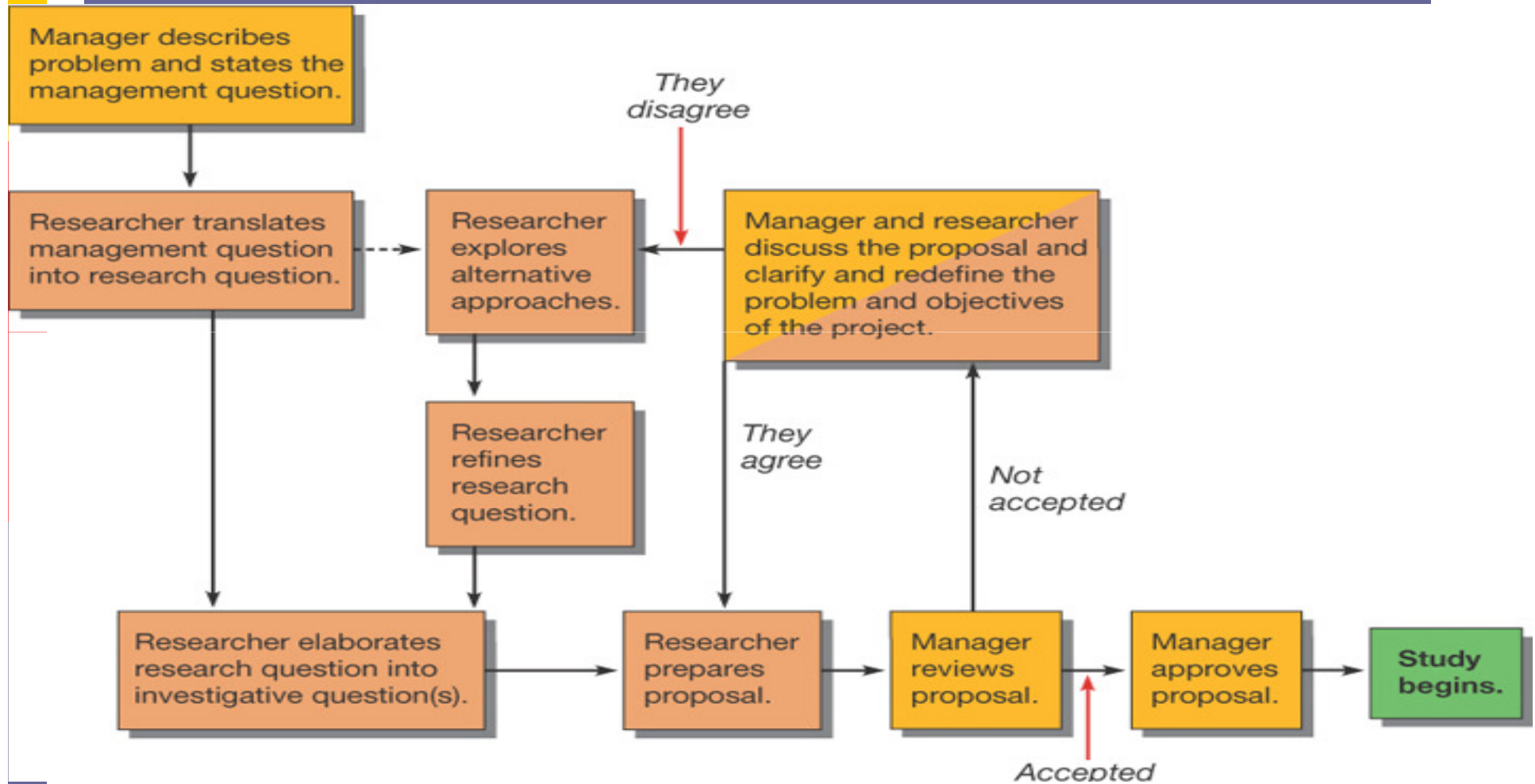


# The Research Proposal

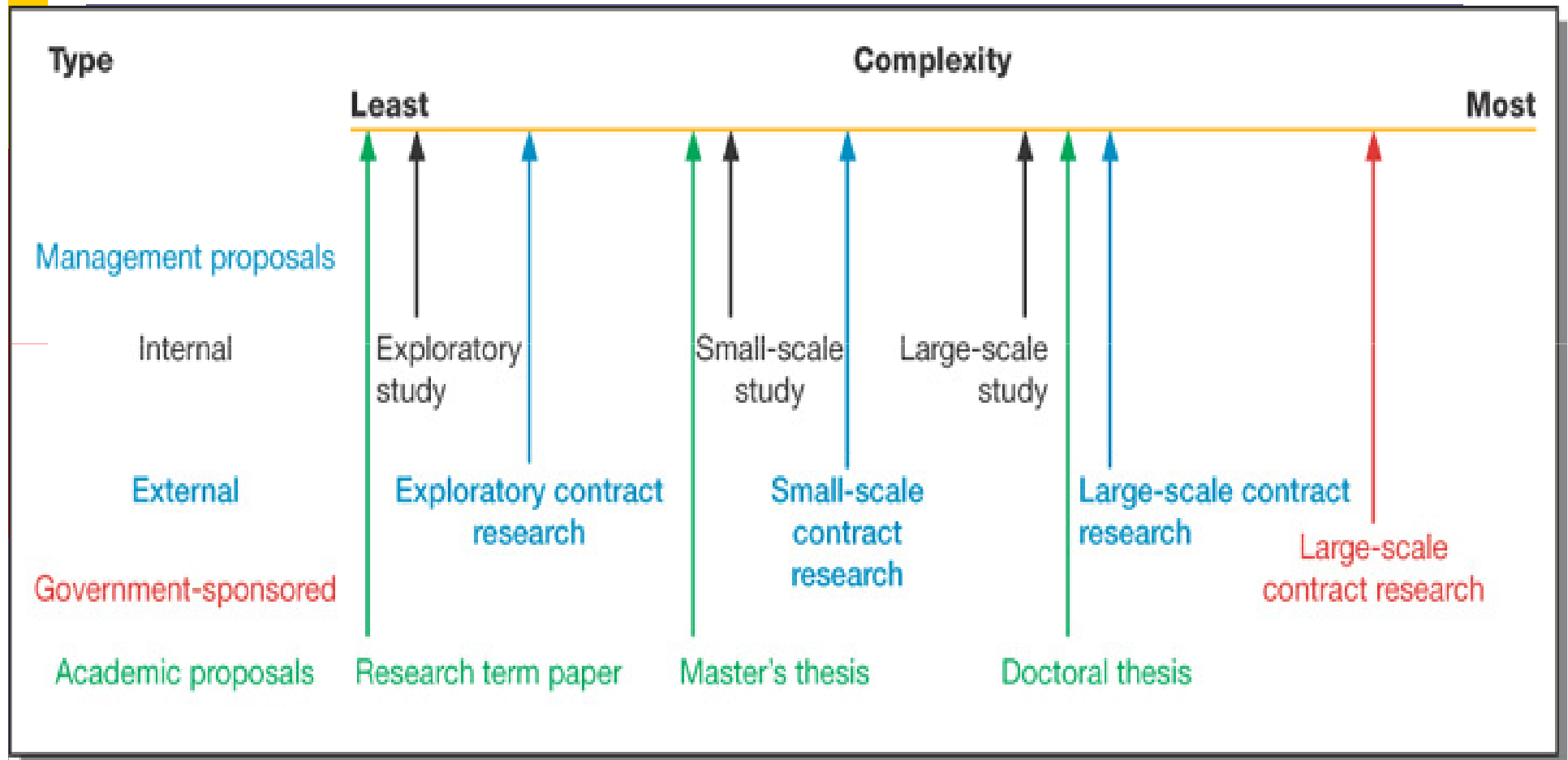
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# Proposal Development



# Proposal Complexity



# Types of Research Proposal

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Research proposals can be divided between those generated for internal and those for external audiences.

- An **internal proposal** is done by staff specialists or by the research department within the firm.
- **External proposals** may sponsored by university grant committees, government agencies, government contractors, not-for-profit organizations, or corporations . Generally, the larger the project, the more complex the proposal. These can be further classified:
  - **Solicited proposals**
  - **Unsolicited proposals**

# Types of Research Proposal (cont)

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- **Solicited proposals** is often in response to an RFP, is likely competing against several others for a contract or grant
- **Unsolicited proposals** represents a suggestion by a contract researcher for research that might be done

# Types of Research Proposal (cont)

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- There are **three levels of complexity**: exploratory studies, small-scale studies, and large-scale studies.
  - The **exploratory study** generates the most simple research proposal.
  - The **large-scale professional study** is the most complex and could be worth up to several million dollars.

# Modules

Proposal Types / Proposal Modules	Management						Government	Academic		
	Internal			External				Large-Scale Contract	Term Paper	Master's Thesis
	Exploratory Study	Small-Scale Study	Large-Scale Study	Exploratory Contract	Small-Scale Contract	Large-Scale Contract				
Executive summary		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Problem statement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Research objectives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Literature review			✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
Importance/benefits of study			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Research design	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Data analysis						✓	✓			✓
Nature and form of results		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Qualification of researchers				✓	✓	✓	✓			
Budget		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Schedule	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Facilities and special resources			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Project management			✓			✓	✓			
Bibliography			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Appendices/glossary of terms			✓			✓	✓		✓	✓
Measurement instrument			✓			✓	✓			✓

# Structuring the Research Proposal

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- Executive Summary
- Problem Statement
- Research Objectives
- Literature Review
- Importance/ Benefits of Study
- Research Design
- Data Analysis
- Nature/Form
- Research Qualifications
- Budget
- Schedule
- Facilities
- Project Management
- Bibliography
- Appendices

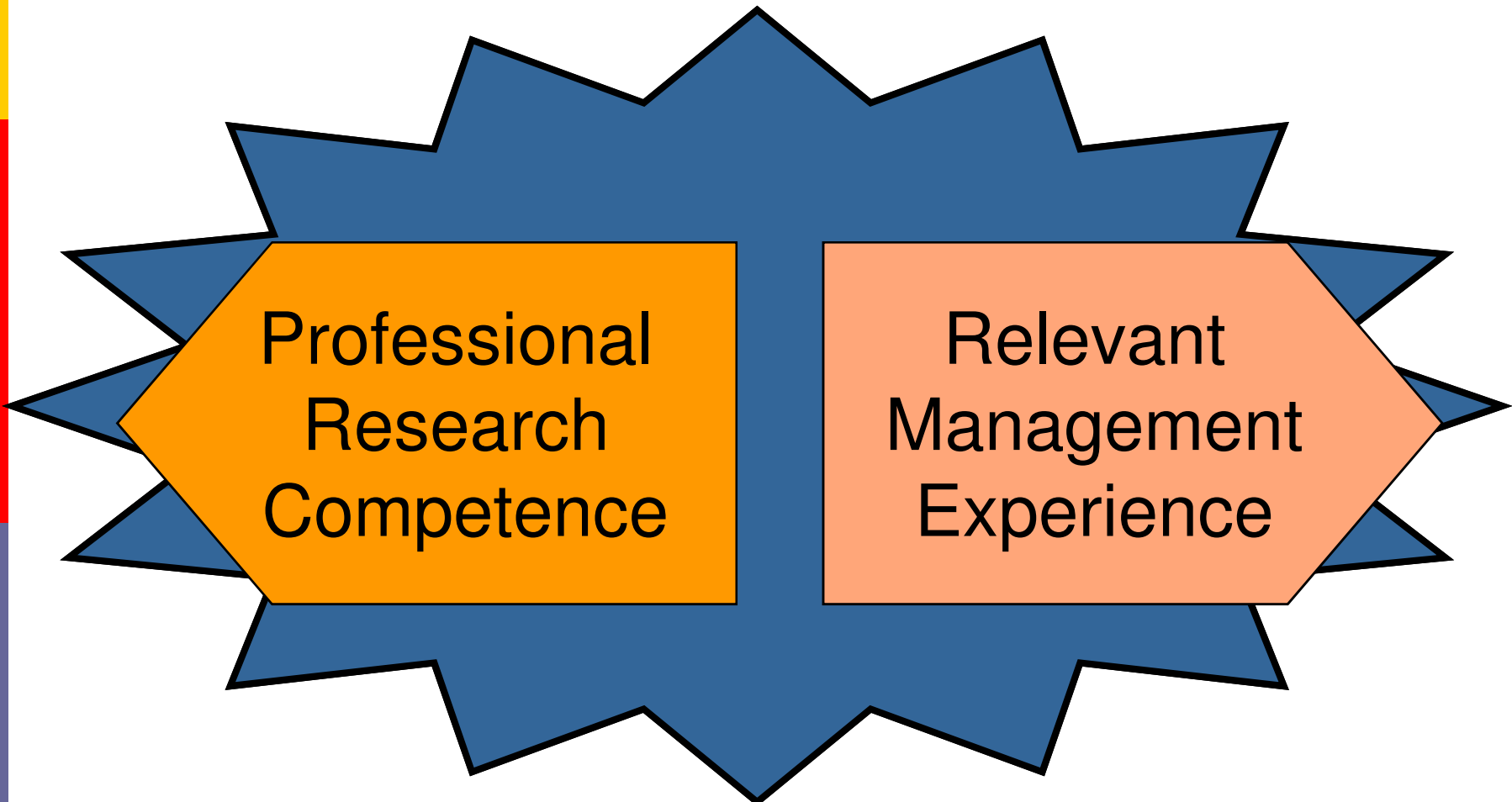
# Data Analysis: “Dummy” Table

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Household Income	Will Enroll	Might Enroll	Will Not Enroll
\$30-35,000			
\$25-29,999			
\$20-24,999			
\$15-19,999			
Less than \$14,999			

# Researcher Qualifications

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Professional  
Research  
Competence

Relevant  
Management  
Experience

# Budgeting for Samples

## HOW MUCH CAN YOU SAVE AT A NICKEL A NUMBER?



**PLENTY.**

If you buy random digit samples, our standard price of a nickel a number can really add up to big savings. Like 37% to 68% over your current sampling supplier. The best part is there's no sacrifice of quality or service. Ask around. We even

**STS**  
SCIENTIFIC  
TELEPHONE  
SAMPLES

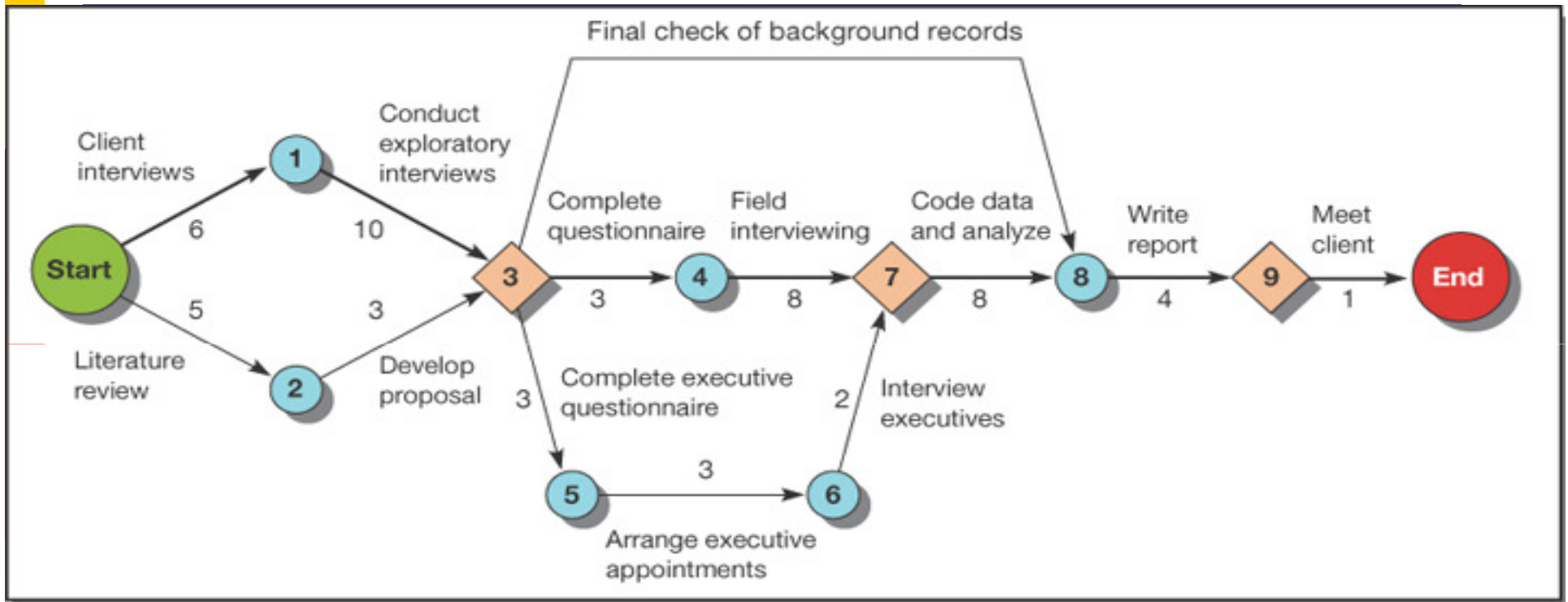
remember little niceties. Like a 100% guarantee. Professional advice. 24 hour service. An aggressive discount policy. Free record coding and sampling reports. No contracts to sign. Even an 800 number. Call STS now at 1-800-944-4-STS.

- Scientific Telephone Samples (STS) provides random dial, listed, and business samples for telephone and online surveys

# Sample Proposed Budget

Budget Items	Rate	Total Hours	Charge
<b>A. Salaries</b>			
1. Research director, Jason Henry	\$200/hr	20 hours	\$ 4,000
2. Associate	100/hr	10 hours	1,000
3. Research assistants (2)	20/hr	300 hours	6,000
4. Secretarial (1)	12/hr	100 hours	<u>1,200</u>
Subtotal			\$12,200
<b>B. Other costs</b>			
5. Employee services and benefits			
6. Travel			\$ 2,500
7. Office supplies			100
8. Telephone			800
9. Rent			
10. Other equipment			
11. Publication and storage costs			<u>100</u>
Subtotal			\$ 3,500
C. Total of direct costs			\$15,700
D. Overhead support			<u>5,480</u>
E. Total funding requested			\$21,180

# CPM Schedule



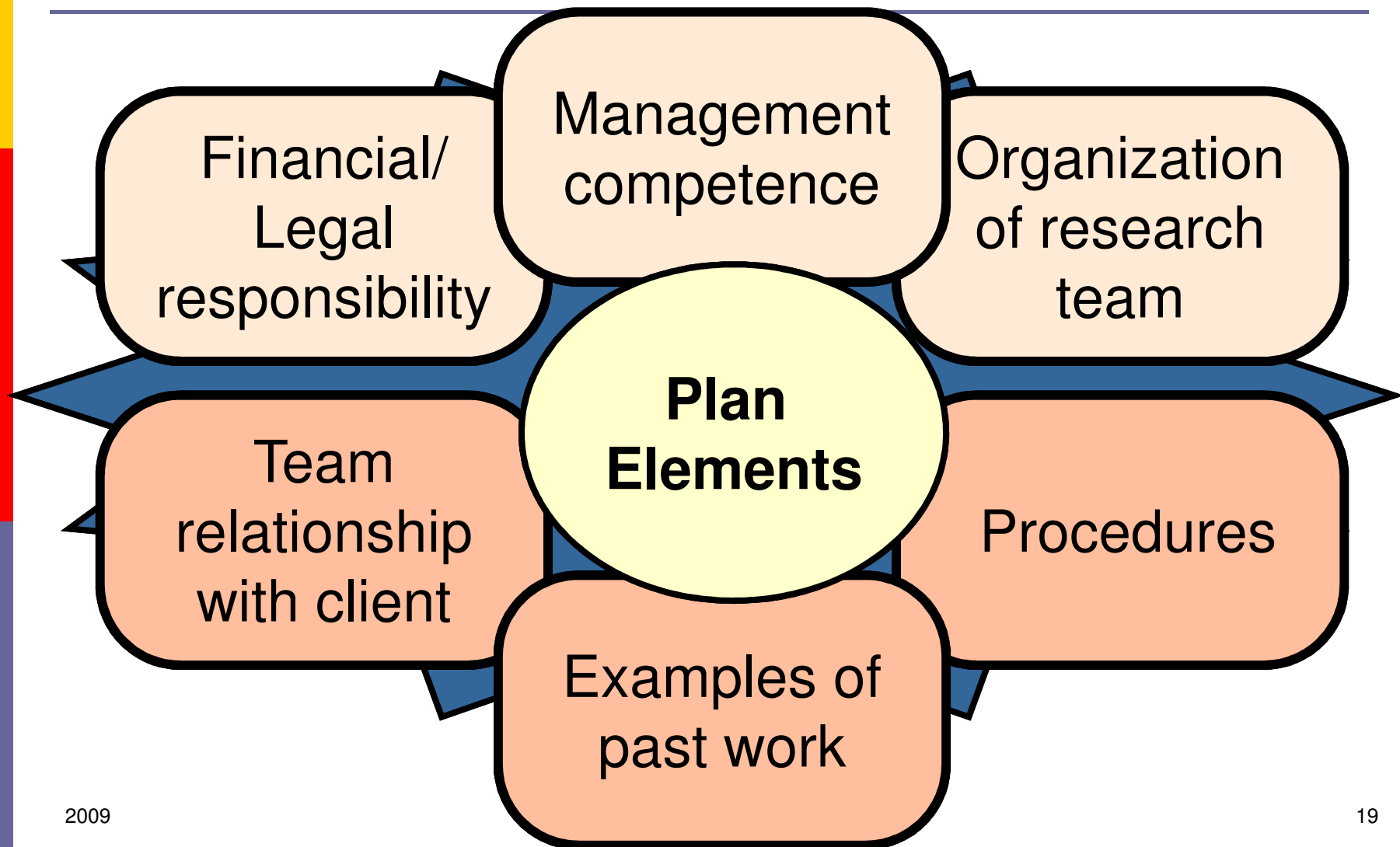
- Milestones:**
- 3 Proposal approval
  - 7 Interviews completed
  - 9 Final report completed

**Critical Path:**  
S-1-3-4-7-8-9-E

**Time to Completion:**  
40 working days

# Elements of a Project Management Plan

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## Repair Process Satisfaction Proposal MindWriter Corporation CompleteCare Program

### Problem Statement

MindWriter Corporation has recently created a service and repair program, CompleteCare, for its portable/laptop/notebook computers. This program promises to provide a rapid response to customers' service problems.

MindWriter is currently experiencing a shortage of trained technical operators in its telephone center. The package courier, contracted to pick up and deliver customers' machines to CompleteCare, has provided irregular execution. MindWriter has also experienced parts availability problems for some machine types.

Recent phone logs at the call center show complaints about CompleteCare; it is unknown how representative these complaints are and what implications they may have for satisfaction with MindWriter products.

Management desires information on the program's effectiveness and its impact on customer satisfaction to determine what should be done to improve the CompleteCare program for MindWriter product repair and servicing.

### Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to discover the level of satisfaction with the CompleteCare service program. Specifically, we intend to identify the component and overall levels of satisfaction with CompleteCare. Components of the repair process are important targets for investigation because they reveal:

- (1) How customer tolerance levels for repair performance affect overall satisfaction, and
- (2) Which process components should be immediately improved to elevate overall satisfaction of MindWriter customers experiencing product failures.

We will also discover the importance of types of product failure on customer satisfaction levels.

### Importance/Benefits

High levels of user satisfaction translate into positive word-of-mouth product endorsements. These endorsements influence the purchase outcomes for (1) friends and relatives and (2) business associates.

Critical incidents, such as product failures, have the potential to either undermine existing satisfaction levels or preserve and even increase the resulting levels of product satisfaction. The outcome of the episode depends on the quality of the manufacturer's response.

An extraordinary response by the manufacturer to such incidents will preserve and enhance user satisfaction levels to the point that direct and indirect benefits derived from such programs will justify their costs.

This research has the potential for connecting to ongoing MindWriter customer satisfaction programs and measuring the long-term effects of CompleteCare (and product failure incidents) on customer satisfaction.

### Research Design

**Exploration: Qualitative** We will augment our knowledge of CompleteCare by interviewing the service manager, the call center manager, and the independent package company's account executive. Based on a thorough inventory of CompleteCare's internal and external processes, we propose to develop a mail survey.

**Questionnaire Design** A self-administered questionnaire (postcard size) offers the most cost-effective method for securing feedback on the effectiveness of CompleteCare. The introduction on the postcard will be a variation of MindWriter's current advertising campaign.

Some questions for this instrument will be based on the investigative questions we presented to you previously, and others will be drawn from the executive interviews. We anticipate a maximum of 10 questions. A new five-point expectation scale, compatible with your existing customer satisfaction scales, is being designed.

Although we are not convinced that open-ended questions are appropriate for postcard questionnaires, we understand that you and Mr. Malraison like them. A comments/suggestions question will be included. In addition, we will work out a code block that captures the call center's reference number, model, and item(s) serviced.

**Logistics** The postal arrangements are: box rental, permit, and "business reply" privileges to be arranged in a few days. The approval for a reduced postage rate will take one to two weeks. The budget section itemizes these costs.

# Exhibit 6-9 Research Proposal for MindWriter Complete Care Satisfaction Research

# Evaluation of a Research Proposal

**Sara Armstrong**  
200 ShellPoint Tower  
Palm Beach, Florida 33480

Mr. Harry Shipley, President  
Economic Development Council  
1800 Pink Flamingo Way  
Palm Beach, Florida 33480

Dear Harry:

I have reviewed Robert Buffet's proposal for an investigation of the job creation practices of local companies and, in short, I am very much concerned with several aspects of the "proposal." It is not really a proposal at all, as it lacks sufficient detail.

First let me mention that I shared Buffet's proposal with my colleague, Jason Henry, a project director at Visionary Insights. I have worked with Jason on several projects and trust his opinion. Mr. Buffet and his organization may one day represent competition for Visionary Insights, and you must therefore be aware of a potential conflict of interest and perhaps discount the opinions stated here. Since I am delivering this letter to you in two days rather than the two weeks you requested, you may wish to discuss my comments with others.

What you and Mr. Buffet gave me is an abbreviated research plan for our county, but since it lacks many features found in a comprehensive proposal, I immediately saw it was not the full proposal that had been funded by the state commerce secretary. I called Tallahassee and reached a young woman who hemmed and hawed and refused to say if she was authorized to mail me the full proposal. Finally, I gave up arguing and gave her your address and told her she could mail it to you if she experienced an outbreak of belief in government-in-the-sunshine.

I then made several calls to people in Tallahassee. Did you know that this research idea is being floated by our senior U.S. senator, who is eager to throw a monkey wrench into the president's tax incentives plan? The senator whispered it to the governor and the governor whispered it to her commerce secretary, and here we are.

The problem statement is rather long and convoluted, but, in short, it poses the questions, "Are new high-tech companies creating jobs for residents of our county? Or are they bringing technical and manufacturing workers from outside the state and bypassing the local work force? Or are they doing research in these companies with a low level of manufacturing job creation? Or are they investing in 'smart' capital equipment that does not create jobs?" If you cut through the verbiage, I think you can see the project hits the mark with its questions.

The research objectives section is fairly straightforward. Buffet's people are going to identify all the companies in this county in the NAICS code groups associated with "high tech" and collect information on the number of locally hired employees in various job categories, chiefly in production, and also collect data on capital investments, debt, and other financial data, which Mr. Henry says makes good sense to collect and ought to be easy to do.

There is a section called Importance of the Study, which is full of platitudes and does not get around to mentioning the pending tax legislation. But at least the platitudes are brief.

I become nervous in the Design section. It calls for Mr. Buffet's group to go on site with a "team" and conduct individual depth interviews with the chief operating officer (COO), treasurer, and comptroller of each company and enter the data into a spreadsheet. I have double-checked this with Jason and also with a banker friend, and both of them assure me that a simple questionnaire might be mailed to the COO. There is no need whatsoever to send in a team to conduct unstructured open-ended interviews. While there might be a noncompliance problem associated with filling out a form, this might appropriately be addressed by pointing out the auspices—the state commerce secretary and your Economic Development Council—with an interview request as a last resort.

The proposal contains no budget and no specific list of researchers who will comprise the team. The firm would have carte blanche to go in with anyone on their payroll and try to induce the subjects to stray beyond the stated research objectives to talk about anything at all. Obviously such license would be a marketing tool and might allow the researchers to collect a list of researchable problems not related to the secretary's needs, as stated in the problem section.

I strongly advise you to tell Mr. Buffet to collect the information through a simple mail survey. Offer to send it out under your council's letterhead, or see if you can get the commerce office or even the governor's office to send it out. But do not subject your local business community to unstructured, free-ranging visits, which are clearly not justified by the research objectives.

Sincerely,  
*Sara*

.teknikir

- ❑ Development of review criteria
- ❑ Assignment of points
- ❑ Assignment of weights
- ❑ Generation of a proposal score
- ❑ Consideration of other factors

## 8.2 Penulisan Laporan Penelitian

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### Referensi

1. Singarimbun Masri, Sofyan Effendi, *Metode Penelitian Survei*, rev. ed, LP3ES, Jakarta, bab 5
2. Cooper, Donal R., Pamela S. Schindler, *Business Research Methods*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed, Mc-Graw Hill International Edition, 2006, ch. 4& 21
3. <http://business.nmsu.edu/~mhyman/>

### Topik:

1. Penulisan Laporan
2. Rangka Karangan

# Struktur Laporan

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1. Judul laporan
2. Kata pengantar
3. Daftar isi
4. Pendahuluan
5. Tubuh laporan
6. Ikhtisar/kesimpulan
7. Lampiran
8. Kepustakaan

# Pendahuluan

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- Latar belakang pengelitan
- Tujuan penelitian
- Metode penelitian
- Cara pemrosesan data
- Analisis data