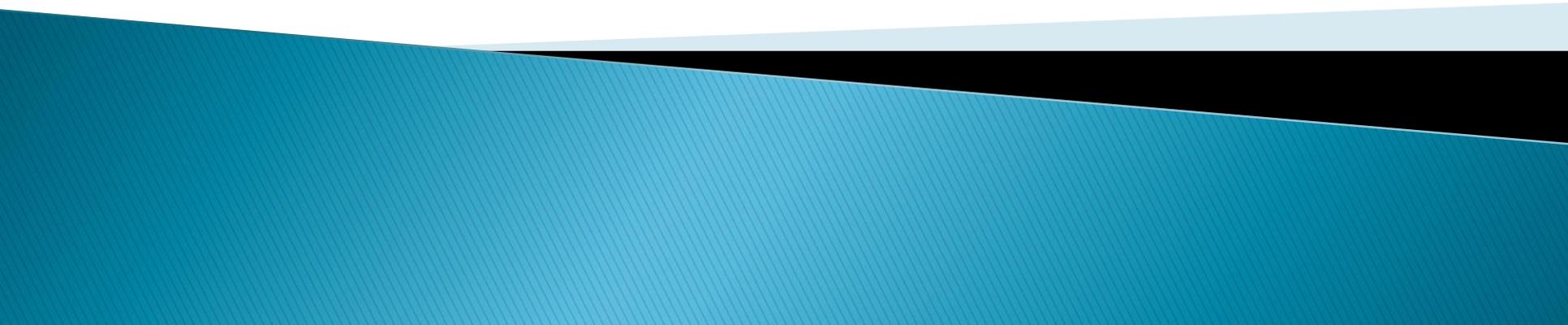


# Unit 16: Research for Strategic Managers

Dwayne Cargill  
Colbourne College

September 15, 2015



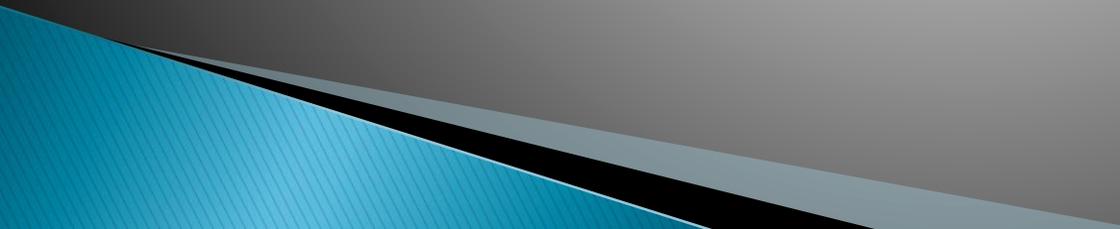
# Content

- ▶ Learning Objectives
  - ▶ Justifying your choice of research question:
    - Why select a Research Question?
    - Common Pitfalls
  - ▶ Finding relevant Literature for research question:
    - Conducting Literature survey
    - Types of Literature Sources
    - 3 stages Literature Search
  - ▶ References
- 

# Learning Objectives

- ▶ At the end of this session, Learners should:
    1. Conduct a research on **how to select a research question** :-
      - 1.3 justify their choice of research question
    2. Conduct a research on how to conduct a literature review:-
      - 2.1 conduct research to find literature relevant to the research question
- 

# JUSTIFYING THE CHOICE OF RESEARCH QUESTION



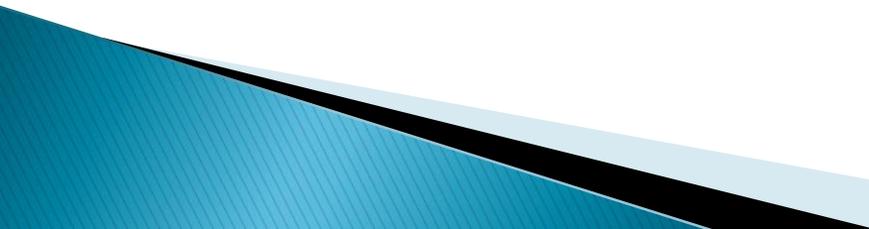
# Why Choose a Research Question

- ▶ Having gone through the factors that contribute to the process for research question selection, you should have a good idea about the importance of undertaking the research you have proposed.
  - ▶ Readers as well as funders of your research want to know if their time and resources is worth investing in your research so you need to convince them at the begin of the need for research around the area.
- 

# Why Select a Research Question?

- ▶ MaCalla (1998) acknowledges that the selection of research question is based on researcher's interest and values. However, this is not sufficient for the rest of the world so it's important to ask the following questions: how important is the topic for development of knowledge? How would the answer to questions which you pose for yourself affect other parts of the knowledge structure within political science? Would it extend "theories" to areas not yet explored? Would it replicate earlier findings in a different setting? Would it resolve present inconsistencies in our interpretation of evidence or create inconsistencies by calling into doubt currently accepted interpretations? A research project which adds to our knowledge in such ways is bound to be considered important.

# Objectives of the Study

- ▶ You need to indicate the objectives of the research. Objectives usually cover things like key areas in the literature that need to be explored, an outline data collection statement, and possibly some comment on data analysis (e.g. the study will apply X's framework to assess job satisfaction in company Y).
  - ▶ Based on your reading and review of the literature, what has been said about the topic? Has anyone else answer this question? If yes, why then do it again, were there flaws in their methodology or assumptions? Are there any gaps in previous research? Does the research question response to a business problem? Will this be of interest to anyone else in the field.
  - ▶ If you can respond positively to these, then you are well on your way to justified your research question.
- 

# Provide evidence

- ▶ In justifying your research question, ensure that you are able to support your claims. Make reference to the literature.
  - ▶ You can also make reference to events that have taken place that would require answers that your research question can provide.
- 

# Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- ▶ In justifying your research question, you want to also think about some common pitfalls that impact research success:
  - Time
  - Money
  - Contacts
  - Research skills
  - Research materials

# FINDING LITERATURE RELEVANT TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION

# Conduct Literature Survey

- ▶ At the initial stage of trying to identify a research project, any kind of literature will do – using keywords to experiment in google or other search engine until we begin to find materials that are useful. In conducting your research to find relevant literature note that this should be at two levels:
  - Conceptual Literature: concerning concepts and theories
  - Empirical Literature: concerning studies made earlier which are similar to the one proposed.
- ▶ Conducting a literature survey helps you to have a clear idea of what is out there. It allows you to identify specific kinds of literatures, so that you can judge the relative merit of what you find for your research study.
- ▶ You need to be aware of the various sources of literature that are available to you. Some may not be available to you however, there are persons who you know that can help you to access these those sources.

# Types of Literature Sources

- ▶ **Primary Literature sources** – these are least accessible, often being in company literature or unpublished research, private correspondence and can include conference proceedings. In some cases this is very valuable information, which relates directly to the research problem in which you are interested (Greener & Martelli 2015 pg. 29).
- ▶ May include sensitive information, what companies decided, and why. For academic research, peer-reviewed journals, such as journal of management studies, are considered more reliable than trade magazines and news channels.
- ▶ This type of information are most time found in company libraries, records centres, research departments. It is therefore important to speak with professionals, subject area experts and teachers who can point you to important sources materials.
- ▶ Blogs and personal websites are making it easier to bring primary source data to the public but you must be very careful with these as there is usually no review of monitoring process for this information as is the case with secondary sources.

# Types of Literature Sources

- ▶ **Secondary Literature sources** – These sources are much more easily available in the public domain and include published books and articles in journals, news media and published business, government and international body publications. Value is high but these publicly available media is likely to be less current than primary sources, due to the time it takes to check, review, authorise and publish. For academic research, peer-reviewed journals, such as journal of management studies, are considered more reliable than trade magazines and news channels.
- ▶ **Tertiary literature sources** – these are collections of or, gateways to, secondary sources. They include encyclopaedias, dictionaries, citation indexes, catalogues and web-based portal, databases and journals' contents pages. We use them to track down secondary literature which is relevant to our field.
- ▶ (Greener & Martelli, 2015 pg. 29)

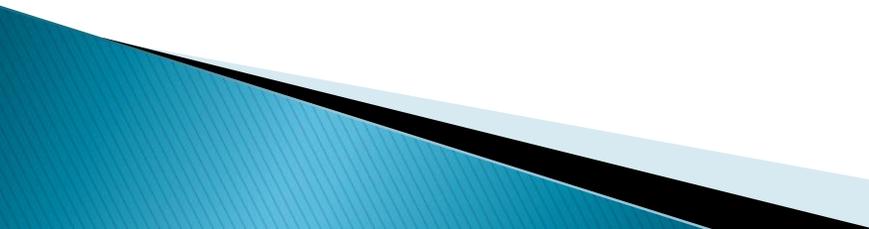
# Three Stages Literature Search

- ▶ If you are not familiar with the research area, a good way to conduct your search is to use this 3 stages process:
- ▶ Stage 1: Use broad terms in google or Wikipedia to get general information on the topic. Lengthen your search string (instead of motivation use Herberg's theory of motivation. Use AND & OR to refine your search. Look out for American vs. UK spelling. Review your search result and look for domains ending with .edu, .uk, .ac. These academic sites are generally more reliable information source.

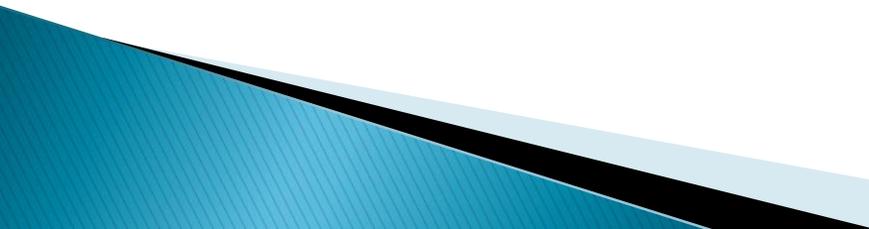
# Three Stages Literature Search

- ▶ Stage 2: Now you have a better vocabulary to describe what you are looking for, try a relevant database or portal (tertiary literature source). Eg. Of business source is Emerald ([www.emeraldinsight.com](http://www.emeraldinsight.com); [www.ovid.com](http://www.ovid.com); [www.ebscohost.com](http://www.ebscohost.com);) Within the portal use more specific search terms and make sure you are looking in the right place (abstract, full text, or key words)
- ▶ Stage 3: Often full version are not available for free and may require subscription. In that case print the abstract and take to the library, you may be able to get it there or a similar article. This is just one stage of the research process that can be very time consuming so leave enough time to do it.

# When to Stop Searching?

- ▶ This is a difficult question to answer. However whenever you start to find the same ideas and authors in several articles you should begin to feel comfortable that you have covered a good range of literature.
  - ▶ In most academic domains there are seminal articles or books that are widely cited by other authors in the field. You should try to read these, preferably the original version.
  - ▶ You are now ready to critically evaluate the key literature for inclusion in your research proposal
- 

# General Sources for Literature information

- Journals
  - Government/Business reports
  - Books
  - Online Articles.
  - Sources of information is largely dependent on the nature of your study.
- 

# Next Class

- ▶ Read Chapters 2 and 3 of Greener S & Martelli J 2015 An Introduction to Business Research Method
  - ▶ Submit Ac 1.3 and 2.1 by Monday.
  - ▶ Revise Ac. 1.1 and 1.2
- 

# References

- ▶ Babbie, E 2004 The Practice of Social Research, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Thompson Wadsworth, USA
- ▶ Greener S. & Martelli J 2015 Introduction to Business Research Method, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Bookboon.com
- ▶ McCalla Charles 1998 How to Write research Design and Research Reports, Social Science Research and Instructional Council retrieved from <http://www.csub.edu/ssricrem/howto/mccall.htm>
- ▶ Resources for Behavioural Science Researchers retrieved from <http://theresearchassistant.com/tutorial/2-1.asp>