

Excercises: Realizing Project Objectives

Purpose: To operationalize project objectives/research questions

Resources: Domains of knowledge paper, problem statement, project goal, readings

You should use the data matrix to operationalize your project key objectives. That is you should begin linking the conceptualizations of others working on similar issues, through a review of the literature and linking these processes to your particular project. The first step in this process is to derive project objectives and research questions. Now you must begin thinking downstream to the process of generating information about your project. How will you fulfill these objectives? The purpose is not to put a method to them yet, but to think about what you need to know and who holds the answers.

Task

Using the questions below as prompts please write a detailed description of your project's questions or objectives. Then, as a summary, prepare a flow chart that represents the connections explained in your narrative.

1. What information do you need to know to fulfill the objective?
2. Why do I need to know it? (link it to your domains of knowledge paper)
3. What kind of data will answer the question?
4. Where can this data be found?
5. How will you access to these data?
6. What's your time line for gathering the data
7. What methods are most useful for this type of data collection?
 - a. If more than one method is useful for this question/objective, which is best and why? Use appropriate references.



Methodology Assignment

Now that you've begun to develop general background knowledge about your project it is time to settle on some research objectives and identified a few methods that might be useful to your project, it's time to begin linking these objectives to methods of observation and into a coherent methodology section. Use your completed individual worksheets, the Singleton text, and Maxwell, will be useful to help you answer the following questions:

1. What are your project's primary goals? Or what is your problem statement?
2. Describe your research design. Is it Qualitative? Quantitative? A mixture of both? How will this improve your data collection and findings?
3. What are your research questions or objectives? Why are they important to achieving your goals? How are they grounded in the literature (provide examples from your background section)?
4. For each research question or objective you identified, answer the following questions.
 - a. What evidence is required to solve your project's problem or achieve its goals?
 - b. What procedures must you use to collect this evidence (data)? (interviews, surveys, focus groups, archival, existing resources)
 - c. Why are these methods most appropriate for your project? Why are they more appropriate than other suitable methods? How will the answers they provide answer your questions than the other alternatives?
5. How will you analyze your data? Under a separate heading answer this question for each of your data collection procedures.

Sample outline

- I. Introduction
 - a. Problem statement/goal
 - b. Description of research design
- II. Data collection procedures
 - a. Research question/objective #1
 - i. 4a (above)
 - ii. 4b
 - iii. 4c
 - iv. 4d
 - b. Research question/objective #2 (as II a above)
 - c. Repeat
- III. Data analysis
 - a. Objective #1
 - i. What techniques will you use to analyze your data?
 - ii. Why is this technique appropriate?
 - b. Objective #2 (and so forth)
- IV. Section summary