



PROPOSE A RESEARCH PROJECT

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Why have I decided to do some research?

- If the answer to this question is because you have been told to do so, either by your tutor or by your boss, you need to think about how you're to remain motivated throughout your project.
- Research can be a long process and take up much of your time. It is important to stay interested in what you're doing if you are to complete your project successfully.
- However, if you want to conduct some research because something has fascinated you, or you have identified a gap in the research literature, then you are lucky and should not have a problem with motivation.

How can I remain interested in my research?

The obvious answer to this is to choose a topic which **interests** you. Most of you do have this choice within the limitations of your subject – be **creative** and **think** about something which will **fascinate** you.

The Five Ws

- What?
- Why?
- Who?
- Where?
- When?

WHAT?

- What is your research? This question needs to be answered as **specifically** as possible.
- One of the hardest parts in the early stages is to be able to define your project, so much research fails because the researcher has been unable to do this. A useful tip is to sum up, in one sentence only, your research.
- If you are unable to do this, the chances are your research topic is too broad, ill thought out or too obscure (not clear).

WHY?

- Why do you want to do the research? What is its purpose? Okay, you might have been told to do some research by your tutor or by your boss, but there should be another reason why you have chosen your particular subject.
- It might be solely to do with the fact that you are interested in the topic. This is a good start as you need to be interested in your research if you are to keep up your enthusiasm and remain motivated.
- Or you might have identified a gap in the research literature – this is good as it shows you have carried out careful background research.
- Or perhaps you want to try to obtain funding for a particular service or enterprise and you need to do some research first to find out if there is demand for what you are proposing.

WHO?

- Who will be your participants? However, you should think about the type of people with whom you will need to get in touch with and whether it will be possible for you to contact them. If you have to conduct your research within a particular time scale, there's little point choosing a topic which would include people who are difficult or expensive to contact.

WHERE?

- Where are you going to conduct your research? Thinking about this question in geographical terms will help you to narrow down your research topic. Also, you need to think about the resources in terms of budget and time that are available to you. If you're a student who will not receive travel expenses or any other out of pocket expenses, choose a location close to home, college or university.

WHEN?

- When are you going to do your research? Thinking about this question will help you to sort out whether the research project you have proposed is possible within your time scale. It will also help you to think more about your participants, when you need to contact them and whether they will be available at that time.

Ask yourself the five 'Ws':

- What is my research?
- Why do I want to do the research?
- Who are my research participants?
- Where am I going to do the research?
- When am I going to do the research?