

In writing this book we wanted to provide business school students with a guide to research methods that would be easy to read, tailored to their modules in research methods, and could help them in carrying out their own research projects. We also wanted the book to be comprehensive covering a wide a range of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

A major feature of the book is the use of examples. Throughout the text we provide examples of the use of different research methods and approaches showing how they have been applied by researchers in the field of management and business. We have done this because, in addition to introducing students to important principles of doing research, we also wanted to show how they could be put into practice.

We feel that a book such as this is important for business students in many ways but two issues in particular stand out for us. First, we are convinced that students need to know about the mechanics of the research process so that they can understand how findings are arrived at and therefore they can critically appraise research that might otherwise be accepted at face value. Secondly, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, students are increasingly being required to conduct their own investigations. These can take a variety of forms, such as mini-projects linked to modules and larger exercises like dissertations. *Business Research Methods* has been written with this kind of requirement in mind and to this end provides students with tips, examples, checklists, and tables of comparisons between different research methods and approaches so that they have a wide-ranging knowledge base for conducting such investigations. In addition, issues that are often seen as marginal to the research process but which are central to conducting a project – such as formulating research questions, searching the literature, and writing up findings – are covered. We have also introduced students to some of the debates that impinge on the use of research methods, such as ethical issues.

Students sometimes find research methods a daunting subject to study. We have sought to demystify the field and to provide a comprehensive, readable and relevant textbook that will be relevant to a wide constituency of business students.

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