

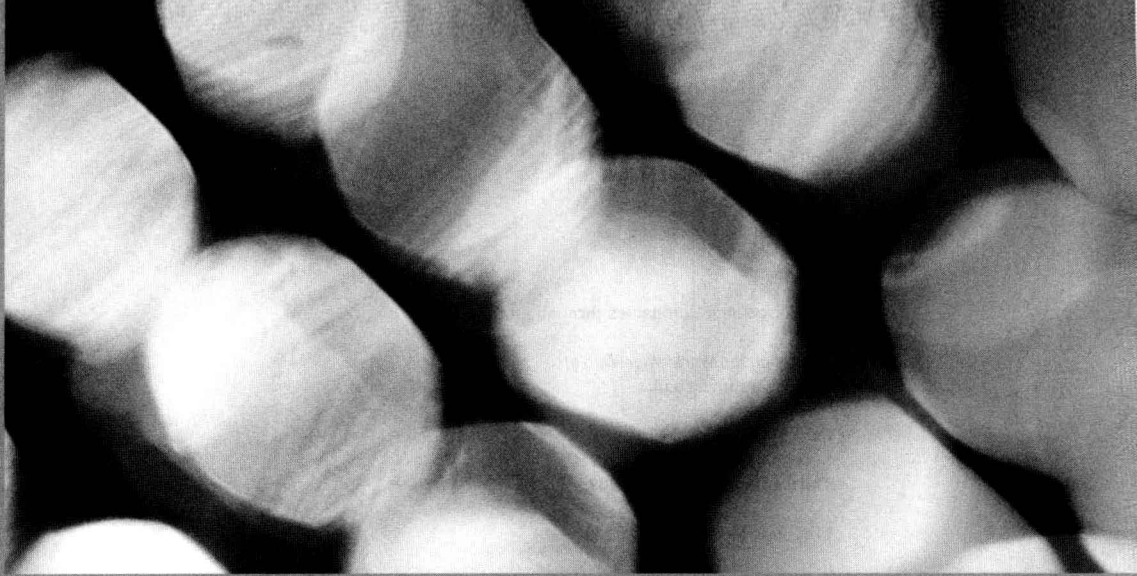
Yvonne McGivern

The Practice of Market Research

Third Edition

FT Prentice Hall
FINANCIAL TIMES

MRS.



Third Edition

THE PRACTICE OF MARKET RESEARCH

An Introduction

Yvonne McGivern

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FOREWORD

In recent years the research sector has enjoyed a period of buoyancy and considerable change – driven not least by a booming global economy and growth in new sectors and markets. Research has been able to grasp new opportunities, powered by significant client investment and interest in the ever-evolving field of customer insight. Over the past few decades methods of data collection have developed at a rapid pace. From online questionnaires to surveys using mobile phone text messaging, researchers use technology to provide businesses with a wide range of in-depth information. On one hand, this has lowered costs and increased efficiency. On the other, it has reinforced the need to ensure that researchers understand the fundamentals of research so that they are able to provide high quality information and insight.

At the heart of successful research remains a series of important basic principles which enable it to provide insights into problems and information on which sound decisions can be based. It is vital that anyone undertaking research understands these principles and the ethics that underpin them. The MRS Advanced Certificate in Market and Social Research Practice supports this process as it provides a benchmark of the knowledge, skills and understanding which researchers need in the early part of their careers. Since its launch in 2002, the MRS Advanced Certificate has grown to become an essential tool in developing new research practitioners. As Managing Director of Operations at Ipsos MORI, a research organisation with strong roots in both market and social research, I believe that the Advanced Certificate is ideally suited for all our researchers. In the UK, seven out of the ten largest research suppliers incorporate the qualification into their professional development programmes and currently 25 per cent of all candidates who sit the qualification are from client-side organisations. More and more global suppliers are rolling out the Advanced Certificate to researchers around the world, and having a textbook such as *The Practice of Market Research: An Introduction*, which matches the syllabus of the qualification, is important in assisting this process.

This third edition of *The Practice of Market Research: An Introduction* has been comprehensively revised to reflect the changes in the MRS Advanced Certificate Syllabus and expanded in areas such as project management and quantitative data analysis to provide a clear pathway for candidates wishing to progress to the MRS Diploma in Market and Social Research Practice. Both qualifications are one way of ensuring that practitioners of the future understand the fundamentals of good research while equipping them to be able to respond to rapidly changing technological and global research needs.

Rowland Lloyd
MRS Chairman and Managing Director of Operations, Ipsos MORI

ABOUT MRS



- With members in more than 70 countries, MRS is the world's largest association serving all those with professional equity in provision or use of market, social and opinion research, and in business intelligence, market analysis, customer insight and consultancy.
- MRS has a diverse membership of *individuals* at all levels of experience and seniority within agencies, consultancies, support services, client-side organisations, the public sector and the academic community.
- It also serves MRS Company Partners agencies, suppliers of support services, buyers and end-users – of all types and scale who are committed throughout their *organisations* to supporting the core MRS values of professionalism, research excellence and business effectiveness.
- In consultation with its individual members and Company Partners, MRS supports best practice by setting and enforcing industry standards. The commitment to uphold the MRS *Code of Conduct* is supported by the Codeline service and a wide range of specialist guidelines.
- MRS contributes significantly to the enhancement of skills and knowledge by offering various qualifications and membership grades, as well as training and professional development resources.
- MRS enables its members and Company Partners to be very well-informed through the provision of a wide range of publications, information services and conferences.
- MRS offers many opportunities for meeting, communicating and networking across sectors and disciplines, as well as within specialisms.
- As 'the voice of market research', MRS defends and promotes research in its advocacy and representational efforts.
- Through its media relations and public affairs activities, MRS aims to create the widest possible understanding of the process and value of market, social and opinion research, and to achieve the most favourable climate of opinion and legislative environment for research.

April 2008

PREFACE

The aim of this book

This book provides a comprehensive, straightforward account of the practice of market research – the techniques and the day-to-day tasks of the researcher – that is both easy to read and easy to understand.

Who should use this book?

This book provides a thorough introduction to the practice of market research. It is suitable for undergraduates on research methods or research skills courses, and is suitable for undergraduates and postgraduates on courses where there is a requirement to complete a research project or dissertation. In addition, research practitioners will find it useful as a reference text and source of information and ideas on both method and practice.

The book was also designed with the MRS Advanced Certificate in Market and Social Research Practice in mind. This is a degree-level qualification that follows the research process from problem definition to reporting the findings. It aims to help candidates to develop a wide range of research skills. The book covers the syllabus for this qualification and there is a section setting out where candidates can find the information they need as they work through each element of the syllabus.

New to this edition

In preparing this new edition of the book some changes have been made to the basic structure in response to customer feedback and to changes in the syllabus of the MRS Advanced Certificate in Market and Social Research Practice. In brief, Chapter 9 – which covered designing questions to measure attitudes – has been merged with the chapter on designing questionnaires to give a new, comprehensive Chapter 9; and the chapter on analysing quantitative data has been expanded into two chapters, Chapters 12 and 13. Material in all chapters has been revised and where necessary updated. Below is a list of the major changes made for this edition.

Revised Chapter 1 on the practice of market research

Since technology is now embedded in how research is done, with online methods of data collection now widely used and accepted as standard research practice, the section on technology and the practice of research was no longer relevant and has been removed. It has made way for some additional material on ethics and the practice of research. A new case study on the McDonald's brand has been added.

Revised Chapter 5 on secondary research

The focus of this chapter is now on doing secondary research or desk research, as it is often called, with updated information on secondary sources and new sections on writing a literature review and citing sources.

Revised Chapter 6 on planning and conducting qualitative research

This chapter has been reorganised with clearer headings and some expanded content. It offers material on methods of data collection in qualitative research (including online methods), interviewing and moderating skills and how to design an interview or discussion guide.

Expanded Chapter 8 on sampling

There is a slightly expanded section in this chapter on sampling in qualitative research.

Expanded Chapter 9 on designing questions

There was some overlap between the chapters devoted to researching attitudes and designing questions. Since designing questions on attitudes poses many of the same problems as designing questions on other things it was decided for this edition to bring them together in an expanded Chapter 9: Designing questionnaires. This change also reflects changes in the MRS Advanced Certificate syllabus.

Expanded Chapter 10 on managing a research project

This chapter contains new material on project management including sections on the role of the project manager, project management tools, communication, leadership and managing resources as well as a revised section giving an overview of the analysis process.

Revised and expanded Chapters 12 and 13 on analysing quantitative data

In the previous edition Chapter 13 covered the basics of quantitative data analysis including univariate and bivariate analysis and the use of inferential statistics. This material has been developed and expanded to look at the whole process of analysis in a slightly different way across two chapters. Chapter 12 focuses on understanding data and how they are transferred from questionnaire to analysis package through to univariate descriptive analysis. Chapter 13 takes the reader through bivariate descriptive analysis and data reduction, and on to explanatory and inferential analysis, setting out some of the more commonly used techniques.

Expanded Chapter 14 on communicating the findings

This chapter contains a new section on what is meant by added value in the research process.

Ethical and professional practice: the MRS Code of Conduct

In each chapter, where relevant, new material has been added that highlights key aspects of ethical and professional practice, drawing attention to the rules and guidance set out in the MRS Code of Conduct.

Case studies drawn from real life research projects

As in the previous edition, most chapters contain several case studies drawn from real-life research projects. For this new edition the range of topics covered by the case studies has been expanded. To make the case studies more accessible – and to increase the value of them as teaching and learning tools – each one has been revised and given a new introduction, new headings, an edited key word list and a new section detailing why that case study is worth reading. The aim of the case studies is to show research in action, to illustrate and/or provide examples of the techniques and practices covered in the chapter. They aim to demonstrate why research was done and how it was done. In addition, they illustrate the usefulness and value of research, how research relates to and addresses the decision maker's problem. They also show how researchers overcome difficulties in setting up and running projects, and finally, they highlight innovative approaches to research practice – from design through to dissemination.

Distinctive features

METHODS AND PRACTICE

The book is unusual in that it covers research methods *and* the practical tasks involved in running a research project. Few other textbooks do this. For this reason the book is particularly valuable to practitioners as well as students. There is comprehensive coverage of the following:

- research design;
- sampling;
- secondary research;
- qualitative data collection techniques including ethnography, semiotics and online methods;
- quantitative data collection including online methods;
- questionnaire design; and
- qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

An entire chapter is devoted to the analysis of qualitative data, a topic which few other market research texts cover in any detail.

In terms of the practical tasks involved in setting up and running a project and bringing it to completion, there is comprehensive coverage (with examples) of the following:

- how to prepare a brief;
- how to write a proposal;
- how to manage a project – including how to brief interviewers, how to prepare a coding frame, how to write a data processing specification;
- how to prepare and write a report;
- how to design and give an oral presentation;
- how to evaluate research findings; and
- professional practice and the MRS Code of Conduct.

REAL-LIFE CASE STUDIES AND EXAMPLES

As noted above, throughout the book there are examples of research in action, some new to this edition. They cover a wide variety of sectors and topics in market and social research. On the market research side there are examples of research on well-known brands from the arts, media, telecommunications, financial services, retailing and fast moving consumer

goods (FMCG) sectors including Barclays Bank, the BBC, BT, Levi Strauss, McDonald's, Shell International, Spider-Man/Columbia Tri-Star Pictures, *The Mirror* newspaper, Unilever Bestfoods Europe and Van den Berghs. On the social research side there are examples of research for government and charities on complex social issues including anti-social behaviour, AIDS awareness, exclusion from school, teenage pregnancy, and child abuse and neglect.

In addition to the case studies, there are examples of the key documents and outputs of research. These include examples of a brief; a proposal; terms and conditions of business; project timetables and costing grids; a sampling summary; discussion and interview guides; questions and sections of questionnaires; interviewer briefing notes; findings from pilot studies; a coding frame and list of extractions; an analysis specification; an audit list for analysis of qualitative data; charts and diagrams; a checklist for preparing a report; and examples of key bits of a report – an abstract and summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CLEAR STRUCTURE

The book is divided into three parts: Part I, Introducing market and social research; Part II, Getting started; and Part III, Getting on and finishing up. Part I provides an introduction to market and social research; Part II deals with getting a project up and running, from thinking about the decision maker's problem and on to the research problem through to designing the questionnaire or discussion guide; and Part III deals with getting on and finishing up, getting the project into the field, analysing, communicating and reviewing the findings.

SUPERB PEDAGOGY TO AID LEARNING

Each chapter opens with an **Introduction** which summarises the aim of the chapter. A list of **Topics covered** is then presented. Next, there is **Relationship to MRS Advanced Certificate Syllabus**, a useful tool that shows how the material in the chapter relates to the MRS Advanced Certificate Syllabus. Next, **Learning outcomes** show exactly what you should be able to do after reading each chapter. **Key words** pulled from the case study texts are presented after a short summary of the focus of the **Case study** to show at a glance what the case study illustrates. In addition, under the heading **Why this Case study is worth reading** there is a **list of reasons** that highlights the value of the case study in terms of what it shows about research practice and the research process.

At the end of the chapter you will find **Chapter summaries**. These help to reinforce the main points made in the chapter, and are useful as a revision tool. **Questions and exercises** at the end of each chapter are designed to test the reader's knowledge and understanding and the ability to apply that knowledge and understanding to research scenarios. These can be used by the reader for self-study and/or in-class discussions. Each chapter ends with **References and Recommended reading** which provide more detail on the topics or issues covered in that chapter. Finally, at the end of the book, is the **Bibliography**.

WEBSITE

A range of support materials, including suggested solutions to the questions and exercises in this book, is available to lecturers and students on the website for this book. To access, visit www.pearsoned.co.uk/mcgivern. To obtain a password, contact your local Pearson Education sales representative.

GUIDE TO THE MAIN FOCUS OF CASE STUDIES

Case study title		What it is about	Research techniques and issues covered	Quantitative research	Qualitative research	Market research	Social research
1.1	McDonald's listens	How research helped to re-establish the brand's credibility and regain customers' trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market research in action; • importance of staying in touch with customers; • importance of understanding changing environment; • end result of research – actions taken, impact on organisation and brand. 	✓	✓	✓	
1.2	Levi Strauss: research compels the business to act	How the company overhauled its approach to market research and the effect this had on business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where the research function sits in large organisations; • links between internal research team and external research supplier; • examples of types of research used by an organisation; • role of research in achieving business goals; application of research findings. 			✓	
1.3	The government reaches an understanding	How the government uses research to develop policies and strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of research in policy development and implementation. 		✓		✓
1.4	Improving performance	How the right sort of research at the right time can improve business performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens when a charity/public sector organisation acts without doing the right research; • what happens when the right research is done at the right time. 	✓		✓	
2.1	Use of a panel	Reasons for using a panel survey, how it works and what the findings have been used for.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example of a panel in action; • design and set up of a panel; • link between information needs and design; • application of the findings. 	✓			✓
2.2	Investigating SPIDER-MAN	Why research was needed and what the findings revealed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for research; • links between organisation's marketing and business goals and the research; • exploratory research enquiry; • international research; • the output from the research. 		✓	✓	
2.3	'I know what you did last summer'	How valuable information on customer behaviour and market characteristics was retrieved by secondary analysis of box office data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example of secondary data analysis; • use of a database; • descriptive research enquiry; • how valuable insight can be extracted from existing data; • end uses of 'insight'. 	✓		✓	
2.4	The Scottish Executive: dealing with anti-social behaviour	How research was conducted on a complex topic, anti-social behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why research was needed; • research objectives; • use of primary and secondary research; • structure of a research project and key elements of it. 	✓	✓		✓

Case study title		What it is about	Research techniques and issues covered	Quantitative research	Qualitative research	Market research	Social research
3.1	Looking at <i>The Mirror</i> : identifying the business issues	The challenges faced by a national daily newspaper at a time of great change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues in unpacking business problem and defining research problem and information needs; issues in 'selling' research findings to internal audience. 			✓	
3.2	Should I talk to you?	How the initial phases of a research project for a charity were handled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for research; research objectives; need to be precise in defining target audience for research. 	✓			✓
3.3	Banner advertising on the net: the effect on the brand	How an online tracking study using a repeated cross-sectional design helped work out the impact of banner advertising on the advertiser's brand and product.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example of repeated cross-sectional design; online research; identifies need for research. 	✓		✓	
3.4	Seeing the big picture	Why an FMCG company would use a panel rather than an ad hoc, cross-sectional approach to understand consumer behaviour and what drives it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-making criteria in choosing one research design over another; links between design and client's information needs; advantages of a panel design and disadvantages of a cross-sectional design; identifies need for and end uses of the data. 	✓		✓	
3.5	What happens when you win the lottery?	The sort of design used to examine organisations' use of funding over time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research objectives; link between research aim and research design; benefits of the approach taken; how client used the data. 		✓		✓
3.6	Experimenting with incentives	How an experimental design was used to examine the effects of incentives on the response rate to a postal survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example of an experimental design; research objective; how research was done; findings. 	✓		✓	
4.1	Why do we need research?	Why a complex social research project was commissioned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How a complex social research project was commissioned. 				✓
5.1	Insight from secondary data	How data recorded at point of sale proved useful in understanding customer behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example of secondary data analysis/secondary research; issues in using database data; insight from data records; how findings not what expected; some end uses of the research. 	✓	✓	✓	

Case study title		What it is about	Research techniques and issues covered	Quantitative research	Qualitative research	Market research	Social research
5.2	Which site? Geodemographics has the answer	How geodemographics can be used in deciding where to site retail stores.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example of use of secondary data; • how geodemographic data used to reduce risk in decision making; • how the data were used; • variables used in decision-making process. 	✓		✓	
5.3	Leveraging the Census for research and marketing	How UK Census data can be used to help researchers and marketers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example of use of secondary data; • value of the Census as a source of information. 	✓		✓	
6.1	Applications of ethnography	How ethnography can be used in market research to understand consumer behaviour and choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What an ethnographic approach can offer the client. 		✓	✓	
6.2	Understanding binge drinking	How ethnographic and traditional qualitative research techniques were used to understand social phenomenon of binge drinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure of a project using traditional and non traditional techniques; • benefits of using 'ethnographic films'. 		✓	✓	✓
6.3	Talking to teenagers about sex: part 1	How and why paired in-depth interviews were used to gather data on a sensitive subject. (Case study 1.2 describes the background to the research and why it was commissioned; and Case studies 6.9 and 6.10 describe other aspects of the project.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links between topic, research objectives and method of data collection; • rationale for use of in-depth interviews; • how recruitment/sampling was done. 		✓		✓
6.4	Researching SPIDER-MAN 2	The content of the first stage of a research project designed to get feedback on a movie sequel. See also Case study 2.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of group discussions – focus groups; • example of a project plan – scope, sample, number of groups, geographic coverage; • research aims; • what covered in groups. 		✓	✓	
6.5	Researching the media habits of minority ethnic groups	How a range of qualitative research methods including workshops were used to explore media use and attitudes to advertising among minority ethnic communities in Britain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link between objectives, sample and methods used; • range of qualitative methods of data collection used; • sample and how it was recruited. 		✓		✓

Case study title		What it is about	Research techniques and issues covered	Quantitative research	Qualitative research	Market research	Social research
6.6	Keeping the consumer in sight: Levi's Youth Panel	Describes how a qualitative consumer panel was used to investigate product design and development issues, among other things. See also Case study 1.2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale for use of a panel; details of panel make-up, recruitment and data collection; shows link between sample and research objectives; highlights contribution that information from the panel makes to the business. 		✓	✓	
6.7	New ways for new products: Unilever NPD research online	How asynchronous online discussion forums were used with great success in new product development research for an FMCG company.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online group discussions; link between method of data collection and information needs or research objectives; benefits of the approach; how the method can be used with other data collection tools. 		✓	✓	
6.8	Talking to teenagers about sex – part 2	Approach taken to interviewing teenagers about sex, contraception and pregnancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link between topic, sample and method; approach to interviews and rationale for approach; how interviews were structured; use of pre-task journals. 		✓		✓
6.9	Understanding the lives of teenagers	How journals were used in a study among marginalised teenagers to help the government devise a strategy in relation to teenage pregnancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why a particular approach was chosen; how task was set up; how journals generated rich, insightful data; end benefits to client. 		✓		✓
6.10	Developing a brand proposition for <i>The Mirror</i>	The approach taken to gather evidence with which to address the business challenges faced by a national daily newspaper. See also Case study 3.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link between business problem, information needs and research approach; overview of a research project; research approaches and rationale for their use; development and use of stimulus material; semiotic analysis in action. 		✓	✓	
6.11	What's wrong with taking the bus?	How a semiotic analysis was used to find out what it is that puts people off taking the bus.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link between business problem, information needs and research approach; detailed guide to how a semiotic analysis was done. 			✓	
7.1	Interviewing in gay bars	How and why fieldwork for a 1986 study of attitudes and behaviour in relation to AIDS was conducted in a non-typical venue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link between sample and fieldwork location; issues in interviewing in a non-typical venue; how fieldwork was managed in unusual conditions. 				✓

Case study title		What it is about	Research techniques and issues covered	Quantitative research	Qualitative research	Market research	Social research
7.2	Asking about child abuse and neglect: face to face or not?	The rationale for the choice of method of data collection in a study into child abuse and neglect for a charity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The thinking behind decisions about methods of data collection; how the data collection process was structured. 	✓		✓	✓
7.3	What do you do all day? The BBC wants to know	The methods used to gather data about daily life in the UK in order to understand how people use their time and use the media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of project plan including sample; links between research objectives and choice of method of data collection; use of a diary and a questionnaire; rationale for using electronic over paper data collection; issues in design of script for electronic diary; response rate; findings and their end use. 	✓		✓	
7.4	BT: Measuring customer satisfaction by post	The approach taken by a telecommunications company, to find out – among other things – what its residential customers and some of its non-customers thought about it at a time of rapid change in the telecoms market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explains need for research; research objectives; rationale for use of postal over telephone data collection; decisions taken about format of questionnaire; content of questionnaire; survey set up and management; respondent follow up survey; reasons for non-response; response bias. 	✓		✓	
7.5	Unilever Bestfoods: a panel full of insight	How data from a panel provided insight into who consumers are, what they do and why they do it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business objectives, research objectives and research design; advantages of using a panel design; application of panel data; sample and response rate; what was measured; end use of the data. 	✓		✓	
8.1	The sampling decision in a consumer telephone survey	How a research agency reached a sampling decision for a consumer telephone survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-making process for sampling; link between aim of research, sampling approach and method of data collection; sampling approach; issue of 'representativeness'. 	✓		✓	
8.2	The sampling decision in a survey of 16 year olds	How a review of a survey of young people led to a decision to switch from a sample of 12–17 year olds derived from a household sample to an independent sample of 16 year olds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-making process in choosing a sampling approach; process of getting access to a suitable sampling frame; sampling approach in detail; response rate. 	✓			✓

Case study title		What it is about	Research techniques and issues covered	Quantitative research	Qualitative research	Market research	Social research
8.3	Sampling the general public and gay men	The sample design for an investigation into knowledge, attitudes and behaviour in relation to AIDS for a government programme of public education and publicity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of two sampling operations; • rationale for choice of approaches; • sample design for a repeated cross-sectional study; • random location sampling; • purposive sampling to get at a hard to find population. 	✓			✓
8.4	Finding teenagers at the 'margins'	How the research team gained access to teenagers 'at the margins'.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues in sampling hard to reach groups; • network sampling; • ethical issues related to topic and target population. 		✓		✓
9.1	Barclays Bank: monitoring brand health	Why a questionnaire underwent a major redesign and what happened as result.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of designing with research objectives and respondent and interviewer experience in mind; • benefits of CAPI; • benefits of pilot studies. 	✓		✓	
9.2	What do you mean, anti-social behaviour?	How to define the intangible concept of anti-social behaviour for use in a questionnaire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of a working definition of 'thing' the client wants to find out; • process of arriving at a definition; • link between concept and concrete examples or indicators of it. 	✓			✓
9.3	How do you ask that?	The questionnaire design issues that arose in researching AIDS and how they were resolved. See also Case study 7.1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire design in action – what was done and why; • some key techniques and rationale for their use; • impact of questionnaire design and interviewing on data quality and on interviewer and respondent experience of taking part in research. 	✓			✓
9.4	Just checking: an informal pilot test	The pilot study for a school meals self-completion survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The value of pilot testing on the target audience. 	✓		✓	
9.5	How do we do it? Finding out about child abuse	Issues involved in designing, pilot testing and administering a questionnaire on a sensitive topic – child abuse. Interesting comparison re mode of administration between this and Case study 9.3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process of questionnaire design; • issues in designing a survey on a sensitive and complex topic; • structure of questionnaire and interview; • pilot testing; • use of two forms of data collection within one interview (interviewer-administered and self-completion); • respondents' view of interview. 	✓			✓