

MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS RESEARCH

5th
EDITION

Mark Easterby-Smith

Richard Thorpe

Paul R. Jackson



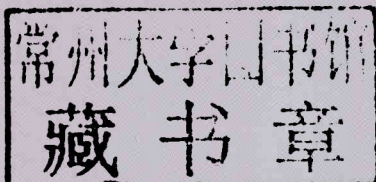
 SAGE edge™



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MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS RESEARCH

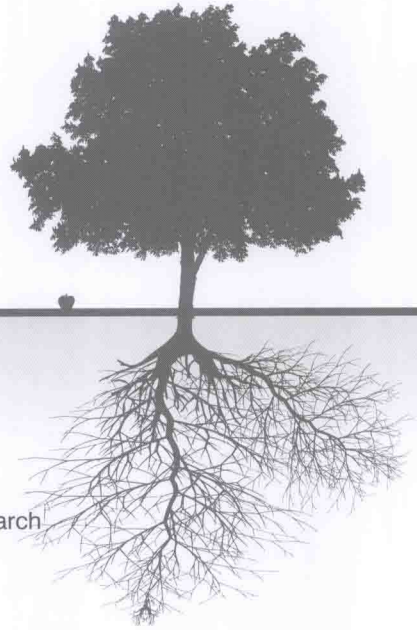


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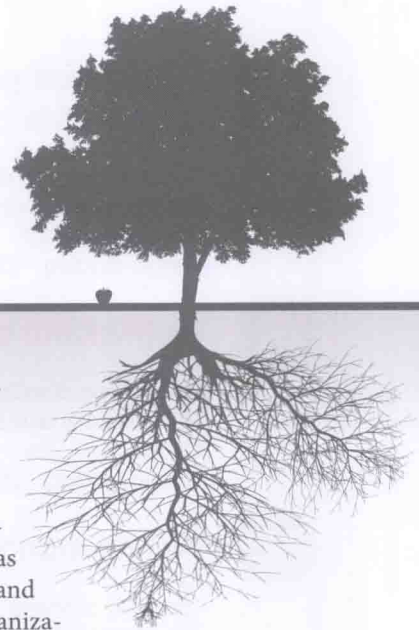
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BRIEF CONTENTS



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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



MARK EASTERBY-SMITH is Distinguished Professor of Management Learning at Lancaster University Management School. He has a first degree in Engineering Science and a PhD in Organizational Behaviour from Durham University. He has been an active researcher for over 30 years with primary interests in methodology and learning processes. He has carried out evaluation studies in many European companies, and has led research projects on management development, organizational learning, dynamic capabilities and knowledge transfer across international organizations in the UK, India and China.

He has published numerous academic papers and over ten books including: *Auditing Management Development* (Gower, 1980), *The Challenge to Western Management Development* (Routledge, 1989), *Evaluation of Management Education, Training and Development* (Gower, 1994), *Organizational Learning and the Learning Organization* (Sage, 1998) and *The Handbook of Organizational Learning and Knowledge Management* (Wiley, 2011).

At Lancaster he has been variously, Director of the School's Doctoral Programme, Director of the Graduate Management School and Head of Department. Externally he spent several years as a visiting faculty member on the International Teachers' Programme, acting as Director when it was held at the London Business School in 1984. During the early 1990s he was national co-ordinator of the Management Teaching Fellowship Scheme funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), which was responsible for training 180 new faculty members across UK management schools. He is a former member of the ESRC Post-graduate Training Board and was President of the British Academy of Management in 2006 and Dean of Fellows in 2008.

RICHARD THORPE is Professor of Management Development and Pro Dean for Research at Leeds University Business School. His early industrial experience informed the way his ethos has developed. Common themes are: a strong commitment to process methodologies and a focus on action in all its forms; an interest in and commitment to the development of doctoral students and the development of capacity within the sector; and a commitment to collaborative working on projects of mutual interest. Following a number of years in industry, he joined Strathclyde University as a researcher studying incentive payment schemes. This led to collaboration on *Payment Schemes and Productivity* (Macmillan, 1986).

In 1980 he joined Glasgow University, where he widened his research interests to include small firm growth and development as well as making regular contributions to the Scottish Business School's Doctoral Programme. In 1983 he attended the International Teachers' Programme in Sweden where he met Mark and embarked on a PhD under Mark's supervision. Collaboration continued through the 1990s with the ESRC Teaching Fellowship Scheme. In 1996 he was instrumental in establishing the Graduate Business School at Manchester Metropolitan University and in 2003 joined the ESRC Training and Development Board. There, he was involved in establishing the training guidelines for both doctorate and professional doctorate provision and more recently in initiatives to address capacity building in management and business. In 2003 he contributed to the

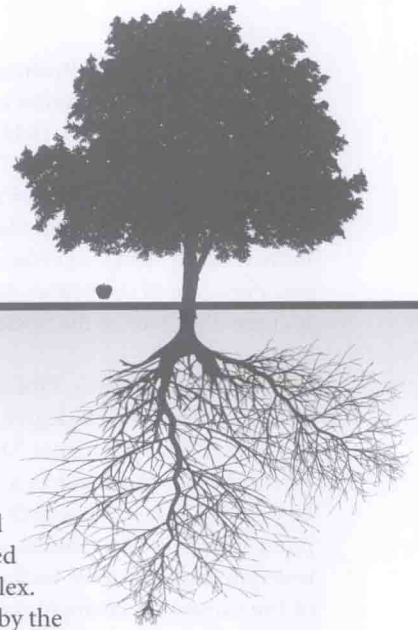
ESRC's Evolution of Business Knowledge programme, his research interests including: performance, remuneration and entrepreneurship, management learning and development and leadership. He has published (with others) a number of books including: *Strategic Reward Systems* (Financial Times/Prentice Hall, 2000), *Management and Language: The Manager as Practical Author* (Sage, 2003), *Dictionary of Qualitative Management Research* (Sage, 2008), *Performance Management: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Palgrave, 2008) and more recently the *Gower Handbook of Leadership and Management Development* (2010). He was President of the British Academy of Management in 2007, Dean of Fellows in 2012, and is currently Chair of the Society for the Advancement of Management Studies.

PAUL R. JACKSON is Professor of Corporate Communications at Manchester Business School. He has a first degree in Psychology from the University of Sheffield and an MSc in Applied Statistics from Sheffield Polytechnic (now Sheffield Hallam University). His first university post was as a research assistant in studies on impression formation, where he decided that it was worth learning how to write programs in Fortran so that the computer could do the tedious work of adding up and he could do the interesting bits. His research interests have included lab studies of impression formation, large-scale surveys of the impact of unemployment on psychological health, longitudinal field studies of the effects of empowerment and work design on employee health and performance, employee communication and teamworking, mergers and social identity.

He has published widely in journals such as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *British Medical Journal*, *Human Relations*, *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology* and *British Journal of Management*. His books include: *Developments in Work and Organizational Psychology: Implications for International Business* (Elsevier, 2006), *Psychosocial Risk Factors in Call Centres* (HSE Publications, 2003), *Change in Manufacturing: Managing Stress in Manufacturing* (HSE Publications, 2001) and *Organizational Interventions to Reduce the Impact of Poor Work Design* (HSE Publications, 1998).

Over the years he has undertaken various roles including Director of Doctoral Programmes at the University of Sheffield and, at UMIST, Head of the Division of Marketing, International Business and Strategy as well as designing the doctoral training programme at MBS. He has been teaching research methods to undergraduate, masters and doctoral students since 1975 and has contributed to books on research methods teaching as well as workshops for students and teachers on behalf of the British Academy of Management.

PREFACE TO THE FIFTH EDITION



The first edition of this book appeared in 1991, at a time when there were very few management research methods books on the market. It quickly became established as the leading text because it covered all of the essential ground, yet was not too long or intimidating. Students and staff liked it because it tackled difficult issues, but avoided either trivializing them or making them unnecessarily complex. The success of the book was attested by the sales figures, and by the fact that it had become the most highly cited management methodology book in the world according to Google Scholar.

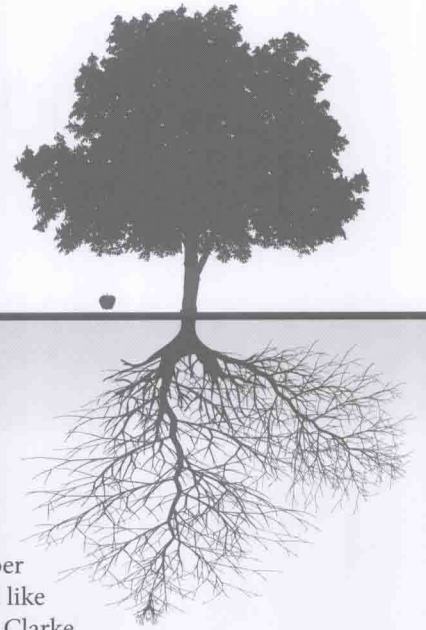
The second edition was published in 2002, and this included a substantial updating of the material since methodology had become a hot topic during the intervening years, and there were many new methods and approaches to management research which needed to be covered. The market had also begun to change significantly, as research methods were starting to be taught at undergraduate level. This resulted in a modest repositioning of our book, but also stimulated the appearance of strong competitors in the market.

The third edition maintained the continuity in the sense that it provided comprehensive treatment of philosophies and methods, plus coverage of both qualitative and quantitative techniques; but it also introduced some radical departures both in terms of content and design. The most significant change was that we strengthened the treatment of quantitative methods, running from the basic techniques for collecting and analysing quantitative data, up to multivariate analysis and structural equation modelling. In keeping with our desire to avoid complications, we covered the principles of analytic methods without introducing complicated algebra. We claimed in the third edition that this part of the book now provided advanced statistics without tears!

The fourth edition was the first edition that deployed full colour. There were additional boxed examples, usually drawn from our own experiences and from those of our students. We also rethought some of the material on philosophy and research design and extended the coverage of qualitative analysis, particularly with the use of computer-assisted methods. The exercises, based on our own extensive methodology teaching, were appropriately updated in response to student feedback. We retained the companion website, developing our guidance to teachers. Perhaps most striking of all to this edition was the addition of a system of icons based around the metaphor of research being like a tree that sucks up nutrients (data, ideas and experiences) from the ground and then converts them into leaves and fruits (reports, publications and theses). Without wanting to labour the metaphor exhaustively, we then went on to develop the icons to illustrate some of the points and as a general orientation tool.

The fifth edition builds on changes made to the book's structure in the fourth edition. We have also changed the order of some of the chapters in order to improve the logic of our arguments and make the text flow better. A new Chapter 1 has been designed to give an overview of the book's content, whilst at the same highlighting what students at all levels need to consider when preparing their research proposals. The chapter on literature searching has been brought forward and updated, and the two qualitative methods chapters have been split into three to mirror the three quantitative methods chapters later in the text. As with other editions, we have offered students an increased number of examples and exercises to help illustrate the points being made or the issues being discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This book is based on the personal research experience of the authors, but thanks should also go to a number of students and colleagues. Both have contributed to this edition in a number of ways, through their encouragement as well as their ideas. We have tried to reflect their suggestions as far as possible in the text.

Our students have taught us a great deal and we have included a number of their examples, both in this edition and earlier editions. We would like to thank Chavi Chen, Gerard Duff, Ray Forbes, Suzanne Gagnon, Jean Clarke, Anya Johnson, Mohamed Mohamud, Lee Beniston, Kendi Kinuthia, Paul Grimshaw, Anna Zueva, Brian Simpson, Julie Schönfelder, Sanaz Sigaroudi and Geetha Karunanayake.

Colleagues have also assisted us by reading through the transcripts, making comments and suggesting ideas, and to them we are extremely grateful. These include Lisa Anderson, Susan Baker, Joep Cornelissen, Ann Cunliffe, Ardha Danieli, Ashish Dwivedi, Paul Ellwood, David Holman, Robin Holt, Ossie Jones, Efthimios Poulis, Christine Reid, Haina Zhang, Liu Wei, Anna Lorbiecki, and Hannah Preston. Jean-Claude Usunier provided a valuable critique of the first edition of the book from a European perspective, and this led to a French translation of the book, which is now in its second edition. Joanne Larty, Mirjam Werner, Daniella Fjellström and Lena Kruckenberg all helped with the preparation and organization of the manuscript from the third edition to the present day, with Lena Kruckenberg being particularly helpful in the restructuring of sections of the book for this fifth edition.

Our editor at SAGE for the first edition was Sue Jones. She provided us with the initial inspiration, and since then Rosemary Nixon, Kiren Shoman, Natalie Aguilera, Delia Alfonso and Alan Maloney offered encouragement, and occasionally hectored us. Our minder for the fourth and fifth edition has been Kirsty Smy.

The authors are grateful to SAGE for permission to include extracts from R. Thorpe and J. Cornelissen (2003) 'Visual media and the construction of meaning' (Ch. 4) in D. Holman and R. Thorpe (eds) (2003), *Management and Language: The Manager as Practical Author*.

We would like to thank our families for their tolerance while this book was being written and rewritten – we hope they will consider the outcome to be worth the effort.

Paul would like to dedicate this book to the memory of Sallie, who died in the final production stages of this edition. She enriched his life beyond measure.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

REALISM

NOMINALISM

VARIOUS 3RD WAYS



Ontology



Epistemology



Methodology



Methods and
Techniques

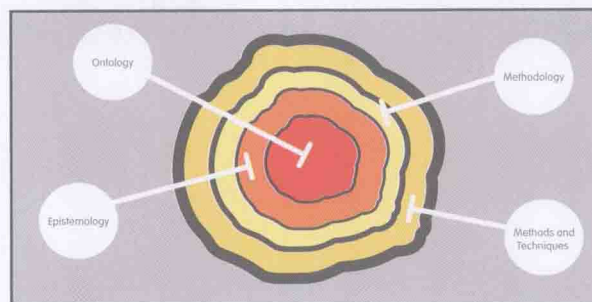
We use the metaphor of a tree to represent how the research process unfolds. The key elements of the tree are the roots, the trunk and branches, the leaves, and the fruit – and each of these parallels an aspect of conducting research.

The *roots* symbolize the research traditions within particular disciplines as well as the experiences of past researchers from particular fields. These perspectives, understandings, ideas and beliefs are drawn up (as the tree draws nutrients from the soil) to form the basis of the researcher's ideas in relation to such things as design, methods and forms of analysis.

The *trunk* transports the nutrients from the roots through the branches to the leaves and fruit; it also provides strength and shape to the tree. Here we use a simplified cross-section of the trunk to symbolize four main features of a research design. The inner ring (or heartwood) is the densest part of the trunk, and we use it to represent *ontology*, the basic assumptions made by the researcher about the nature of reality. The next ring represents *epistemology*, the assumptions about the best ways of inquiring into the nature of the world. The third ring from the centre represents *methodology*, or the way research techniques and methods are grouped together to provide a coherent picture. And the fourth ring represents the individual **methods and techniques** that are used for data collection and analysis. The four rings are named and ordered in this way, because the most visible parts of research projects are the methods and techniques used for data collection and analysis and represented by the outer ring. The three inner rings are increasingly hidden from the external observer, yet each makes a critical contribution to the strength, vitality and coherence of the research project.

Moving up and along the *branches*, the leaves and fruit form the tree's canopy. The *leaves* collect energy from sunlight, and represent the collection and analysis of data within a research project. It is the collection of research data that stimulates new ideas and enables the evaluation of existing theories. Here we distinguish between three main kinds of data based on the underlying epistemology (second ring in the trunk), according to whether they are essentially positivist, constructionist or hybrid approaches. To provide differentiation we indicate the positivist approaches in orange, constructionist approaches in green, and hybrid approaches in a combination of these colours.

In the final chapter of the book we focus on the *fruit* of the tree, which represents the way the research is written up and communicated to third parties. Here we show the coherence between the outputs of the research, and the ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods which underpin any research. In this way, the views and



values adopted by the researcher from the early stages of the framing of the research, the design of the research project and the collection of the data are coherently connected and linked.

Within the chapters that follow we have placed a number of these icons in key locations. This is not intended to be exhaustive in the sense that everything is necessarily covered by the icons; nor are we seeking to explain everything through the use of these icons. Our intention is mainly to use them in the light sense as an organizer and as a reminder of the origins of some of the ideas being discussed.

Key of symbols



Ontology



Epistemology



Methodology



Methods and Techniques



Positivist



Constructionist



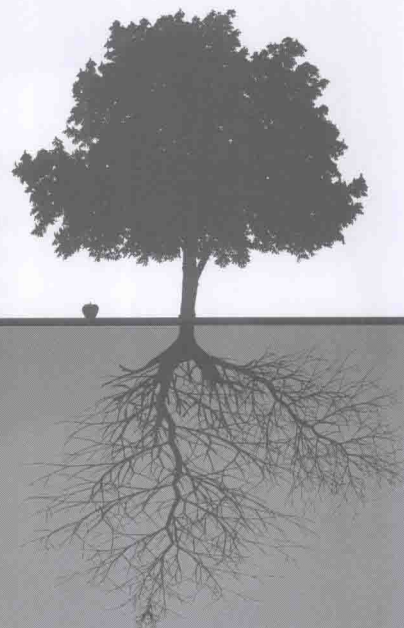
Hybrid approaches



Output



GUIDED TOUR



LEARNING OBJECTIVES



To help students think through the issues they will need to consider when preparing a research proposal.



To understand the interdependence of philosophy, design and method in effectively addressing research questions.

Learning objectives Each chapter starts by setting out clearly what key information you should soon understand, so you can easily track your progress.

Examples Real management and business research examples are highlighted in these boxes, to show you how research happens in reality.

research topic in
(Example 1.1)

Having a conceptual
and align their theorizing
through the process outlined
her research and it also helped

EXAMPLE
1.1

A PhD student reflects

When I initially embarked on my PhD, I was already an experienced business manager. I was 'born with the business' already having an idea of what I wanted to do. This feeling of ownership was reinforced by my supervisor who encouraged me to frame my research. During the process, I eventually came to realize the consequence of my approach.

EXERCISE 2.1

Defining your research

- Individual exercise:** Write a short research statement of 500 to 1,000 words in which you define your ideas and assumptions and state the work in progress.
- Interactive exercise:** Discuss your research with a group and ask them to challenge your ideas and assumptions of your research? What are the implications?

Exercises These activities are designed to get you to practise and think about the key research tasks covered in each chapter.

Identifying key concepts

Once the topic has been defined, the next step is to identify the key concepts and terms that will be used in the research. This is a process that involves a lot of reading and thinking. The key concepts are the central ideas that will be explored in the research. They are the building blocks of the research and are used to define the scope and boundaries of the study. The key terms are the specific words and phrases that are used to describe the concepts and ideas. They are the tools that the researcher uses to communicate their ideas and findings. The process of identifying key concepts and terms is a critical part of the research process and is essential for the development of a clear and focused research plan.

Conclusion Review the contents of each chapter in the Conclusion, an easy-to-read review and discussion of the most important information you've read.

CONCLUSION

As we conclude this first chapter, we wish to give to their research. This book goes about conducting such research and need to help in developing practice and mode 2 research.

FURTHER READING

- Alvesson, M. and Willmott, H. (eds) (2003) *Studying Organizations: A collection of chapters for readers who manage organizations*. London: Sage.
- Bartunek, J.M., Rynes, S.L. and Daft, R.L. (2006) *Managing the transfer between practitioners and academics: This article discusses the role of relationships in disseminating knowledge across 'the Great Divide'*. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(4), 791-803.
- Grey, C. (2005) *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Mostly Boring History of the World*. London: Sage.
- As it says on the label, this book provides a very short, fairly interesting and mostly boring history of the world. It is a collection of chapters for readers who manage organizations. It is a collection of chapters for readers who manage organizations. It is a collection of chapters for readers who manage organizations.
- Marshall, S. and Green, N. (2000) *Helpful Commentary*. London: Sage.

Further reading Each chapter ends by highlighting books and articles that provide more in-depth information on the methods presented in each of the chapters and insights into how these methods have been used successfully in existing studies.

CHAPTER 2

Exercise 2.4 Performing literature searches

b) Individual exercise: Test your search skills by performing searches on one specialized database (such as Web of Science (ProQuest), Business Source or JSTOR), on SRRN and on Scholar. Have you found what you expected? What were the results? How do the results of your search database compare with those of SRRN and Google Scholar?

Answers to exercises Turn to the back of the book to get responses to those exercises that have specific answers.

Glossary Key terms appear in bold in the text, and their definitions are presented in the Glossary near the back of the book.

1-tailed test refers to a directional alternative hypothesis relative to the null hypothesis; a prediction of a positive association between variables, or that one group will be bigger than another

2-tailed test refers to a non-directional alternative hypothesis relative to the null hypothesis; association between variables may be either positive or negative; the means of two groups will differ in either direction

academic theory explains social behavior through exchange

CHAPTER 1: GETTING STARTED THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Alvesson, M. and Willmott, H. (eds) (2003) *Studying Organizations*. Sage.
A collection of chapters for readers who are exploring the relationship between practitioners and academics.

Bartunek, J.M., Rynes, S.L. and Daft, R.L. (2001) 'The role of relationships between practitioners and academics', *Academy of Management Review*, 26(1), 1-10.
This article discusses the role of relationships between practitioners and academics in managing knowledge across 'the Great Divide.'

Grey, C. (2005) *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Useful Book*. Sage.
As it says on the label, this book provides a very short, fairly interesting and useful introduction to the field. It is reasonably priced. It adopts a critical perspective on the work of those who are managed, rather than those who manage.

Stake and Greenwood

Further Readings For ease of reference we have gathered the further reading from all chapters into one section.

Bibliography A wealth of reading material is covered here, as all the sources that have collectively informed the writing of this book are gathered in one place.

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