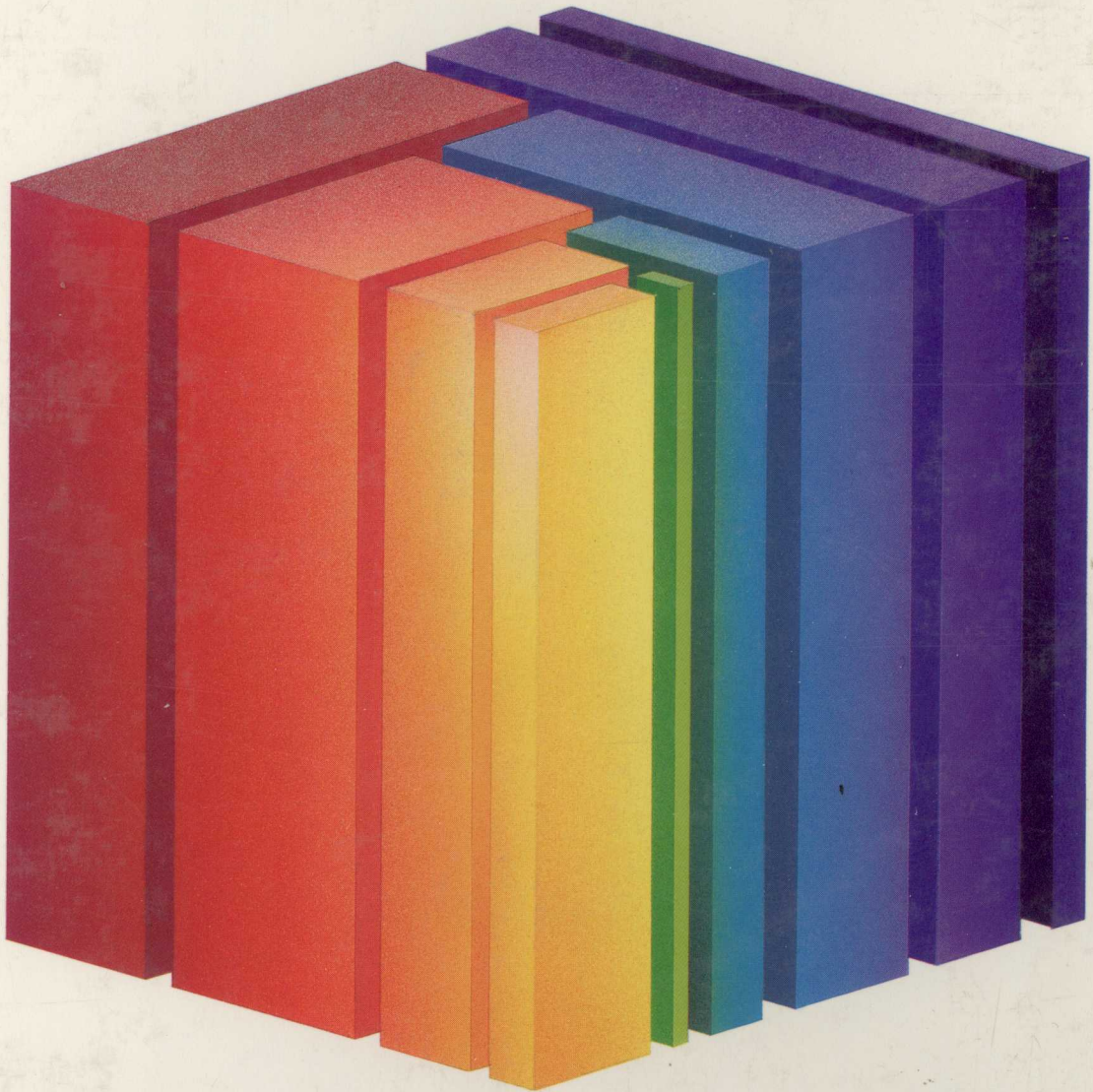


C. William Emory

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FOURTH EDITION

BUSINESS RESEARCH METHODS

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BUSINESS RESEARCH METHODS

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Preface

The fourth edition of *Business Research Methods* provides comprehensive coverage of the research process in the business setting. It was written to fulfill the need for a research methods text that would span the disciplines of business and serve as a reference source for managers. We have also found it useful for managers and future managers of nonprofit and government organizations—especially those where the functions are similar to business and decisions are based on research information.

We developed this book while teaching research and data analysis for MBAs, executive MBAs, doctoral students, and public managers. Although written with MBAs in mind, the text supports the other applications mentioned.

Looking into the 4th Edition

The test of a singularly versatile textbook comes with time, years of use and years of thorough, reliable coverage of the field. *Business Research Methods* was a pioneer methodology text in business. Each edition has sought to better meet the learning needs of students, the instructional requirements of professors, and the applied orientation of managers.

If you are an existing user of this text, we think that you will be pleased with the many new features. If you are contemplating adopting this text, we think you should consider what distinguishes it from the others. The fourth edition:

- Maintains a balanced presentation of fundamental concepts and practical applications.
- Covers topics which receive meager attention in other texts, including reasoning and inference; research proposals; conducting exper-

iments, observational studies and content analysis; preparing data for analysis; diagnostic checks of statistical assumptions, measures of association, multiple comparison tests, multivariate techniques, and more.

- Provides timely coverage of topics such as ethics in business research; computerized searches; current business reference tools; exploratory data analysis; presentation of statistics, charts, and graphics; and communicating research findings orally.
- Includes examples of software options for data entry, exploratory data analysis, complex table construction, hypothesis tests, correlation topics, and diagnostics tests.
- Examines research methods in breadth and depth, freeing instructors to concentrate on the creative aspects of their teaching.
- Enables students to understand the nature of the scientific method as applied to business problems.
- Focuses on problem solving, emphasizing the need for thorough problem identification, formulation, revision, and pilot testing.
- Follows a process model that guides the development of a research question and the study's sequence yet promotes flexibility in matching methods to problems.
- Uses practical examples and skill-building techniques to provide a solid grounding in implementation skills.
- Enables students to do a credible job of planning and executing a research project.
- Develops students' evaluative skills so that they may assess the worth of research designs and data-handling procedures.
- Equips managers facing "make-or-buy" research decisions to do the work themselves or to judge the quality of a research product produced by others.
- Serves as a convenient reference beyond the course.

Changes in the 4th Edition

The fourth edition has evolved in some significant ways. We have created new material, expanding some topics and condensing others. We have also corrected, deleted, and reorganized. Why was this necessary? The specialized fields that contribute to research methodology are improving steadily. They are a source of new ideas and practices.

Similarly, our coverage responds to advances in technology. Personal computers and powerful software have revolutionized data analysis. Their impact has been felt in secondary data searches, data collection, data entry, graphical analysis, reporting, and many related areas. Some subjects previously developed in tedious detail in the classroom are no longer relevant. Computer applications once de-

pendent on an arcane job control language now benefit from an intuitive interface. These improvements leave us with more time and opportunities for discovery and meaningful application.

And then, advice is not always consistent. For example, there appears to be no “best spot” for some topics. This was discovered in previous editions when sections were moved from the back to the front and back again only to hear from a different constituency each time. In this edition, we again considered divergent views about students’ learning patterns; we also listened to what the majority of our adopters told us was right for them.

This edition also reflects improvements in our own teaching—largely the result of thoughtful feedback from students and colleagues. We have tried to convey this in our presentation of original and new topics.

Features of the New Edition

The first thing you’ll notice is the new visual appearance of the book. A larger page size, redesigned layout and graphics, new fonts, and other design features combine to improve the readability of the text.

A preview appears at the beginning of each chapter to outline the scope and organization of topics. Chapters then conclude with an expanded summary, discussion questions, notes, and suggestions for additional reading and reference. There are 150 new graphics that demonstrate our commitment to illustrating learning points, not just writing about them. In our experience, visual images accelerate initial understanding, facilitate the explanation of difficult ideas, and promote synthesis.

The book now consists of four parts that parallel the research process. Part I introduces business research. It defines and characterizes the nature of business research, provides a foundation for thinking and reasoning scientifically, develops a step-by-step overview of the research process, and explains how to propose a research project. In Part II, there are four chapters on the design of research studies. Starting with design strategies and their relative advantages, we proceed to the role of measurement, the design of scales for various objectives, and the selection of a sampling design. Part III consists of five chapters on the sources and collection of data. The most frequently used methods and procedures in business research are described: secondary data search procedures, the types and uses of survey methods, instrument development, observational research, and experimentation. Part IV is composed of five chapters on the analysis and presentation of data. It begins with a chapter on how to prepare data, explore it, and complete a preliminary analysis. An-

other chapter reviews the theory of hypothesis testing and illustrates tests for different types of data. Correlation, bivariate regression, and nonparametric techniques are described in detail. Multivariate methods and the presentation of results complete the section. In addition, Appendix A contains an extensively updated guide for reference sources, while Appendix B provides more accessible tables for the various statistical tests cited in the book.

Six new chapters extend the comprehensiveness of prior coverage on important topics. They are: Scientific Thinking, The Research Proposal, Observation, Data Preparation and Preliminary Analysis, Measures of Association, and Multivariate Methods. All of the existing chapters were revised, some extensively. Each change was carefully blended into those parts of the first three editions that users found particularly valuable and wanted to preserve.

Two new expository features appear in the 4th edition: the Chapter Close-Up and the Further Study. The Chapter Close-Up integrates concepts presented in the chapter with a descriptive illustration. It typically responds to a question or problem posed by an introductory vignette. The Further Study is an extension of a topic that has been introduced in the chapter. Appearing at the end of the chapter, it may be a detailed example, an exercise, or a subject of special interest for advanced students.

Acknowledgments

We have benefited greatly from the contributions and reviews of many people. We are indebted to those who have helped develop the first three editions of the book. For the first edition, Walter Nord and Francis Connelly were especially helpful. Robert Fetter, Claude McMillan, and Alexander Voloatta all read the original manuscript and suggested improvements. J. Paul Peter, Phillip Beukema, and Stewart E. Fleige provided useful critiques that guided the revision for the second edition. The third edition was improved further by the recommendations of Harold F. Rahmlow, Alan D. Carey, Richard A. Wald, J. K. Bandyopadyay, and Donald R. Cooper, now the coauthor.

We are especially grateful to the reviewers who helped us prepare the fourth edition: Perri J. Stinson, California State University; William J. Evans, Lesley College; and Hamid Noori, Wilfrid Laurier University. We attempted to make the many changes you recommended and retain the features that prompt you to endorse our text.

A few people deserve a special word of thanks. Pamela T. Brannon did the research for the revisions to Chapter 9 and to Appendix A. She brought many insights and much enthusiasm to the project.

Pamela R. Cooper read and edited numerous drafts and served as a technical advisor on software.

We had the good fortune to work with Richard T. Hercher, senior sponsoring editor at Irwin. We appreciate his vision and guidance as well as the highly professional team that brought the book to completion. In particular, we thank Keith J. McPherson, assistant art director, who designed the new layout for the book and a beautiful cover. We also appreciate Waivah Clement, project editor, for coping with wayward transatlantic packages while handling coordination, and Ann Cassady, production manager.

Errors resulting from the revision are ours, and we accept responsibility for them. We thank you for calling them to our attention. Suggestions for improvement or comments about your successes with the text are highly valued. Write to us in care of Richard D. Irwin, 1820 Ridge Road, Homewood, IL 60430.

Donald R. Cooper
C. William Emory

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