M.I.Y.O

Measuring Impact: with, for and by Youth Organisations

Trainer Guide & Course Materials

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Introduction

Welcome to this comprehensive training guide, specifically designed to address two vital areas: **Consultancy and Social Impact Research Skills.**

In the **Consultancy Skills** section, you will be introduced to the core concepts and tools pivotal to the consultancy domain. Our aim is not just to familiarize you with these tools but to ensure that you:

- ⇒ Grasp a fundamental understanding of key consultancy concepts.
- ⇒ Are equipped and confident to put the shared tips and advice into real-world scenarios.
- ⇒ Comprehend the profound significance of each concept and its potential to aid you in supporting member organisations in an impactful and meaningful way.

Transitioning to the **Social Impact Research Skills** segment, this section will serve as your primer to the world of social research. Delving deep into this module will enable you to:

- ⇒ Acquaint yourself with foundational terms and concepts that underpin social research.
- ⇒ Develop an in-depth understanding of how researchers design and execute an impact study, ensuring that the results are both accurate and actionable.

PART 1: Consultancy Skills

Dear reader,

You are about to embark on an extraordinary adventure. An adventure made up of encounters, discoveries and learning about others but above all about yourself! Being a member of a pool of consultants involves cross-cutting skills. This toolbox has been carefully pieced together by our magnificent team of trainers to give you a quick reference on the main topics related to your consultancy skills, such as the DISC profiles, logical levels, coaching and motivational interviewing, stages of change, pillars of consulting, and more. This toolbox aims to equip you with all the necessary knowledge and practical tips required for a successful consultancy practice within WOSM and YMCA. We hope that by reading it, you will:

- ⇒ have a basic understanding of the most important concepts and tools related to consultancy;
- ⇒ feel prepared to apply the tips and advice in practice;
- ⇒ reflect on how each concept will help you support member organisations in a meaningful manner.
- ⇒ You will also find further reading advice to deepen your knowledge on each topic.

We wish you an enjoyable reading!

1.1 Presuppositions

As a consultant, one likes to get communication flowing. When communication with an organisation gets stuck - how do you as a consultant start it again? Here is a tool that can help you with that.

To get communication flowing again, a consultant needs to work on their "perceptual filter" - their attitude, bias, point of view, perspective or set of assumptions or presuppositions about the object, person or situation.

This attitude "colours" all perceptions of the object. Know that there will be exceptions to all of these assumptions, but they are a very useful starting basis for communication and a very effective way to increase your awareness of your personal perceptual filters (aka personal biases). Every consultant has biases, as they are human.

In Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), these assumptions are called **presuppositions**. Some people call them the rules of the game that support you when making contact with others. Experience has shown that they should be more of a "state of mind" and each consultant should want to behave in the spirit of these principles.

But obviously the practical use of these principles is more important. They allow you to keep communicating and make it easier to make and maintain contact with others. They also offer ways to follow another person's thought process or understand their behaviour.

By accepting the principles listed below, you increase your chances of reaching your goals, achieving organisational targets, and motivating others. Presuppositions can unblock and improve communication between Consultants and NSOs, and here are the most useful ones:

⇒ The map is not the territory
⇒ If one person can do it, another can learn it
⇒ At some level, all behaviour is positively intended
⇒ The meaning of your communication is the reaction you get
⇒ In communication there is no failure, only feedback
⇒ Everybody is motivated for something
⇒ The person who has the most options, has the greatest chance of success
⇒ You cannot not communicate
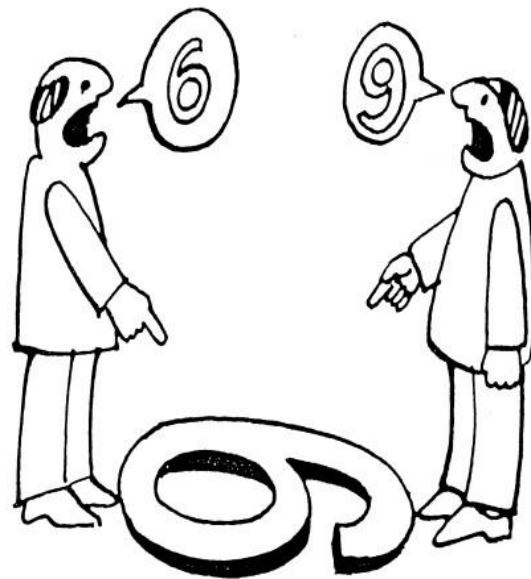
You will find the explanation for each presupposition in the next chapters.

The map is not the territory

The map is not the territory is the most famous quote from the book Science and Sanity, in which Korzybski described the main principles of general semantics. The general semantics imply that there is always more than what we see, hear, feel, or believe. In other words, reality is not the same as our image of it. Selective observation, interpretation etc. cause us to have an incomplete and not entirely reliable perception or image of reality.
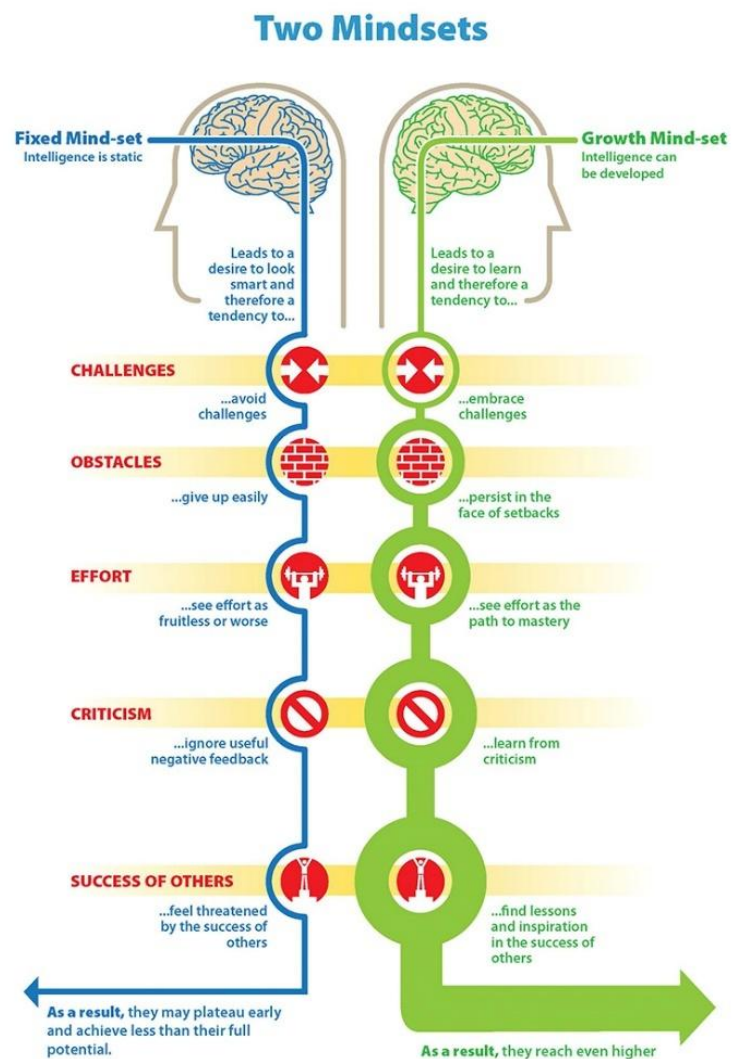
The map is not the territory implies that humans create maps and the reality is the territory. This keeps us aware of how we use our words. The words which are used, relate to the map and not to the territory itself. Also, the same word may have different meanings to different people.

The presupposition that we act and feel based on our perception of the world, rather than based on reality, invites us to be more aware of our ideas, impressions and expressions. Thus, change is primarily a change of perception, formulation etc.

If one person can do it, another can learn it

Carol Dweck did research on the influence of self-confidence and motivation on performance. She distinguishes between two types of mindset, namely the 'fixed mindset' and the 'growth mindset'. Somebody with a fixed mindset subscribes to the view that intelligence and capacities are fixed and can't be developed any further.

The growth mindset, however, presumes that intelligence and capacities can be developed by working on them. The growth mindset focuses on learning and on the fun of learning, whilst the fixed mindset assigns more importance to accomplishments.

Two Mindsets

Fixed Mind-set
Intelligence is static

Leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to...

Growth Mind-set
Intelligence can be developed

Leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to...

CHALLENGES
...avoid challenges
...embrace challenges

OBSTACLES
...give up easily
...persist in the face of setbacks

EFFORT
...see effort as fruitless or worse
...see effort as the path to mastery

CRITICISM
...ignore useful negative feedback
...learn from criticism

SUCCESS OF OTHERS
...feel threatened by the success of others
...find lessons and inspiration in the success of others

As a result, they may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential.

As a result, they reach even higher

Graphics by Nigel Holmes based on research by Carol Dweck   http://www.ed.gov   DOINGWHATWORKS

The mindset indicates how you see yourself, how you deal with your own learning, development and change. It also shows how you approach others from a management perspective, which expectations you have of others, and how that translates into communication about learning, development and change.

Research has shown that people can change their mindset. Change starts when you realize that the human mind can be shaped, and that you can improve your abilities with focused efforts. Concentrating on effort rather than on accomplishment also stimulates a growth mindset.

Other research also acknowledges the importance of focused efforts. It isn't talent, but practice that enables one to learn new things. A core principle in NLP is that if you are close to something, you share its principles and values, you know and understand the strategy, and you also practise a lot, then you can learn new things. Similar to this is the 10.000-hour-rule formulated by American psychologist K. Anders Ericsson. Scientific research shows that high performers in any field tend to have a lot of experience. Practice does make perfect!

At some level, all behaviour is positively intended

It is useful to distinguish behaviour from intention. Behaviours can be healthy, appropriate, constructive or problematic, careless or clearly unacceptable, but the intention behind them - at some level - always try to get to something valuable. An immediate example would be - a scout commissioner can refuse to include someone with talent into their taskforce because they have the positive intention to have only the best people on the team.

Before we jump to conclusions, ask, 'What does someone want to achieve with this behaviour? What value (s) does this person fulfill with this? ' What can a Consultant do with this knowledge? We can use this to find a new application for the positive intention. Therefore, this person could explore new options that could fulfill the intention of being 'making the best team', without excluding people with talent.

The meaning of your communication is the reaction you get

This principle states that the other person's reaction defines your communication's meaning. Observing the reactions which your communication elicits, gives you the chance to adjust your communication until you have achieved the desired effect. For example, your choice of words influences if the other will talk about the problem or the goal. In the first case, you discuss what should be avoided, prevented, what is bothering you. In the second case you discuss what you want to achieve, the goals which you want to reach. If you notice resistance to this in the other person, that is the feedback they are giving you.

In communication there is no failure, only feedback

Failure is a dead-end street, but feedback allows you to keep the goal in your sight. It gives you an opportunity to learn and consider other approaches, rather than to concede failure. You always have the possibility to revisit certain issues, to start the conversation again, and to reach a new agreement. This way you can elicit the desired reaction in the other person after all.

Everybody is motivated by something

Or in other words: everybody has an intrinsic motivation. The key to change is knowing what motivates others. It forces you to not just draw conclusions based on what you (don't) see and (don't) hear, but to be truly curious about what is important for the other person.

The person who has the most options, has the greatest chance of success

If a person allows their communication to be flexible enough to connect with others, then this person will have the greatest chance to be successful. The person or element with the most flexibility in a system will have the most influence.

This is the "Law of requisite variety" from the **Systems Theory**, proposed by W. Ross Ashby. This means that the person with the most options and behavioural choices will control the system. In any field, the top people in that field are those who have the most variety in their behaviour. They have choices of behaviour that their colleagues don't.

Any time you limit your behavioural choices, you give others the competitive edge. If you are able to respond to any situation in a variety of ways, you are more likely to get your desired outcome.

You cannot not communicate

It's the same with making choices in life. I often hear people say they can't make a choice. So, I ask them what it is they are doing right now, and they'd say, "Not making a choice". Well, that is a choice too.

I once worked in Brazil, where children are not supposed to open a gift in the presence of the giver. I thought this was peculiar until an old man explained it to me. He said there is no way to hide your first facial expression, and he told me this example.

Imagine you are 7 years old, and your parents give you a bicycle for your birthday. You enter the room where the present is, all wrapped up, and you are happy. Even though the bike is wrapped, you can see that it's a bike. Every child (or adult) will immediately imagine what the bike looks like underneath the wrapping paper.

I could remember the first bike that I got when I was a kid, and how I had hoped it would be a green one. I also remember that I had been a bit disappointed when my gift turned out to be a red bike. And that disappointment must have been visible on my face. And even though my parents know that I loved my bike and I rode it all day, my first facial expression was one of disappointment. You cannot not communicate!

Conclusion

As a consultant, I cannot live without these assumptions or presuppositions. They guide me through every conversation I have. Now, I internalized them and I am no longer aware that I use them. But how did I succeed?

Here's a little exercise. Take one (maximum two) of the above assumptions. An assumption that you think you really understand and can recognize immediately. Then for the upcoming 3 days, take a writing book with you wherever you go and start taking notes. It is only a trick until you utilise it yourself. During these 3 days, look at the world with a specific focus, an eagle-like focus. Wherever you can, recognize this specific assumption in action. Write that action down.

I found it easy to first recognize the assumptions in other people, but later I also saw them in art and culture and so many other things. I saw assumptions in movies, I saw that directors like to play with them to change a plot.

Know that you have been building assumptions from the very first day of your life. But once again, become well aware of how they give direction to your life.

1.2 Building Rapport

The principle of rapport is pacing and then leading

Rapport is a close and harmonious relationship in which the people or groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas and communicate well. Building rapport is an emotional bond and is important in one's professional and personal life. NSO members are more likely to work with someone who will relate well with their current team. Having a closer

connection and understanding between parties leads to greater rapport, better working relationships and helps influence decisions.

Creating rapport at the start of a conversation with someone new will often make the result of the conversation more favourable and positive. It's important to stay calm, which helps decrease any possible tension and make communication easier. Applying these basics of rapport, building from your personal lives to your Scouting and NSO work, will enable you to develop mutual trust and attentiveness as a Consultant with your outreach and communication with NSOs. Mutual trust assists in willingness to follow the consultant in the changes that need to occur.

When people are in contact with each other, both verbal and non-verbal communication improves. The more one individual appreciates the contact with another, the stronger the adjustment (connection) to the other will be. At the verbal level, this is expressed by the usage of similar words, phrases, speed of speech, volume, etc.

At the non-verbal level, this is expressed by adjusting and synchronising facial expressions and gestures, positions of the arms and legs, entire sequences of gestures, breathing rhythm, etc. This may be used to your advantage because, if rapport is present, people are more inclined to appreciate and trust the other, and to be less critical of others. Research also reveals that people prefer to do business with like-minded people, because they tend to trust them more.

Humans possess the ability to create rapport from the moment they are born. The mirror neurons in the brain, which are receiving a lot of attention lately, may play a part in this process. Showing rapport is especially important in professional relationships as they require a high level of trust.

Probably the most important effect of rapport is that it focuses attention on the necessary points, and it increases the mutual ability to absorb information. This process can be influenced deliberately by pacing and leading.

In pacing (following), the consultant considers the current conditions and behaviour of their communication partner and describes them verbally in certain speech patterns. These speech patterns make it possible to interpret the content, which enables the listener to find their own experiences in these words. The goal is that the listener (internally) agrees with what is being said. Because of the agreement, the listener develops confidence in the speaker. Supplementing body language can also be helpful. The consultant goes along, and signals to the speaker that they and their needs are being recognized.

In leading (conducting), the consultant takes on the part of the initiating role, and can influence the listener, if they choose to go along, for example by slowing down their breathing frequency. Pacing and leading can be a circular process, until rapport has been achieved.

Other 'professional' relationships also use rapport that has been elicited on purpose. It allows for the fast establishment of efficient communication. Rapport is considered to be an important part of interpersonal communication and taught as such. If rapport can be built, it can also be lost. Rapport can be ended by recalcitrant verbal or non-verbal communication. One example would be to turn one's body away from the other person when communicating.

Rapport can be established in many ways, and some characteristics and variables are described below.

Characteristics:

⇒ An atmosphere of harmony
⇒ Respect for each other's view
⇒ Mutual trust
⇒ The willingness to follow each other

Tuning variables:
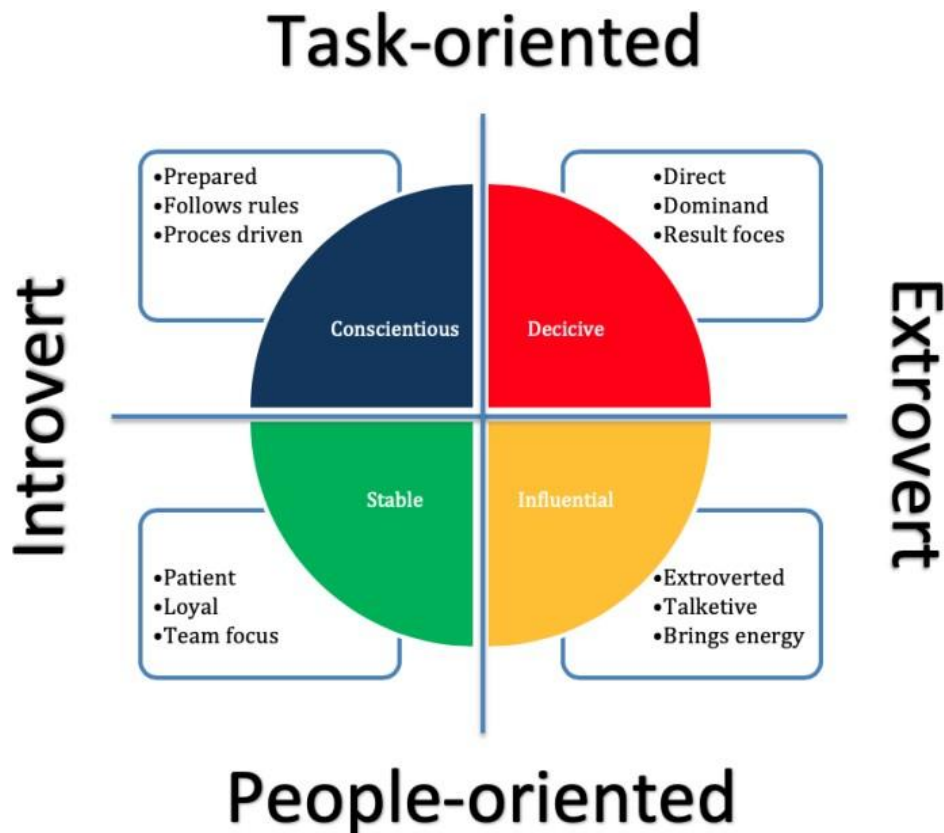
⇒ Criteria (what he/she thinks is important in that context)
⇒ Body posture
⇒ Movements and gestures
⇒ Breathing frequency, rhythm and depth
⇒ Pitch, rhythm and speed of voice
⇒ Choice of words (Be aware of predicates)
⇒ Values (highly valued criteria)
⇒ Beliefs (opinions, presuppositions)
⇒ Culture (clothing, jargon)

1.3. The DISC Model

Understanding the DISC model

Scouts may look alike when wearing our scarves and uniform, but they are also unique individuals. This also applies to our behavior. One person may be direct and enthusiastic, while the other may be quiet and expectant; some work with precision, while others are messier. Too often a messier personality may come across to the conscientious personality as disorganized, whereas they themselves feel the environment stimulates creativity.

Task-oriented

- Prepared
- Follows rules
- Proces driven

Conscientious

- Direct
- Dominand
- Result foces

Decicive

Stable

Influential

- Patient
- Loyal
- Team focus

- Extroverted
- Talketive
- Brings energy

Introvert — **Extrovert**

People-oriented

We all do it in our own way. Your behavioral style leaves a mark on everything you do. It leaves a mark on your strengths and weaknesses, your interaction with others and how they see and experience you, how you do your consulting, your communication etc.

The DISC model was developed by William Moulton Marston. He never put a copyright on the concept, nor did he create an assessment for it. Others have taken his model to build upon and create their own profiles.

Marston theorized that the behavioural expression of emotions could be categorized into four primary types, stemming from the person's perceptions of self in relationship to their environment. These four types were labelled by Marston as **Decisive (D), Influential (I), Stable (S), and Conscientious (C)**.

These four types stem from two specific axis on which Marston theory is based. These two axes are described in several other theories as well, which sometimes leads to misunderstanding of the DISC model or confusion with other models of behaviour.

One axis is the axis of extroversion (D&I) versus introversion (C&S). This is often the horizontal one. The vertical axis is task oriented (D&C) vs people oriented (I&S).

Extroverted people, (D&I) get energy from others and think by talking about things. Introverted people, (S&C) can get energy from themselves and often think first before they say something. These two extremes do not always appreciate or understand each other.

Task-oriented people get energy from the so-called achievement of objectives and tasks, and have a "goals first, then people" mindset. Those who are people-oriented get energy from interplay, harmony and others. A person-oriented person has a "people first, then goals" mindset. Here too, one can imagine that friction can happen.

As stated above, there are 4 main behaviour styles: **Decisive, Influential, Stable**, and **Conscientious**. Below are some handling tips.

Note: throughout this course (and maybe in your further experience), you will encounter different terminology associated with the four behaviour models, for example:

D = Decisive, Dominant

I = Influential, Influencer

S = Stable, Steady

C = Conscientious, Compliant

Handling tips for the Decisive style (Ds)

Someone with a decisive behavioural style **(Ds)** likes to argue based on facts and will not avoid conflict. They take a position and enter into a discussion based on facts and arguments, not emotion. **Ds** like to:

⇒ take the lead
⇒ show what is achieved
⇒ delegate

The consultant should recognise that **Ds** need the opportunity to **take the lead** and exert influence, however specify clear limits in this regard. Offer **Ds** the opportunity to share successes and acknowledge what they have achieved and offer the possibility to delegate as well. Provide professional support using someone who acts quickly and can think along.

Persons with a decisive behavioural style **like changes**. They like to create new opportunities and challenges, preferably challenges that involve risks. Therefore, ensure variation in their work and tasks. **Ds** want to determine things and make their own choices. Give **Ds** space and authority to be able to decide (up to a certain extent). Make sure there are clear boundaries and ask for feedback.

Ds are **results oriented**. Make sure that you agree on concrete goals with each other. Support **Ds** if needed but walk with them and open the space for feedback. Make sure not to restrict their thinking, or they will think they are micromanaged.

In general **Ds** only **want to know the big picture**. So be clear, short, and focused. Focus on the main points and stay business-like. People with a decisive behavioural style cannot handle vague language. Ds are in general logical thinkers. They collect facts and arguments and present them in a logical order. Someone with a decisive style always wants to win or be the best. Challenge **Ds** with achievable and certain goals. If he or she performs well, reward and acknowledge this.

Handling tips for the Influential style (Is)

Someone with an influential behavioural style **needs a lot of contact** with other people. Influentials make contact and enter a conversation. Show your involvement, show something of yourself and ask questions. They will be happy to share their stories.

Influential behavioural style people **seek confirmation** and want to make a good impression. Express your approval and show appreciation for the work they are doing. But also show that you admire and like them on a personal level. People with an influential behavioural style want to live in the so-called fast-lane. Don't be put off by the enthusiasm with which they work, instead give space and go with the flow. Offer a lively environment with sufficient incentives.

Influentials (**Is**) **have an optimistic outlook** on life and **like to dream** about what is possible. Try not to dampen this but go along with the optimism that comes with the influential style. Assume possibilities.

Influentials **like to receive compliments**. Express your sincere appreciation of the achievements, preferably in front of others. Someone with an influential style hates conflicts and will, if possible, avoid them. If there is a conflict or disagreement, do not raise your voice, talk calmly, do not become personal and focus on the facts.

For others, they are often quite chaotic. They have trouble getting things in order. They experience doing (all) things together with enthusiasm. Most of them think emotionally and this often gets them in trouble or at odds with others. Focus on emotions and ask questions that go into the feeling, in order to get their personal opinions and comments. Do not ask for the logic or for the truthfulness of their experience.

Is tend to focus on the broad lines. Avoid details, show the total picture. They like to be enthusiastic and inspired. Approach them with the same enthusiasm!

Handling tips for the Stable style (S)
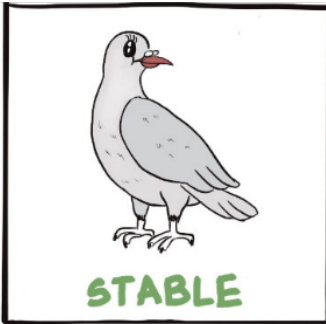
Someone with a stable behavioural style **avoids taking risks** and prefers to take the safe path. Make clear how your approach or idea reduces or excludes certain risks. This offers them a sense of security. Above all, do not ignore the risks by, for example, putting things into perspective or simply mentioning the benefits.

People with the stable behavioural style (**Ss**) in general **are logical thinkers** and would like to know what the causes and/or consequences are. Ensure logical reasoning and good substantiation. Do not wander off topic as people with a stable head style will often experience this as chaotic.

Ss want appreciation for what they are doing but will not easily ask for this. Give compliments and show genuine appreciation. e.g. for their helpfulness. You will immediately notice that this has an effect! They prefer peace and tranquillity. Don't just drop-in unannounced but find the right moment. Avoid raising your voice but create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.

Ss are team players and they do not like to come in to a conflict with peers, so ensure a pleasant team environment. Pleasant team environment for them is a team that offers stability and that appreciates them as a person.

Please don't put such people in the spotlight, they **enjoy a role in the background** and will achieve more there. They feel comfortable and happy and find it very pleasant helping or supporting others in their team. Even when peers are NOT asking for help, those with a stable style may still offer it, which can be a potential pitfall.

Ss do not like conflicts or disagreements and will withdraw when put in such a situation. Avoid verbal aggression or raising your voice; focus on cooperation and on common interests. They want to be personally involved in what they do, so address them personally, **Ss** will appreciate it.

Ss want to know what is expected from them. Therefore, give clear instructions and walk them through step by step. Don't expect someone with a stable behavioural style to take the initiative in this regard. They don't like being confronted with an accomplished fact or having to make a quick decision. Enable them to take time to prepare well and give them time to think when it comes to making decisions. For example, you can propose to them that it is okay to come to a decision tomorrow and not to make one today. In short, be patient.

Handling tips for the Conscientious style (Cs)
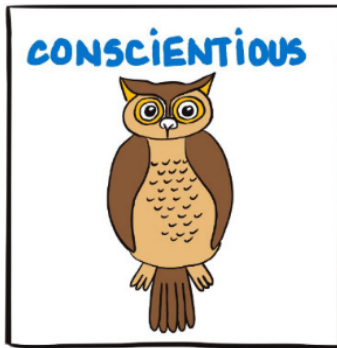
Someone with a conscientious behavioural style thinks **it is important to do things the right way**, without making mistakes. Give conscientious people time to investigate and analyse. Set limits / a timeline for them, because people with this main style tend to keep analysing.

People with a conscientious behavioural style (**Cs**) tend to be **rational and focused on logic**. The best way to convince them of something is with numbers and/or proven facts. Convincing on the basis of emotions will be counterproductive.

The **Cs want to analyse**. Provide as much relevant written information as possible so that he or she can judge for herself/himself or draw a conclusion. They would like to analyse themselves and will always question your opinion.

Conscientious people **are precise and recognize mistakes** and carelessness. Make sure you are organised and well prepared. Don't be late and pay attention to language errors when you write something down. They attach great value to monitoring quality. Emphasising that quality and things happening well, is also very important to you.

Conscientious people **like privacy** and in general separate work and private life. Choose a formal approach and don't get too close physically. Be especially wary of this when you first meet. This also applies to personal questions. Only when you know the **Cs** better, the time has come to become more personal.

The conscientious person is **primarily a thinker**. Give them time and space to think (preferably alone, or in a quiet place). Do not exert too much pressure. In their personal nature they are careful and thoughtful. They will experience a very direct approach as offensive. Choose a more indirect approach with a choice of words that is not absolute or definite. Show that you know what you are talking about and that you have thought carefully about what you say and do.

Cs try to **avoid conflict**. Avoid verbal abuse and do not become too personal. In the event of a conflict, use tact. Ask for explanations calmly, one on one, and try to find a solution together. Someone with a conscientious main style would prefer to do things themselves. Then they will know for sure that it is going well.

Give someone with a C style a position in which they can check, or state clearly that you are checking yourself and that the quality and care are being closely monitored in all upcoming moments.

1.4 Logical Levels

What are logical levels

Gregory Bateson, a British biologist, anthropologist and philosopher, introduced the idea that within human thinking and learning, a hierarchy of neurological levels can be differentiated. Robert Dilts, an internationally respected developer, author, trainer and consultant in the field of leadership and change and a pioneer in the field of neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), further developed the model based on "Steps to an Ecology of Mind". Bateson thus provided the foundation for one of the most beautiful and simple models within NLP. When analysing situations and relations, it provides insight into your own and the other's worldview.

Mutual cohesion of the six levels

The mutual cohesion of the logical levels is defined by Bateson as follows:

⇒ A higher logical level organises the information in the levels below it;
⇒ Changes and learning processes on a particular logical level require stability on the logical level above it;
⇒ A change on a higher logical level **will** cause changes on the levels below it;

A change on a lower logical level **could** cause a change on a higher logical level, but not necessarily. The solution for a problem usually lies on a different (higher or lower) logical level than the problem itself. In each logical level the learning processes are different, and changes are realized in a different way.

When analysing an issue, the model helps you to determine on which level the problem is, and also which level is not involved in this issue. Thus one can determine at which level change must start first.

If your behaviour and your capability (and your environment, if applicable) are in congruence with the goals which you aim for at the highest level, we call this an alignment; all logical levels are working together and support each other. Unfortunately, you will often notice that not all logical levels are working with and for each other. This can be the case not just for you or a team member, but even for the organisation as a whole.
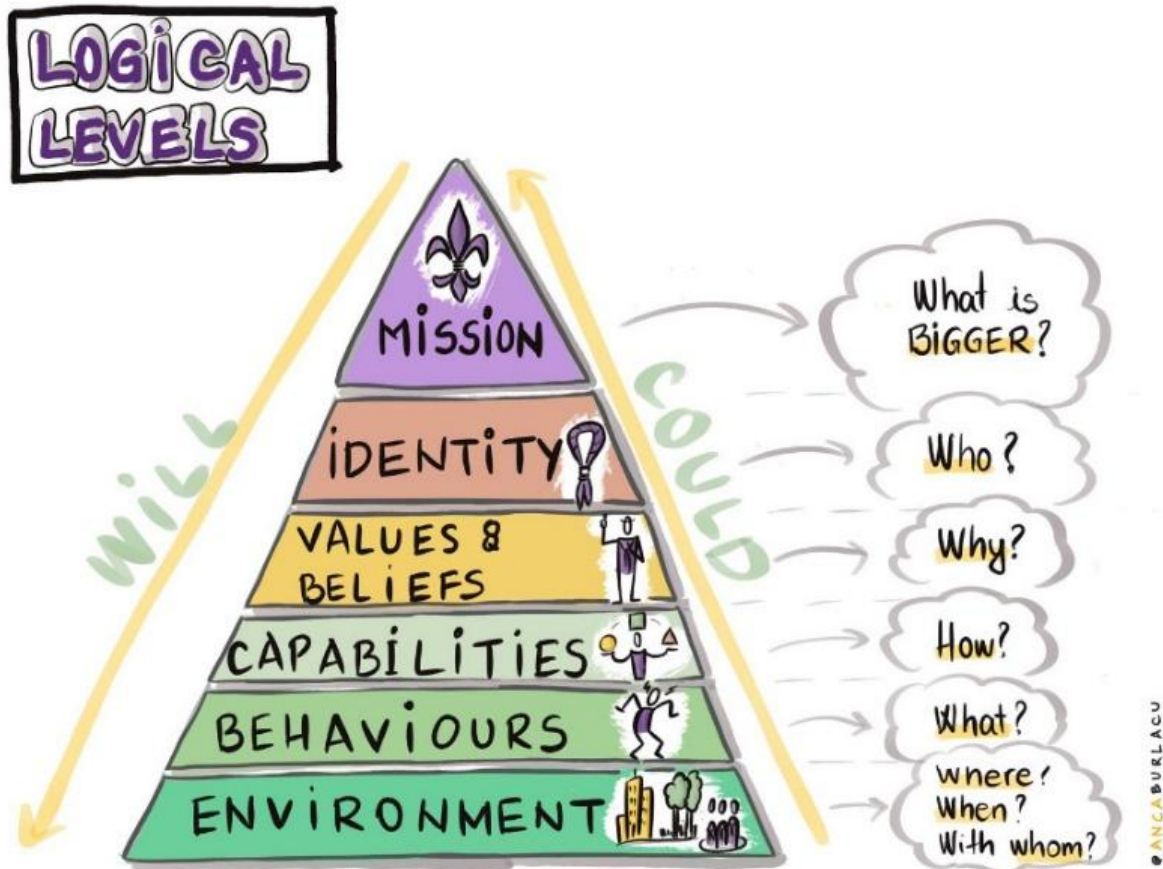
How aligned is the organization?

Example 1: During a conversation with a member of an NSO you are trying to convince him to start a new project, which he will have to coordinate. His reaction is not what you would have expected: he says he would prefer not to do this. His explanation: "I am just not that kind of person to take the lead". You try to convince him to accept the job after all and offer him a course to prepare him for the task.

This argument won't be effective. Why?

The fellow Scout indicates that his problem is at the *belief* level. You can tell this from his choice of words (I am not *that* kind of person who takes the lead). The tools which you offer him (a course to learn skills) are at the Capability level. These don't match.

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the European Union

The conviction that he can't do it is established at a very high level. No number of courses or training will convince him that he will be able to do the job. To put it another way: the Scout's problem is not that he is not capable, but that he doesn't believe he is a leader as he beliefs he "is not a leader". The correct intervention should be one of 'support' and 'giving positive feedback' and 'showing trust' for things he already did as a leader. The opinion of the Scout is established at a much higher level and will need to be changed at this level.

Example 2: I was walking through a camp and heard a 6-year-old girl say to her camp leader: "*I am* really weird". But her camp leader answered: "No, you *did* some silly things, but you're not weird". Because the girl emphasised the word **"I am"**, the issue got raised to the identity level.

Fortunately, the scout leader brought it back down to the behaviour level by pointing to what the girl was *doing*. By stressing that it was her **behaviour**, she correctly identified that the issue was not at the identity level. Thereby she avoided forming a limiting-belief of herself.

Environment

The emphasis is on talking about what happened, with whom, when, where. In the first story, the subject places the causes outside of their control. A lot of energy is used to explain how something came to happen. Complaining is also part of this.

Behaviour

The emphasis is on what the subject did and thought, and what influence the subject had on the situation. Reflections on any influence that the subject might have had to influence the situation, are also part of behaviour.

Capability

When analysing their own influence, the subject talks about actions which they would have liked to perform, but which they were unable to. This concerns abilities which they would like to possess so they could get a better grip on the situation or themselves.

Belief

The subject reflects on the why of their behaviour, the norms and values behind it. Convictions manifest themselves in a recognizable pattern which emerges in various situations. Impeding convictions may prevent existing abilities from being used.

Identity

The subject explores issues of personal meaningfulness. Why am I so exhausted, what is valuable to me, what makes me feel good, what challenges me, what do I want to achieve. This level often comes into play during burn-out or stress.

Mission/spirituality

The subject sees links within the big picture. This is the level of wisdom. The meaning of life, responsibility for the world and future generations, profound religious or spiritual beliefs. This level needs attention in case of a (life) crisis.

Summary

A Consultant distinguishes logical levels to benefit from the following possibilities:

⇒ Make a personal of an NSO goal more achievable: it's easier and faster to achieve a goal if it is;
⇒ more congruent with the logical levels above and under it.
⇒ Clarify conflicts between people or parts of the NSO organisation: if it takes a remarkable amount of time or effort to achieve a goal, then it is often in conflict with higher logical levels.
⇒ Find solutions that work: the solution for a conflict lies on another level than the conflict itself. "You can't solve a conflict with the same kind of thinking that caused the conflict" – Albert Einstein.
⇒ Estimate the consequences of a change for people or for an NSO: a change has more consequences if it affects a higher level. It also allows you to estimate the efforts that will be needed to achieve the change. The risk of complications and the resulting efforts will be greater if changes must be made at a higher level.

Exercise/Experiment: Logical Levels alignment

Whenever the logical levels are in a state of alignment with each other, they function better together. There is less internal friction, and their effectiveness is increased. In this exercise, the participants can investigate their own alignment with the help of another participant. It will also reveal if there is any ambivalence within the logical levels.

For this exercise you could find someone you like to work with together and try this exercise as an experiment. It will teach you to listen, to ask great questions, and to find out on which logical level there is an issue that prevents the participant from living their dream life.

That could help them to identify what they need to change and at which level, but it could also help you to point out where your change is going to be. It could even save you years of change when you make the intervention at the right level.

The exercise is divided into 2 steps. You need to print out the floor cards which you can find in Annex 1; we use floor cards to make this exercise spatial, as working spatially makes it easier for you and your partner to distinguish better the different steps. Don't worry if this is not done right the first time; be curious to what it can bring you!

Step 1: walking forward

⇒ Person A plays the part of the researcher, and at the end of the exercise checks if participants can see any discrepancies in their alignment, which may be points of attention for them.
⇒ Person B guides person A step by step through the process. The 6 steps have been placed on the floor and person B guides person A during their walk from floor card to floor card.
⇒ Person C observes and may take notes.

⇒ To start, B asks A what A's desired goal is:
⇒ What would you still like to achieve?
⇒ Where would you like to be a few years from now?
⇒ What would the ideal work life balance look like for you?

Then B asks A: "Imagine that you have achieved all of that...?" (give A a little time to picture this in their mind). Now B will place A on the first logical level (environment) and asks what belongs to this level, and thus B leads A through all the levels in A's desired goal: Environment, Behaviour, Capability (if they are visible), Beliefs, Identity and, finally, Mission.

Together A & B summarise the results from this process and discuss A's observations.
At the end of step 1, it is okay to have a quick thee or coffee or a glass of water in between.

Step 2: walking back

⇒ In the next step B asks A:
⇒ Now we know what you dream is, we want to look at how your life is now.
⇒ How is your life now?
⇒ (give them some time to reflect... and then move to the Mission floor card)

⇒ Then B will walk A back over the logical levels of the current situation, from Mission to Identity, to Beliefs and Capability, to Behaviour and finally to Environment.

⇒ Now A & B reflect on the route which A completed (but this time in reverse order). Then B asks:

⇒ What do you notice?

⇒ Where can you see any discrepancies?

⇒ Do you know something now that you didn't know before?

⇒ (pause for a moment to reflect, then thank A)

⇒ To close off the exercise, B asks A:

⇒ How was it?

⇒ What did you learn through this walk?

⇒ Looking over both ways we walked, the dream state forward and the present state back, what discrepancies between the two states do you see?

⇒ or; when we look back at the exercise we just did, what do you notice and what do you want to share with me?

⇒ To elicit change, ask the following:

⇒ What are the first (small) steps you are planning to take now?

⇒ Where do you need to change something to get closer to your dream state?

⇒ What motivates you to start doing it now?

⇒ To work on relapse prevention, these questions might help:

⇒ Who could help you with this?

⇒ What would be a pitfall for you, when you look at this exercise, in not doing the steps mentioned above?

⇒ What do you have to do to make sure you have a better chance of accomplishing these next steps?

⇒ This is the end of the alignment round. and the end of the exercise!

⇒ And what not to change roles now? A takes the role of B, and B becomes A, and we can repeat this experiment a second time.

Note

When B notices that A is discussing a different logical level than the one in which A should be at that moment, B has to explicitly ask A to stay in the current level. If A fails to do so, then B should take A away from the maps to help A distance themselves (become dissociated), after which the exercise can continue.

1.5 Motivational Interviewing & the 4 Pillars of Consulting

Definitions

The 4 pillars of great consulting come from Motivational Interviewing. Motivational Interviewing is a method based on cooperation, which focuses on the person, and which is characterised by a focused style of communication in order to evoke and reinforce the intrinsic motivation for change.

Motivational Interviewing has its roots in therapeutic settings, but turned out to be especially suitable for organisations which need to deal with change. Change can take the form of reorganisations, development plans, restructuring and innovation. It is suited for Scouting organisations where the principle of volunteer management is prevalent.

Motivational Interviewing is a style which focuses on cooperation, in this case cooperation between a member organisation and a consultant. It is essential that any motivation to change comes from within the NSO. The willingness to change as needed is not just a given within the Scout Movement, but it is the result of the interaction between the Consultant and the NSO.

Motivational interviewing is more about guiding than about leading, more about dancing than about wrestling, and definitely more about listening than about talking.

PACE – the 4 pillars of consulting

The 4 pillars that Consulting and Motivational Interviewing rests on are summed by the acronym **PACE**

1. Partnership

Focus on what is working, on what goes well. Pay attention to interchangeability, which will stimulate the trust and openness of the person you're talking to.

2. Acceptance

Investigate what the worries, values, and motivations of the dialogue partner are.
How do they experience the current situation?

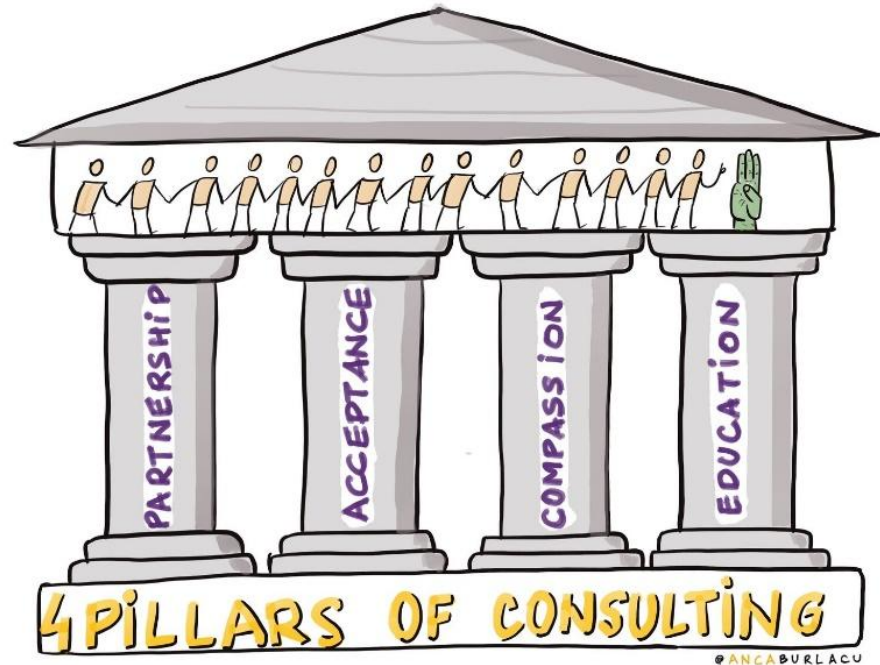What reasons do 'they' have to change?

3. Compassion

Sincerely try to understand what the dialogue partner means. Listen more than you speak or give information.

4. Evocation

Instead of telling dialogue partners to change, elicit from them reasons to change. What they hear themselves say, has a stronger influence.

1.6 Motivational Interviewing & the 6 Phases of Behavioural Change

Introduction

The choice to change is a combination of:

- The willingness to change;
- The ability to actually change;
- The readiness, the right moment to change.

Willingness to change is about the REASON and WILL. To realise the importance of change, it is important that the NSO or the Scout members see a difference between what they believe to be important and the behaviour which they exhibit. If they can't see a difference, then the NSO or Scout member won't consider changing.

What is important are values and goals, and how these things relate to each other. What do you want? What do you want to replace the problem with? Not wanting something usually doesn't energise people and doesn't provide direction. It doesn't motivate people, or at best, only for a short time.

The ability to actually change is about CAPABILITY. The extent to which the employee feels the goal is achievable? If people believe that it's important to change, then that doesn't automatically mean that they know how to go about it. When people say things like "The problem is with her rather than with me" or "Well, it's not really that bad", this is often interpreted as a lack of motivation, but they can be all about fear, shame, or a lack of faith that they will be able to change at all. So why try to change?

The starting point is to improve personal effectiveness and to create a vision of the steps to take. The trick is to find out when the problem is not a problem for a while. When looking for a solution, this is the search for the so-called 'exception'. When can you do this a little? What are you doing differently then? And how can you do this 'differently' more often? For most people the goal is often (too) large and far away. This may prevent them from getting started at all. Ask: "What would/could be the first step on the road to the goal?".

The readiness, the right moment to change, considers the question whether the NSO or its members can or want to change NOW. There may be issues that right now demand a lot of energy from the NSO, which can't coincide with a change of behaviour, and which may doom any chance of change. This is a motivated choice. To postpone is not the same as to fail.

In short, motivation can be compared to a bank vault: only if all four locks have been unlocked, can somebody be ready to change. If one or more locks remain closed, then that person is not ready to change. There is no use in trying to force the matter but try to find out WHICH lock is still closed and listen to what the other does say.

Identify and solicit change statements

Examples of questions to ask:

- What rating would you give yourself (or the NSO if you work with a team) on the possibility to change?
- What rating would you give yourself in trust on getting this change done?
- How likely is it that this is the right moment to start?

All of the 3 questions above are on a scale from 1-10. It is interesting to do this questionnaire standing up. You and the team will see where people stand and how far they still need to develop. You will see the discrepancies and people will give you hints on what they have to do to take one step forward.

Possibility	Trust	Moment
1 ———[ ]——— 10	1 ———[ ]——— 10	1 ———[ ]——— 10
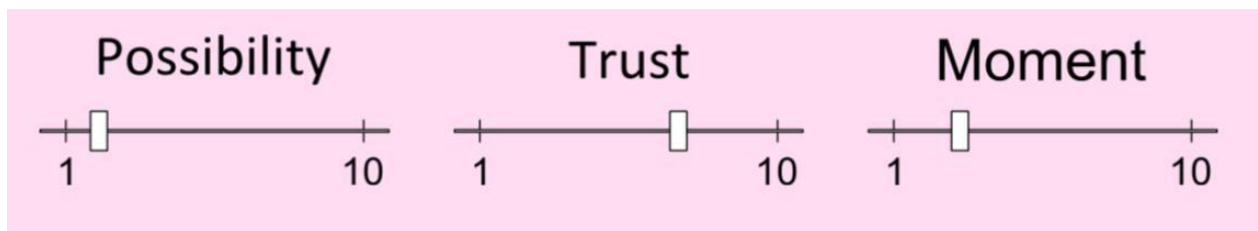
With these questions you can see which lock is locked in the vault. This imaginary vault represents things that might be locked inside people who 'must' start to change. It's up to you as a consultant to see which lock is locked. This allows you to focus on their needs and saves you time because you won't work on 'open' locks. Instead you only work on the locks that need opening.

Reason

Wish

Opportunities
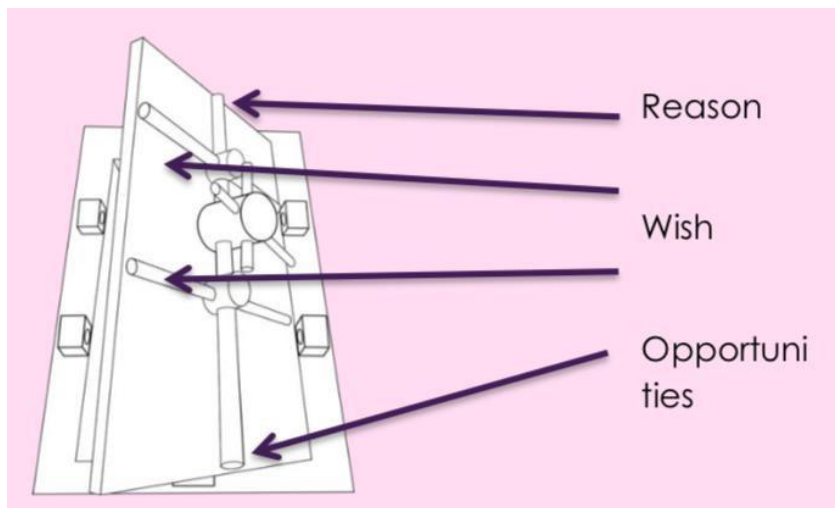
Be aware that as long as a single lock is closed, the door to change won't open. And even once you open a particular lock, another one may have closed again, even if it appeared to be open earlier on.

It is up to you to show determination and become in tune with the other. Not only will this establish rapport, but it will accelerate the entire change process of acceptance and willingness. It is up to you to pick each lock one at a time, like a professional safecracker. Only then the safe door to change will open. But always remember that you can only influence the safe (the other person); it is up to the other to eventually change.

Prochaska and DiClemente did research on people who managed to change their habits. Based on this research, they charted the six phases of behavioural change. The phases of behavioural change of Prochaska and DiClemente can be used as a foundation during Motivational Interviewing. By connecting an intervention to the phase in which the person is at that moment, you can move with the resistance and avoid wasting energy.

We will now look at these phases in more detail. It is important to realize that behavioural change is not a linear process with a start and an end, but a circular one. It doesn't matter in which phase somebody is; they can always regress to a previous phase or to old behaviour.

Change often means taking two steps forward and one step back. The speed at which somebody or an NSO moves through the various phases is hard to predict. There is also no guarantee that the other chooses to change, but by connecting to them you have the biggest chance to influence them. Not connecting is sure to elicit conflict, and to connect and influence in a conflict situation is not easy.

That is why Motivational Interviewing takes the following approach:

- it focuses on cooperation;
- you elicit the motivation to change in the other person(s);
- the choice to change is the responsibility of the person or NSO;
- you help the other person(s) or NSO to investigate their own ambivalence (doubt) and work on it.

Phases of behavioural change

Image by Freepik
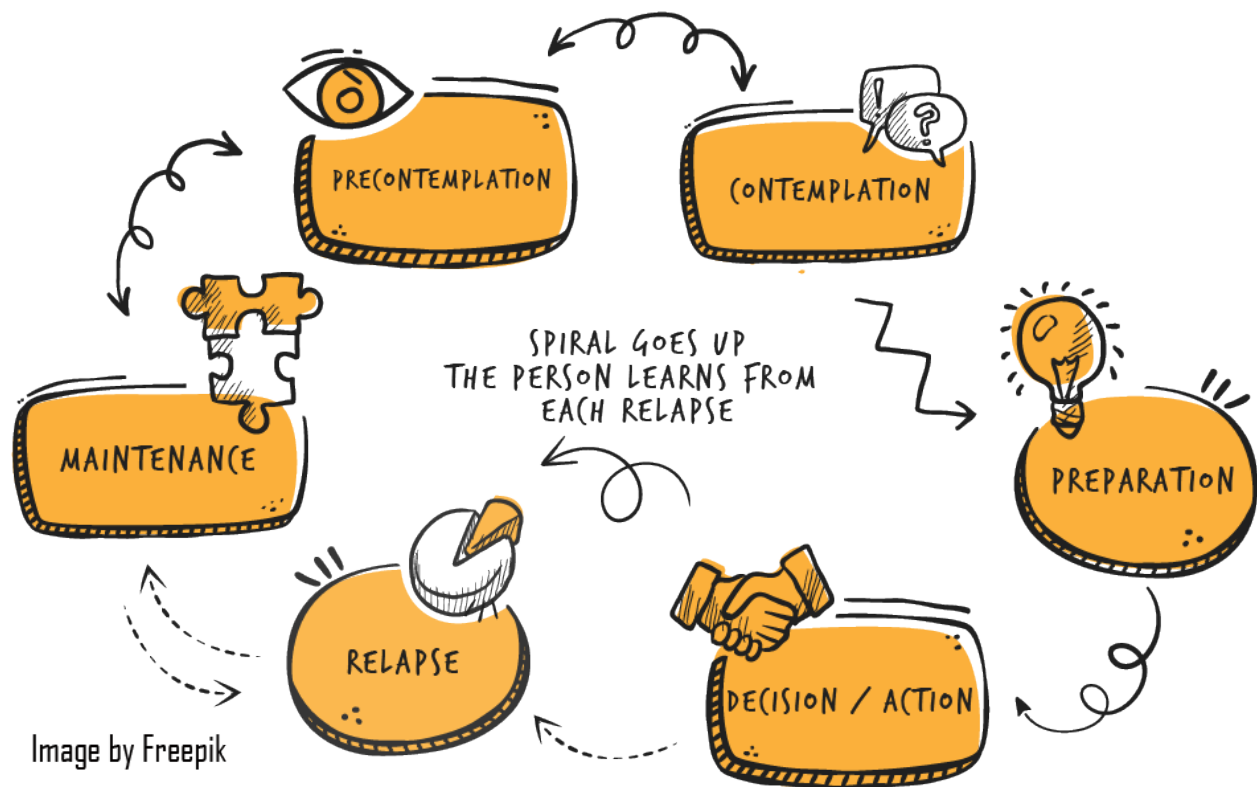
Precontemplation

In this phase, one does not see any advantages to change or to cooperate with change. The current behaviour or situation benefits them. The only thing bothering them is the 'whining' (pressure to change) from others who want them to change.

This is the consultant's pitfall: if you try to convince somebody or the organisation, then you are already two phases ahead of them; you're in the decision-making phase. You are going too fast, the other party thinks they are being belittled, and this elicits resistance.

Inquire what they like about the current behaviour/situation. You can also ask if there may be some disadvantages to it. If there are none, let it be, don't try to convince them yet. If you want to offer them information, do it in a neutral way; present them with facts which they can use to draw their own conclusions.

In this phase the key is to connect, to gain their trust. This is the base to influence them later on. Some examples of what a consultant could say during this phase:

⇒ **Validate the person or NSO's experience**: "I can understand why you feel that way"

⇒ **Acknowledge the person's control over the decision**: "I don't want to preach to you; I know that you are an adult and you will be the one to decide if and when you are ready to start."

⇒ **Repeat a simple, direct statement about your stand on the benefits of working on this new behaviour for this person or NSO**: "I believe, based upon my experience, that this "old behaviour" is putting your NSO at serious risk for losing XYZ (describe a criterion that is of high importance for the other), and that losing "XYZ" is an important thing to you."

⇒ **Explore potential concerns**: "Has your 'old behaviour' ever caused you or the NSO a problem?" "Can you imagine how your 'old behaviour' might cause problems in the future?"

⇒ **Acknowledge possible feelings of being pressured**: "I know that it might feel as though I have been pressuring you, and I want to thank you for talking to me anyway."

⇒ **Validate that they are not ready**: "I hear you saying that you are nowhere near ready to lose 'old behaviour' right now.

⇒ **Restate your position that it is up to them**: "It's totally up to you to decide if this is right for you right now."

⇒ **Encourage reframing of the current state of change**: the potential beginning of a change rather than a decision never to change: "Everyone who's ever lost 'old behaviour' starts right where you are now; they start by seeing the reasons why they might want to lose 'old behaviour'. And that is what I have been talking to you about."

Contemplation

In this phase the scales of wanting and not wanting to change are moving up and down. They haven't decided yet to actually change or cooperate with change. There is ambivalence: 'I can do it and I can't do it', 'I'm ready for it and I'm not ready for it'. If they are in doubt, then a consultant is at risk of the following pitfalls:

- Advising without having been asked to do so
- Expressing superiority
- Convincing
- Acting too soon
- Ignoring or belittling
- Making optimistic predictions

These actions tend to elicit or reinforce resistance. You are not connecting with the NSO or with the fellow Scout, but rather you take away their responsibility, and ignore the cause of their doubts. This is more likely to cause conflict, rather than to bring about a change in behaviour.

During your contact, keep in mind that people in this phase are largely open to change processes which focus on realisation. Don't move into action now, it's still too early for that. When people are in doubt, the doubt must be investigated and resolved before they can make a decision. In this phase interventions focus on mapping the advantages and disadvantages of the current situation and the advantages and disadvantages of changing.

You can ask them to rate their feelings on a scale (0-10). For example:

- On a scale of 0-10, how important is it for you to start doing things differently?
- Imagine that you would do it differently. On a scale of 0-10, how much faith do you have that you will be successful?
- On a scale of 0-10, to which extent is it the right moment NOW?

These answers provide information that you, the consultant, can focus on. Somebody who indicates that it's very important for them to change, but who is not confident that they can do it, doesn't need to be convinced of the necessity to change. The consultant can then focus on the possibilities to increase their confidence, and stress what is going right.

⇒ **Validate the NSO's experience**: "I'm hearing that you are thinking about losing OLD BEHAVIOUR but you are definitely not ready to take action right now."

⇒ **Acknowledge the person's control over the decision**: "I don't want to preach to you; I know that you are an adult and you will be the one to decide if and when you are ready to lose OLD BEHAVIOUR."

⇒ **Clarify the NSO's perceptions of the pros and cons of attempted loss of OLD BEHAVIOUR**: "Using this worksheet, what is one benefit of losing OLD BEHAVIOUR? What is one drawback of losing OLD BEHAVIOUR?"

⇒ **Encourage further self-exploration**: "These questions are very important to beginning a successful program to lose OLD BEHAVIOUR. Would you be willing to finish this at home/work and talk to me about it during our next talk?"

⇒ **Restate your position that it is up to them**: "It's totally up to you to decide if this is right for the NSO right now. Whatever you choose, I'm here to support you."

⇒ **Leave the door open for moving to preparation**: "After talking about this, and doing the exercise, if you feel you would like to make some changes, the next step won't be jumping into action - we can begin with some preparation work."

Preparation

"Testing the waters"

"My OLD BEHAVIOUR is a concern for me: it is clear that the benefits of attempting to lose OLD BEHAVIOUR outweigh the drawbacks, and I am planning to start within the next month". At this stage, the consultant's goal is to praise the decision to change, prioritize behaviour-changing opportunities, identify and assist in problem solving, encourage small initial steps and assist in identifying social support.

⇒ **Praise the decision to change**: "It is great that you feel good about your decision to start with the NEW BEHAVIOUR: you are doing something important to decrease your chances of getting rid of XYZ (name an important criterion that the other is trying to get rid of).

⇒ **Prioritise behaviour-changing opportunities**: "Looking at your OLD BEHAVIOUR habits, I think the biggest benefit would come from switching from ABC to XYZ, what do you think?"

⇒ **Identify and assist in problem solving**: "Have you ever attempted losing your OLD BEHAVIOUR before? What was helpful? What kind of challenges would you expect in making those changes now? How do you think you could deal with them?"

⇒ **Encourage small, initial steps**: "So, the initial goal is to try starting with X this week, and then to move to Y or Z next week."

⇒ **Assist in identifying social support**: "Which colleague, friend or other person could support you as you make this change? How could they support you? Is there anything else I can do to help?"

Decision / Action

In this phase they have chosen. The person being coached has made the decision by themselves. They make specific plans on how to go about it. The coach focuses on supporting the plans: what do you want to achieve, what do you need to succeed, what is the first attainable step, what are the problems which you might face, what can you do in such a situation, etc.

During the consulting sessions it is important to pay attention to what was achieved and how. There will also be attention to what is difficult. Focus on achievable steps: people like to get to the goal straight away, but that takes many small steps. By stressing what has gone right so far, their confidence is reinforced.

NOTE: a decision may also be that right now the advantages of changing are smaller than the advantages of the current behaviour. The NSO returns to the preliminary phase. Everything remains as it is for now.

Perseverance / Maintenance

In this phase, they have integrated the change in their life. Supporting sessions and relapse prevention remain important.

Relapse

Relapse is part of change processes! Relapse is often viewed both by the person and their surroundings as a sign of weakness, lack of motivation. This is unfortunate; old behaviour is always easier than new behaviour. A relapse can be a learning moment, so it is important as consultants not to judge them for relapsing. Choose a positive, motivating approach. Change needs its trial and error. A relapse doesn't necessarily mean that you need to start from the beginning again.

Dealing with change: ambivalence

Should an NSO indicate that they are not ready for change yet, then the problem is not that they don't realise what the disadvantages of their behaviour are, but that they have conflicting feelings. This is called ambivalence; I want to and at the same time I don't want to; I can do it and the NSO can't do it; I'm ready for it and I'm not ready for it yet. In a nutshell: they have doubts.

If your fellow Scout or NSO has doubts, then you as a consultant are at risk of the following pitfalls:

⇒ Advising without having been asked to do so

⇒ Expressing superiority

⇒ Convincing

⇒ Acting too soon

⇒ Ignoring or belittling

⇒ Making optimistic predictions

These actions tend to elicit or reinforce resistance. You are not connecting with your counter partner, but rather you take away their responsibility, and ignore the cause of their doubts. This is more likely to cause conflict, rather than to bring about a change in behaviour.

Dealing with change: resistance

Resistance is a normal occurrence in a consulting relationship. Change makes people insecure. NSOs and fellow Scouts may rebel against this insecurity, this uncertainty about where the new relationship with these new feelings will take them. The emphasis of good consulting as with Motivational Interviewing is not on preventing resistance, but on recognizing and lowering resistance.

Resistance can manifest itself in many forms, such as anger, dependence, ignoring people, "forgetting" agreements, or denial. In most cases this is a subconscious resistance against change.

Resistant behaviour may suggest that this issue is important to the other person. It may indicate a lack of alternatives for the other person. It tells you something about the interaction between the people communicating; in most cases it indicates that action was taken too soon / too fast, rather than carefully listening and analysing.

Another way to look at resistance is through the vault example above. If one of the locks is closed, the vault will not open. It is up to you to see which lock is closed. Can you determine that?

You can determine this by asking the following 3 questions, measuring on a scale from 1-10:
- How much do you trust you can do this?
- How big is your possibility?
- Is this the right moment for change?

1.7 Change Management (Organisational Change)

Introduction

Change is often a complex process that involves many stakeholders and requires commitment, resources, and willpower to stick to change. When you take on a service request to help an NSO improve an aspect of their programme and governance, you are essentially helping them to make a change and to stick with it. And, as change can be uncomfortable, it is essential to pay attention to several aspects which we will explore below.

There are several models that help us understand the change processes, its stages and steps, and how to act in each stage in order to consolidate change at each step. We will focus on 2 models in this chapter.

Kotter's 8 stages of change

Below we will introduce a model designed by John Kotter, who explains how organisational change can be fostered in 8 steps:
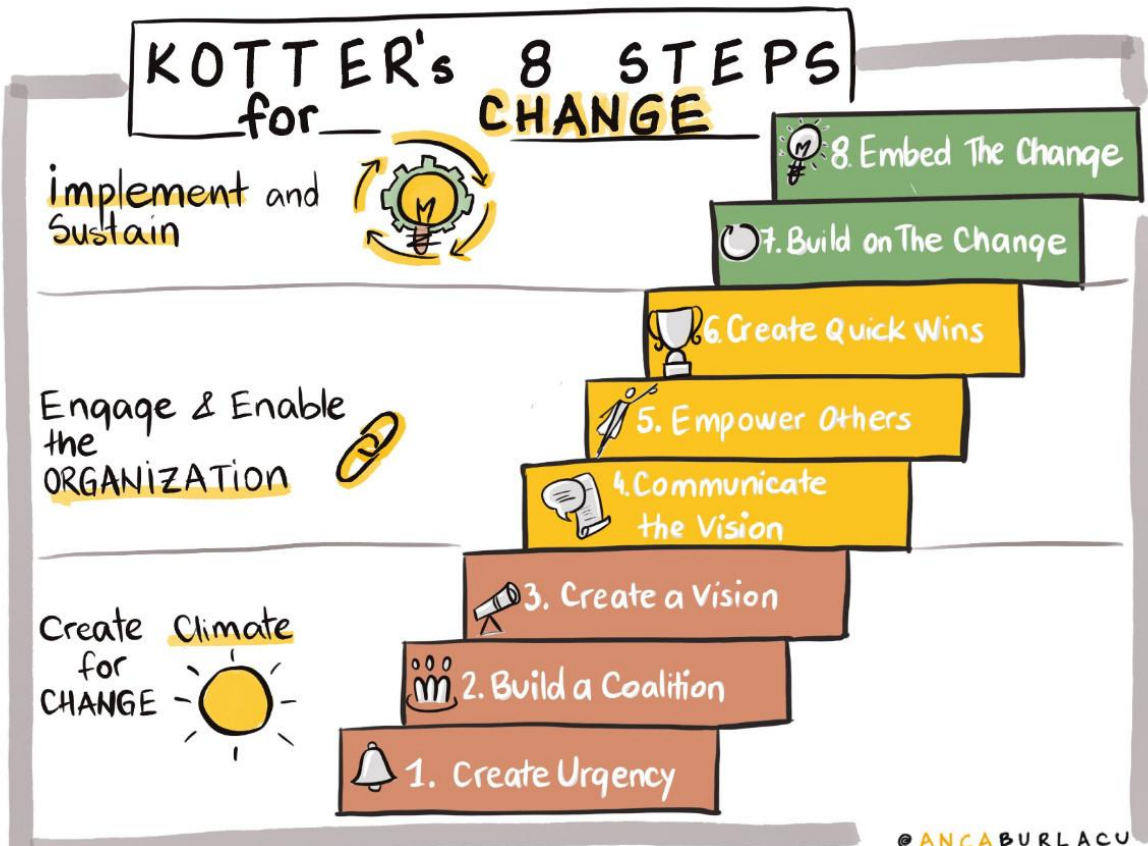
1. Create urgency

At this stage we want our NSO members to proclaim "Let's do this!". If not everyone is lined behind this belief though, you can support the main members who wish to push for change to:

- show the need for change with a compelling object (see, touch, feel);
- show valid and dramatic evidence from outside the organisation that change is required;
- look for cost-effective and easy ways to reduce complacency;
- never underestimate how much complacency, fear, and anger exists, even in good organisations.

2. Build a coalition

One person is almost never enough to make change happen; to create a group powerful enough to guide a big change and to work together well, you and the involved NSO members can:

- Show enthusiasm and commitment to draw the right people into the team;
- Model the trust and teamwork needed in the group;
- Structure meeting formats for the guiding team to minimise frustration and increase trust;
- Put energy into step 1 if you cannot take on step 2 and if the right people will not.

3. Create a vision

A change process requires a vision and a strategy that will help achieve this vision; together with your team:

- Try to see possible futures and select what is feasible;
- Work on a clear vision that can be articulated within a minute or written up on 1 page;
- Propose visions that are moving – such as a commitment to service people;
- encourage the team to adopt strategies that are bold enough to make bold visions a reality;
- Pay careful attention to the strategic question of how quickly to introduce change.

4. Communicate the vision

We want people to buy into the idea of change and to rally up with it. For that to happen, you and the NSO team should:

- Keep communication simple and heartfelt;
- Do their homework before communicating (understand what people are feeling);
- Address people's anxieties, confusion, anger, and distrust related to adopting a change;
- Rid communication channels of junk so that important messages can go through;
- Use new technologies to help people see the vision.

5. Empower others

To get more people to act on the agreed vision, we can:

- Find individuals with change experience who can bolster people's self-confidence (they've done it and so can this team);
- Recognise and reward systems that inspire, promote optimism, and build self-confidence;
- Provide feedback that can help people make better vision-related decisions;
- "Retool" disempowering managers (or members) by giving them new jobs that clearly show the need for change.

6. Create quick wins

Consolidate people's desire to keep sticking to change by:

- Showcasing early wins that come fast;
- Make these wins as visible as possible to as many people as possible;
- Promote wins that are meaningful to others;
- Focus on wins that speak to influential players whose support you need and do not yet have;
- Prioritise wins that can be achieved cheaply and easily, even if they seem small compared with the grand vision.

7. Build on the change

We have reached the step where we want people to make wave after wave of changes, until the vision is fulfilled. At this stage, focus on:

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- Encouraging the team to make space for the new actions by ridding themselves of work that wears them down (tasks that were relevant in the past but no longer; tasks that can be delegated);
- Looking constantly for ways to keep urgency up;
- Using new situations opportunistically to launch the next wave of change;
- As always – show 'em, show 'em, show 'em.

8. Embed the change

Finally, once change is implemented, we wish to see this change consolidated and continued. Keep reminding all NSO members involved to:

- Not stop at step 7 (it's not over until the changes have rooted);
- Use new employee orientation to compellingly show recruits what the organisation cares about;
- Use the promotions and shoutouts process to place people who act according to the new norms into influential and visible positions;
- Tell vivid stories over and over about the new organisation, what it does, and why it succeeds;
- Make absolutely sure they have the continuity of behaviour and results that help a new culture grow.

Change curve

Change is often difficult for people; different people react in different ways to it. It can be dangerous to count only on one or two members who wish to make a change in the organisation, if other stakeholders are not feeling confident or aligned with the change. The change curve can help you understand where each stakeholder stands in the change process and how to act to move people towards a more positive attitude.

Denial and frustration

To fight denial and frustration, what helps is often to:

- Explain why change is necessary
- Explain the impact of this change on individual and team(s) level
- Ask for feedback on the change
- Listen
- Understand if more time is needed.

Depression

At the depression stage, individuals are at the very lowest of their motivation to address change. When someone is experiencing this, try to:

- Sell the benefits of change
- Provide more information on the plan

Experiment

Experiment is the stage when people are willing to give it a try. When here, try to:

- Encourage questions
- Consider suggestions for amending the plan
- Take care of people not sliding back into depression when moving on.

Decision

At the decision stage, you want to:

- Accelerate/maintain the implementation steadily
- Recruit more people as advocates of the change

Integration

Remember that people will move through these stages at different rates - the leaders can often be ahead of other people affected, and people can also get stuck or fall back into a previous stage.

1.8 Asking Great Questions

Questions are flashlights. They help us discover aspects of both our outer and inner experience, they shine light into specific areas whilst leaving other areas in darkness. There is a huge difference in an answer depending on where the light is shone. You may be asking yourself - "why can't I solve this problem no matter how hard I try?" Consider what parts of the experience are highlighted when you ask "what new courses of action have I not tried yet? Or who would be willing to help me through this?".

What is important to remember is that different questions lead to different answers, some are much better than others! Coaches, consultants, trainers, teachers and many other people use questions. They can be used to promote awareness, learning, change and growth both personal and collective. We want to ask helpful questions that lead to great insights and purposeful actions, but how do we do that?

In my experience, first you should ask yourself a question (yes, another one!). "Where is it useful for this person to shine more light on?"

But even after asking and considering such a question yourself, the only way to know if the question you posed to your client, coach or friend was a good one, is to listen to their answer. The question could have been a clever and sophisticated one that led to no new information, or it could have been a very simple one opening an "aha" moment!

So we can confidently say that there are no great questions, just great answers... and to get to those answers alongside crafting a good question, you must also consider four important areas:

⇒ **Emotional state:** the same question will take you to completely different places if asked when the other person is worried and in a hurry, or relaxed and committed to the conversation you are having.
⇒ **Role:** it is important to be aware that we all answer differently if we think our answers are being evaluated, that the other person is just looking for the 'right' answer or genuinely helping us explore new possibilities. Therefore, we will naturally answer differently to authoritarian bosses than we would to trusted learning allies.
⇒ **Rapport:** this refers to the quality of the relationship you are establishing on a moment-to-moment basis. If you and the other person are meeting in the same revolution, rhythm, and pace then the odds of getting great answers to your questions increase dramatically.
⇒ **Trust:** To gain deep insights, learning and commitment to act, is only possible if the two people in the conversation trust each other. It is your job to build a safe, respectful, confidential environment where trust can grow.

1.9 Coaching & the GROW Model

Definitions of consulting, training, coaching

There are many definitions of Coaching. According to ICF (International Coaching Federation), coaching is a partnership with clients in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential. The process of coaching often unlocks previously untapped sources of imagination, productivity and leadership. It is much more a matter of asking questions than giving guidance.

There is a difference between consulting, training and coaching. In each process the facilitator or the client will provide a different amount of input and a consultant will wear different hats in different contexts.

Consultant has an area of expertise. They assess your situation, identify the problems and very often he will provide a plan or ways of achieving the results. Example: A WOSM consultant on Grow Partnership will assess your NSO status, identify problems and give the solution for better results. Consultants can also execute some activities for you.

Trainer will teach or train you on a certain subject or topic. They have the content and very often they teach that content repeatedly, to different groups. The focus is on the trainer, their skills, expertise and knowledge. After the training, the trainee will be better equipped to perform a task or work in a specific area. Example: training on Diversity and Inclusion.

Coach is someone who partners with the client (coachee), getting the information needed from the coachee and unpacking it. The coachee will be able to gain insights and see the bigger picture. The focus is on you, the client, focusing on goals and finding ways to achieve it.

The GROW model

The GROW Model is the most common coaching framework used by the coaches. Given its relative simplicity, the GROW model is considered a way to structure coaching and mentoring sessions with their coachees.

Tip: The key to coaching and using the GROW model lies in asking great questions. Coaching isn't telling the coachee what to do — it's helping him/her come up with their own answers by asking the right question at the right time.

Asking powerful questions is the essence of great coaching. Below you will find a list of questions one can use during a coaching session, but feel free to get creative and use your own questions.

Goal

Coaching starts with establishing a goal. It could be a performance goal, a development goal, a problem to solve, a decision to make, or a goal for the coaching session. For clarity of goal setting as well as consistency across your team, encourage your coachees to use a SMART goal format, where the letters stand for:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ttainable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**imely

The following ten questions can help people gain clarity about their goals:

1. What do you want to achieve from this coaching session?
2. What goal do you want to achieve?
3. What would you like to happen with _____?
4. What do you really want?
5. What would you like to accomplish?
6. What result are you trying to achieve?
7. What outcome would be ideal?
8. What do you want to change?
9. Why are you hoping to achieve this goal?
10. What would the benefits be if you achieved this goal?

Reality

This step in the GROW model helps you and the coachee gain awareness of the current situation—what's going on, the context, and the magnitude of the situation.

The key is to take it slow and easy with your questions. It's not a rapid-fire interrogation. Let the coachee think about the question and reflect on their answers. Use active listening skills, as this is not the time to jump to a solution.

The following 20 questions are designed to clarify the current reality:

1. What is happening now (what, who, when, and how often)?
2. What is the effect or result of this?
3. Have you already taken any steps towards your goal?
4. How would you describe what you did?
5. Where are you now in relation to your goal?
6. On a scale of one to 10, where are you?
7. What has contributed to your success so far?
8. What progress have you made so far?
9. What is working well right now?
10. What is required of you?
11. Why haven't you reached that goal already?
12. What do you think is stopping you?
13. What do you think was really happening?
14. Do you know other people who have achieved that goal?
15. What did you learn from _____?
16. What have you already tried?
17. How could you turn this around this time?
18. What could you do better this time?
19. If you asked _____, what would they say about you?
20. On a scale of one to 10, how severe/serious/urgent is the situation?
21. If someone said/did that to you, what would you think/feel/do?

Options

Once you both have a clear understanding of the situation, the coaching conversation turns to what the coachee can do to reach their goal.

These 20 questions are designed to help the coachee explore options:

1. What are your options?
2. What do you think you need to do next?
3. What could be your first step?
4. What do you think you need to do to get a better result (or closer to your goal)?
5. What else could you do?
6. Who else might be able to help?
7. What would happen if you did nothing?
8. What has worked for you already? How could you do more of that?
9. What would happen if you did that?
10. What is the hardest/most challenging part of that for you?
11. What advice would you give to a friend about that?
12. What would you gain/lose by doing/saying that?
13. If someone did/said that to you what do you think would happen?
14. What's the best/worst thing about that option?
15. Which option do you feel ready to act on?
16. How have you tackled this/a similar situation before?
17. What could you do differently?
18. Who do you know who has encountered a similar situation?
19. If anything was possible, what would you do?
20. What else?

Will (or way forward)

This is the last step in the GROW model. In this step, the coach checks for commitment and helps the coachee establish a clear action plan for next steps.

Here are 20 questions to help probe for and achieve commitment:

1. How are you going to go about it?

2. What do you think you need to do right now

3. Tell me how you're going to do that.

4. How will you know when you have done it?

5. Is there anything else you can do?

6. On a scale of one to 10, what is the likelihood of your plan succeeding?

7. What would it take to make it a 10?

8. What obstacles are getting in the way of success?

9. What roadblocks do you expect or require planning?

10. What resources can help you?

11. Is there anything missing?

12. What is one small step you can take now?

13. When are you going to start?

14. How will you know you have been successful?

15. What support do you need to get that done?

16. What will happen (or, what is the cost) of you NOT doing this?

17. What do you need from me/others to help you achieve this?

18. What are three actions you can take that would make sense this week?

19. On a scale of one to 10, how committed/motivated are you to doing it?

20. What would it take to make it a 10?

1.10 Stakeholders

What is a stakeholder

The term stakeholder is used as a general term to describe individuals, groups, or organisations that have an interest in the project and can mobilise resources to affect its outcome in some way. A formal definition of a stakeholder is: "individuals and organisations who are actively involved in the project, or whose interests may be positively or negatively affected as a result of project execution or successful project completion" (Project Management Institute (PMI®), 1996).

As a Consultant, you will most likely interact with stakeholders such as the official contact of the NSO (International Commissioner, Chief Scout Officer), members of the National Team, National Board Members.

For some of the processes where your consultancy is involved, stakeholders' approval is very important, and in some cases it will determine the outcome of the service. Obtaining this approval is just as much about communication, education, and visibility as it is about strategic alignment. Stakeholders must be able to quickly and easily understand where a new project fits into the big picture of the NSO.

Stakeholder analysis

A stakeholder analysis allows you to map out and establish the appropriate level of communication with your stakeholders, relative to their influence and interest in your project. Once you have identified them, it's important to develop a communication strategy to deal with the different stakeholders. A thoughtful stakeholder analysis will prime you for the advocacy you need or prepare you for the resistance you and your NSO contact may face.

When to perform a stakeholder analysis? Some of the stakeholders are key actors in the process that you support; after completing the stakeholder analysis, remember to revisit and review it during important milestones, especially where the national board or national teams may be involved.

How to perform a stakeholder analysis

Here are the steps to perform a stakeholder analysis:

1. Identify your stakeholders

Support the NSO members to brainstorm about who their stakeholders are. To do this, list all of the people who are affected by the work triggered with the service request, or who have a vested interest in its success or failure. Be aware that this relationship may include the ones described in the section "Stakeholders".

2. Prioritise your stakeholders

Once you have the people identified, you can place them on a grid, based on the following four criteria:

⇒ **High power, highly interested people:** Fully engage these people, and make the greatest efforts to satisfy them.
⇒ **High power, less interested people:** Keep these stakeholders satisfied, but not so much that they become bored with your message.
⇒ **Low power, highly interested people:** Adequately inform these people, and talk to them to ensure that no significant issues arise. People in this category can often be very helpful with the details of your project in a supportive role.

⇒ **Low power, less interested people:** Again, monitor these people, but don't bore them with excessive communication.

You can see below a graphic example of how this looks like:

3. Understand how to communicate with your stakeholders

Now that stakeholders have been identified and prioritised, you need to understand how they feel about your project, in order to communicate with them in the best way.

Some good questions to ask include:

- What motivates this stakeholder?
- What other priorities do they have, and how can we align our project with those priorities (or at least ensure the project won't threaten them)?
- Will this stakeholder likely have a positive view of our project? If not, what can we do about it?
- Which of your project information is relevant to them, and what is the best way to relay that information?
- Who influences their opinion, and are those influencers also your stakeholders?
- If they're not likely to be supportive of your project, what can you do to win their support?
- If you can't win their support, what can you do to manage their resistance?
- Remember that investing time in this analysis could be the determinant step in ensuring the success of your service!

4. Develop a communication strategy

If you have arrived at this point and know what the NSO needs to communicate and to whom, it's important that the members and the team involved also have a clear idea; you can structure this information using a simple outline (see image below). Yes, we encourage you to write it down so that you don't leave anything behind; be sure that all people involved know well when, how and to whom they need to communicate.

Here's a simple example of how you can develop this communication strategy. This is just one model among many; you can try using it and, based on the NSO's needs, explore other models too.

Who	Type of information	Way to communicate	Special notes
Chairperson National Board	Very brief, just highlights of the project	Email and a Whatsapp message to her assistant	Be careful with the formalities
Chief Scout Officer	Detailed, he wants to know who do what and when	Generally Slack, if it's urgent call him, and every month a report	Is not very convinced but he is trying to help
Treasure of the National Board	Give the general highlights, and the financial very detailed	Call him, always for everything he don't review frequently his email, neither slack or whatsapp	He is very influent in the board
Board Member National Board	Highlights, when it's about youth engagement more info	Whatsapp generally, formal comms by email with message to Whatsapp	Young with energy, close to CSO very committed with the project

1.11 Cultural Differences

Why do consultants need to learn about cultural dimensions?

Mastering the various dimensions of culture will help you to understand your service counterparts better, put some of your perceptions or preconceptions into perspective, navigate conversations more easily and accompany your interactions more effectively.

But first, what is culture?

UNESCO defines culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional **features of society or a social group that** encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions, and beliefs. Others define it as all the ways of life including arts, beliefs and institutions of a population that are **passed down from generation to generation**. Culture has been called "**the way of life for an entire society.**" As such, it includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, art.

Organisational culture is the collection of values, expectations, and practices that guide and inform the actions of all team members in an organisation. The collection of traits that make an organisation what it is.

It is important to note that organisational culture will be impacted and shaped by the culture of the country in which it operates but be careful of your assumptions. Organisations in one country or even one city will have many different cultures depending on their own history, traditions, leadership etc.

There are many models for cultural mapping, Geert Hofstede and Erin Meyers both have valuable models which help us in our roles. They present some characteristics of each culture and what guides its members, including the cultural norms that affect everyday interactions. It should be noted that we have adjusted the language of Geert Hofstede's model to reflect the world today more accurately. Understanding the dimensions in either model will help you to understand your interactions better. Put some of your perceptions or preconceptions into perspective, navigate conversations more easily and accompany your interlocutors more effectively.

HOFSTEDE'S CULTURAL DIMENSIONS

Adapted from the Hofstede's cultural dimensions model

HUMANE		PERFORMANCE
BIG POWER DISTANCE		SMALL POWER DISTANCE
INDIVIDUALISM		COLECTIVISM
HIGH UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE		LOW UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE
SHORT-TERM ORIENTATION		LONG-TERM ORIENTATION
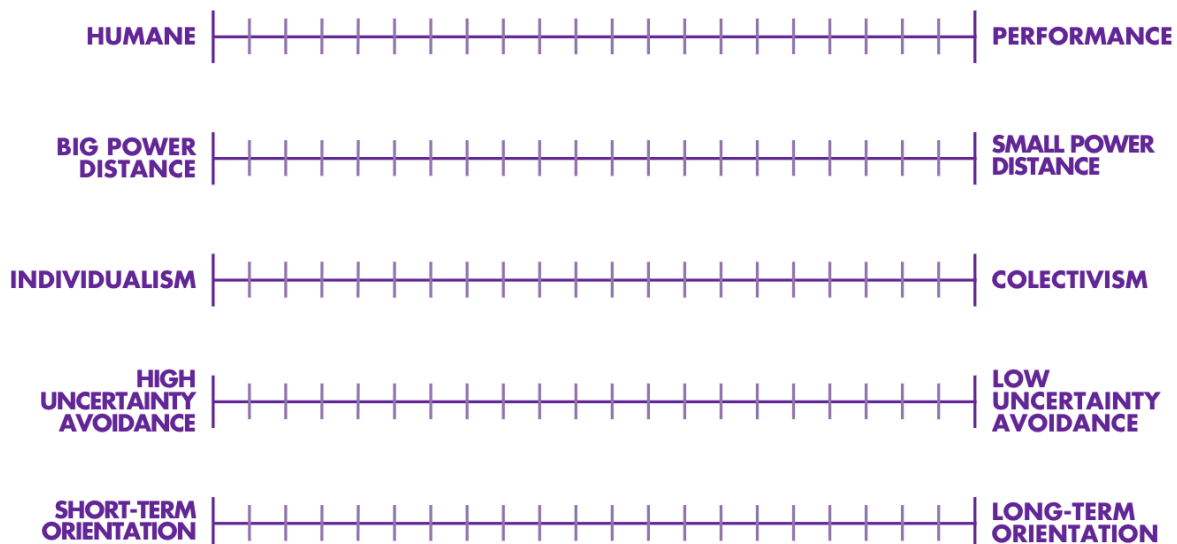
For both models two opposite poles define each dimension: each culture will have a specific position on this spectrum. You can use this as one of the tools to help you understand an organisation that you might be working with across these five dimensions as you get to know them better. It can help to get a "more" complete picture of that organisation and therefore

communicate and support your partners more effectively. As a consultant alongside these tools ask yourself:

- What kind of questions might you ask to know more about the organisation?
- What presuppositions may be helpful?

CULTURAL MAP
Adapted from Erin Meyer's model

COMMUNICATING
Low-context ——————————————— High-context

EVALUATING
Direct negative feedback ——————————————— Indirect negative feedback

PERSUADING
Principles first ——————————————— Applications first

LEADING
Egalitarian ——————————————— Hierarchical

DECIDING
Consensual ——————————————— Top-down

TRUSTING
Task-based ——————————————— Relationship-based

DISAGREEING
Confrontational ——————————————— Avoids confrontation

SCHEDULING
Linear-time ——————————————— Flexible-time
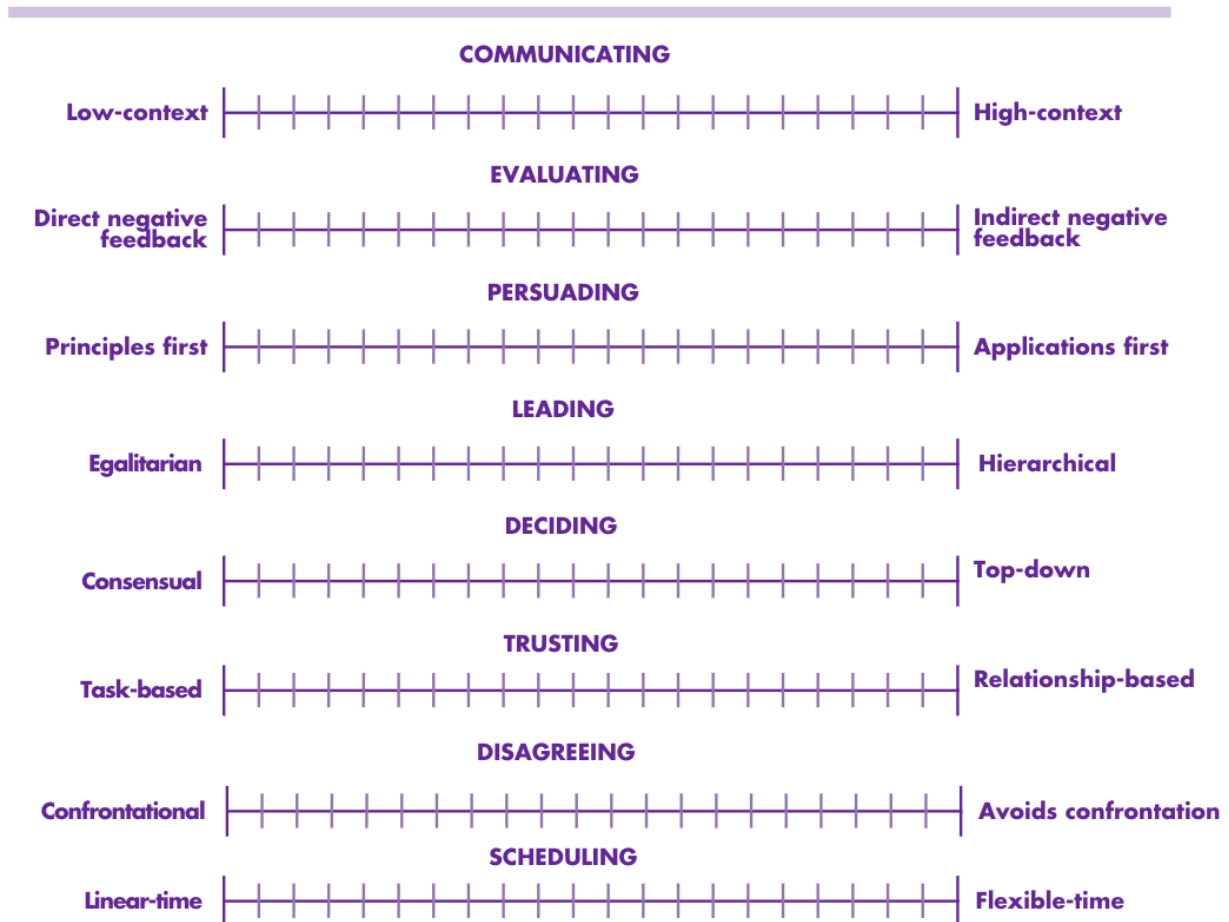
In low-context cultures, good communication is precise, simple, explicit and clear. Messages are understood at face value. Repetition is for clarification, as is putting messages in writing. In high-context cultures, communication is sophisticated, nuanced and layered. Messages are often implied but not plainly stated.

Evaluating

All cultures believe that criticism should be given constructively, but the definition of "constructive" varies greatly. This scale measures a preference for frank versus diplomatic negative feedback or the different ways we perceive politeness. Evaluating is often confused with Communicating, but many countries have different positions on the two scales. Some cultures may be are high context (implicit) communicators, yet are more direct in their criticism. Other Cultures may be at the same context level, but are more frank when providing negative feedback.

Persuading (why vs How)

The ways in which you persuade others and the kinds of arguments you find convincing are deeply rooted in your culture's philosophical, religious and educational assumptions and attitudes. The traditional way to compare cultures along this scale is to assess how they balance holistic, principles first arguments (the Why) and specific thought patterns and inductive logic (the how).

Leading

This scale measures the degree of respect and deference shown to authority figures, placing countries on a spectrum from egalitarian (believing that people are equal) to hierarchical.

Deciding

This scale measures the degree to which a culture is consensus minded. We often assume that the most egalitarian cultures will also be the most democratic, while the most hierarchical ones will allow the boss to make unilateral decisions. This isn't always the case.

Trusting

Cognitive trust (from the head) can be contrasted with affective trust (from the heart. In task-based cultures, trust is built cognitively through work. If we collaborate well, prove ourselves reliable and respect one another's contributions, we come to feel mutual trust. In a relationship-based society, trust is a result of weaving a strong affective connection. If we laugh and relax together, get to know one another personally and feel a mutual liking, then we establish trust.

Disagreeing

Different cultures have very different ideas about how productive confrontation is for a team or an organisation. This scale measures tolerance for open disagreement and inclination to see it as either helpful or harmful to relationships.

Scheduling

All businesses follow agendas and timetables, but in some cultures people strictly adhere to the schedule, whereas in others, they treat it as a suggestion. This scale assesses how much value is placed on operating in a structured, linear fashion versus being flexible and reactive. Erin Meyers as part of the Culture Map book has mapped organisations and countries across the world to give insight into how you can work together more successfully. Take some time to read this book and explore the world of cultural differences and how you can better work together.

1.12 Listening Ladder

Listening is one of the most important skills that we have, but often, although we think we are listening, we are either listening for a gap to speak ourselves or to hear the things we expect from another person. Next time you are having a conversation, consider if you are:

⇒ Not really listening

⇒ Listening, waiting to speak

⇒ Listening to understand the other person

PART 2: Social Impact

2.1 Introduction to Social Impact

Impact - we hear this word a lot, but what does it truly mean? Different groups see it in various ways. In this e-course, we'll dive into what impact really is and how it plays a role in youth movements and our communities. Let's unpack it together! According to Oxford Dictionaries, Impact is "having an effect on something." Defining impact has been attempted by many researchers and organisations, where the definitions vary largely. For the sake of common definition and understanding, upon careful review of existing literature, we propose using the definition by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG):

> *"Impact implies changes in people's lives. This might include changes in knowledge, skill, behaviour, health, or living conditions for children, adults, families, or communities. Such changes are positive or negative long-term effects on identifiable population groups produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. These effects can be economic, socio-cultural, institutional, environmental, technological, or of other types."*

A simple definition of social impact studies is the research efforts to understand and evaluate the positive and negative effects that projects, policies, or initiatives have on individuals, communities, and society as a whole. These studies help decision-makers and stakeholders assess their actions' social, cultural, economic, and environmental consequences and make informed choices that prioritise the well-being of individuals and communities where they operate.

'Methods' and 'Techniques' are used as roughly equivalent terms referring to specific concrete ways of seeking data or information about a situation or people's lives, experiences or activities. The term 'methodology' refers to your research design or plan. You will have heard terms like 'survey', 'evaluation', 'action research', and 'community study'. These are terms describing general research approaches—and each of these may, in turn, involve one or more specific techniques such as interviewing, observations, discussions, case studies, or a questionnaire.

Quantitative and qualitative methods are two key approaches in social research. Quantitative methods deal with numbers and measurable data. Imagine conducting a survey in your school to find out how many students prefer apples over oranges; you'd count the number of preferences and analyse them with graphs or charts. On the other hand, qualitative methods are more about understanding people's feelings and thoughts. Instead of just counting preferences, you might interview students to learn why they prefer apples or oranges. This method gives you a deeper insight into people's opinions and emotions. In summary, quantitative methods focus on 'how many' or 'how much,' and are often used with statistics, while qualitative methods focus on 'why' or 'how,' and are often used to explore thoughts and feelings (Wadsworth, 2011*).*

2.2 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research can be viewed as a research strategy that:

⇒ emphasises quantification in the collection and analysis of data;
⇒ entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the emphasis is placed on the testing of theories/hypothesis testing;
⇒ has incorporated the practices and norms of the natural scientific model – quantification, classification, categorisation;
⇒ embodies a view of social reality as an external, objective reality (Bryman; 2001)

Why and when do we use it?

⇒ **At the macro level** - Tracking changes and patterns of otherwise invisible phenomena– e.g. mortality, morbidity, fertility, global warming, GDP;
⇒ **At the micro level** – To collect quantifiable data from a relatively large population when our questions begin as "How many..?, "What are the levels of e.g. satisfaction/dissatisfaction with…", "To what extent does.."

What kind of data can it provide and what can we do with it?

Quantitative research often collects large scale evidence collated into datasets and coded into quantifiable data for analysis. For this reason the type of data collected in quantitative research is often limited to that which can be quantifiable (counted). Narrative data needs to be converted to categories for quantification and analysis.

Back to 'conceptual building blocks'

Before designing or administering a survey questionnaire (or any other type of research instrument) it is vital to give time to clarifying the key *concepts* that make up the research question and to *operationalise* them, i.e. specify what exactly they will mean and how they will be measured *in the context of a specific study*.

David de Vaus (2014) calls it 'descending the ladder of abstraction'
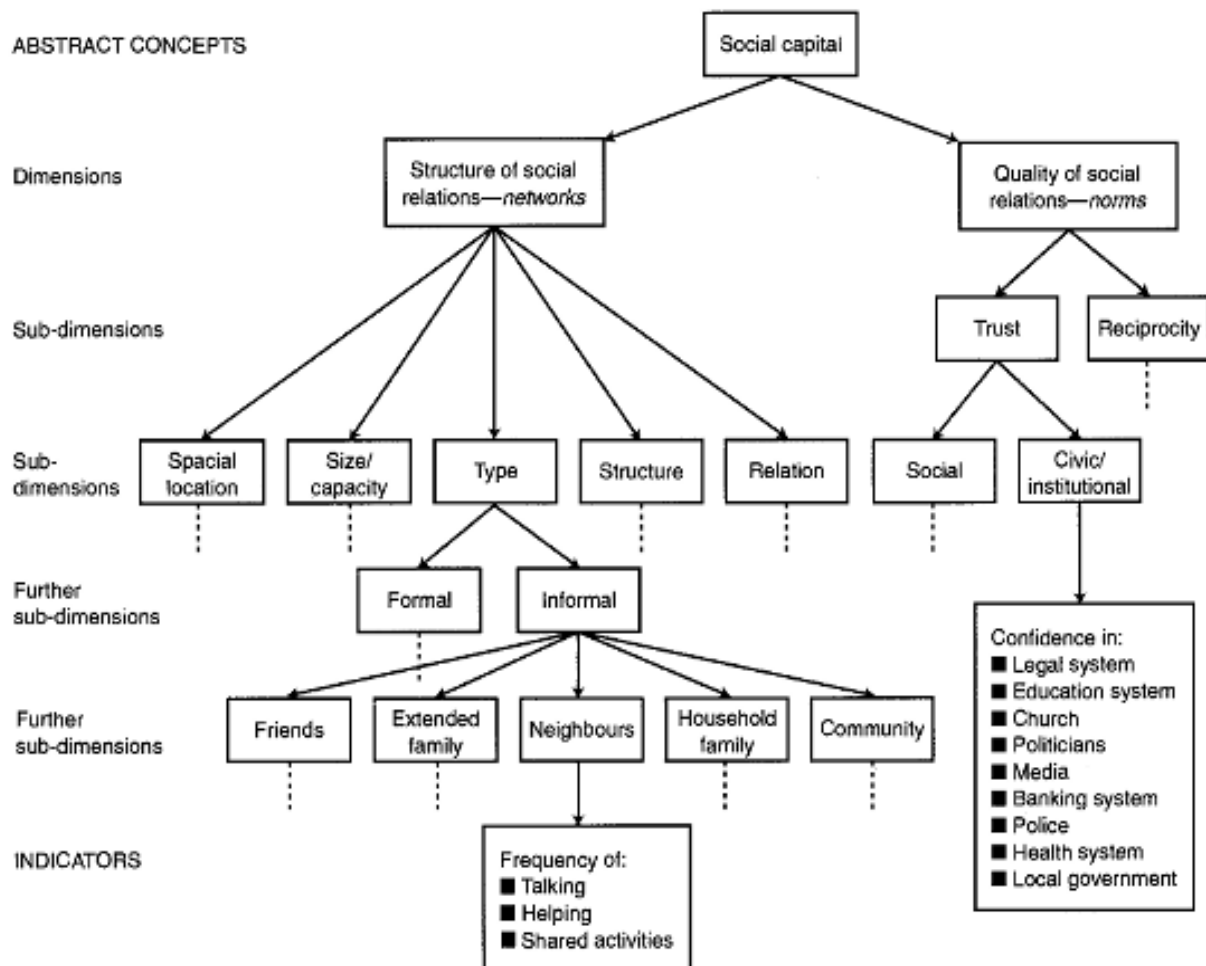
A concept that can be measured is called a *variable*

⇒ Concepts are subjective perceptions and need to be defined in order to become operational and therefore become study variables.
⇒ For example, how are you defining "youth work", "spirituality",
⇒ Concepts may need to be converted into 'indicators' in order to be constructed as variables
⇒ For example "socio-economic indicators of relative advantage/disadvantage"
⇒ Clarifying the use of particular operational definitions/parameters of key variables is important for study validity and reliability. Drawing on established definitions from the literature can be useful. Or some studies may wish to challenge established definitions due to their limitations.

When collecting quantitative survey data there are other key factors in the process to consider: sampling and questionnaire construction.

Sampling

There are two major types of sampling: Random and non-random.

Non-random sampling – the sample is constituted in such a way that not all members of the population have an equal chance of selection and that selection is subjective.

Random sampling – every member of a given population has *a known chance* of being selected for participation in the study, meaning that selection is objective and in terms of probability the sample chosen is likely to be representative of the population from which it is drawn.

For random sampling to occur a sampling frame must be available – that is a list of everyone in your given population from which a sample can be taken. In the absence of a sampling frame, a non-random sample is the only other option. While this can still yield a relatively large sample, it limits any claims on the 'representativeness' of your sample and your findings.

Non-random sampling

There are a number of different types of non-random sampling approaches:

Quota sampling –including members of subgroups in proportion to their presence in the population e.g. based on gender, age, location or other key strata as relevant to the study.

Purposive – deliberately choose particular types of respondent because of their suitability for a particular research purpose – e.g. all of those with more than ten years' experience in youth work positions in a particular region.

Convenience/availability sampling – work with what is possible/practicable, including participants who are available to partake.

Snowball sampling (may overlap with above) – target a specific individual(s) and ask them to recruit other respondents resulting in a chain referral to the study. Snowball sampling can be particularly useful for 'hard to reach' populations. One major disadvantage is the reliance on one individual and their immediate network to generate a sample. Initiating a number of unrelated 'snowballs' can help negate this limitation.

Random sampling

Random sampling, through the use of a sampling frame (a list of all of the units in the population) allows for a number of different approaches, illustrated by De Vaus (2014) below:

Simple random sampling – random sample generated from the sampling frame.

Systematic sampling – using the sample statistic to select and sample from the sampling frame.

Stratified random sampling – drawing out key strata in proportion to their presence in the population and employing a random sample accordingly.

Multistage cluster sampling – phased approach with random sampling at each level in order to generate a random sample of clusters e.g. county/jurisdiction/schools.

Selecting a simple random sample (SRS) from a sampling frame (De Vaus 2014: 71)

Number	Name	Number	Name	Number	Name
01	Adams, H.	18	Iulianetti, G.	35	Quinn, J.
02	Anderson, J.	19	Ivono, V.	36	Reddan, R.
03	Baker, E.	20	Jabornik, T.	37	Risteski, B.
04	Bradsley, W.	21	Jacobs, B.	38	Sawers, R.
05	Bradley, P.	22	Kennedy, G.	39	Saunders, M.
06	Carra, A.	23	Kassem, S.	40	Tarrant, A.
07	Cidoni, G.	24	Ladd, F.	41	Thomas, G.
08	Daperis, D.	25	Lamb, A.	42	Uttay, E.
09	Devlin, B.	26	Mand, R.	43	Usher, V.
10	Eastside, R.	27	McIlraith, W.	44	Varley, E.
11	Einhorn, B.	28	Natoli, P.	45	Van Rooy, P.
12	Falconer, T.	29	Newman, L.	46	Walters, J.
13	Felton, B.	30	Ooi, W.	47	West, W.
14	Garratt, S.	31	Oppenheim, F.	48	Yates, R.
15	Gelder, H.	32	Peters, P.	49	Wyatt, R.
16	Hamilton, I.	33	Palmer, T.	50	Zappulla, T.
17	Hartnell, W.	34	Quick, B.		

Drawing a systematic sample (De Vaus 2014: 73)

	01	21	41	61	81
Step 1: Determine population size	02	22	42	62	82
100	**03**	**23**	**43**	**63**	**83**
	04	24	44	64	84
Step 2: Determine sample size required	05	25	45	65	85
20	06	26	46	66	86
	07	27	47	67	87
	08	**28**	**48**	**68**	**88**
Step 3: Calculate sampling fraction (population ÷ sample)	09	29	49	69	89
= 100 ÷ 20	10	30	50	70	90
	11	31	51	71	91
= 5	12	32	52	72	92
	13	**33**	**53**	**73**	**93**
	14	34	54	74	94
Step 4: Select random starting point within first 5 cases	15	35	55	75	95
e.g. 03	16	36	56	76	96
	17	37	57	77	97
	18	**38**	**58**	**78**	**98**
Step 5: Select every 5th case	19	39	59	79	99
= sample of 20	20	40	60	80	100

Adapted from http://trochim.human.cornell.edu/kb/sampprob.htm

Stratified random sampling (De Vaus 2014: 74)

Sampling frame — Whole population

Strata (ethnic background) / Complete list of all cases in each strata — Anglo Saxon, Asian, Southern European, West Europe, East Europe

List of randomly selected cases from each strata

Sample of each ethnic group is proportionate to size of group in whole populations
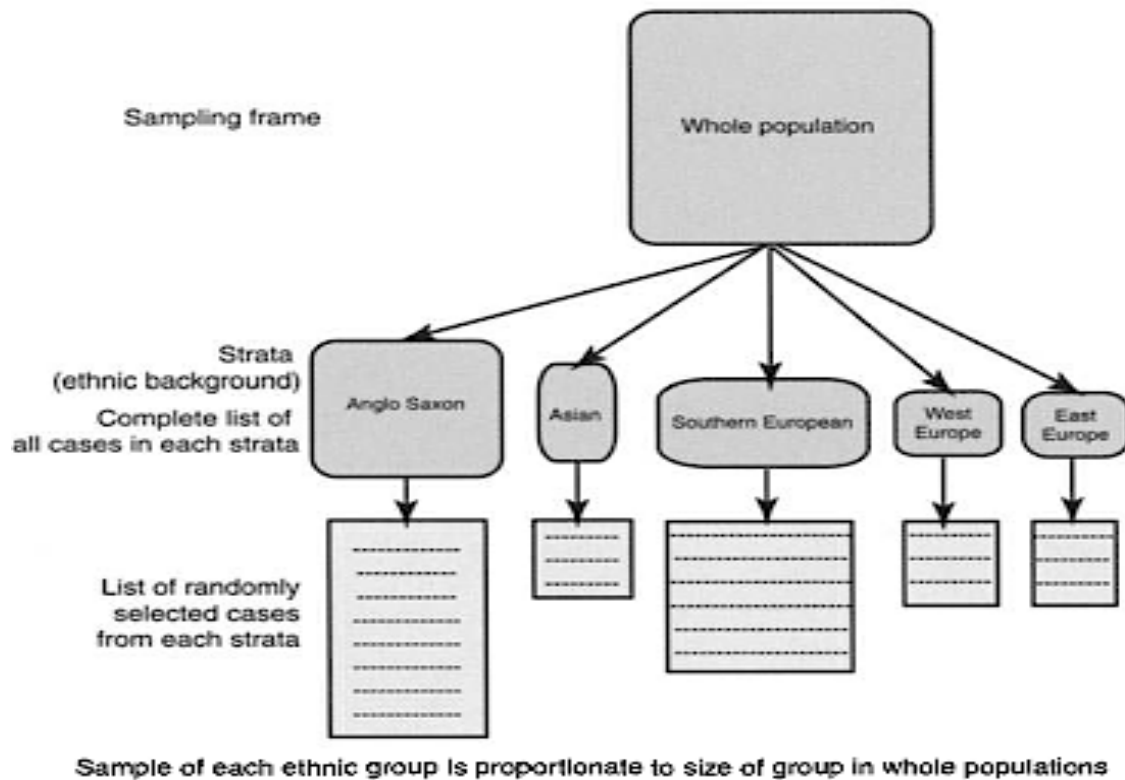
Finally, the steps in multistage cluster sampling (De Vaus, 2014: 75).

Stage one

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

41	42	43
44	45	46

Divide city up into districts and select a sample (shaded areas selected)

Stage two

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

High Street
North Road
Deep Street
New Road
Old Street

Ruda Street · Penlyne Avenue · Trinian Street · Bachus Road · Moss Avenue · Sainsbury Avenue · Box Road

Divide district into blocks and select a sample within each selected district (shaded blocks selected)

Stage three

1. 1 Box Road
2. 3 Box Road
3. 5 Box Road
4. 7 Box Road
5. 9 Box Road
6. 11 Box Road
7. 52 Old Street
8. 50 Old Street
9. 48 Old Street
10. 46 Old Street
11. 44 Old Street
12. 42 Old Street
13. 67 Sainsbury Avenue
14. 65 Sainsbury Avenue
15. 63 Sainsbury Avenue
16. 61 Sainsbury Avenue
17. 59 Sainsbury Avenue
18. 57 Sainsbury Avenue
19. 12 New Road
20. 10 New Road
21. 8 New Road
22. 6 New Road
23. 4 New Road
24. 2 New Road

In each selected block list each household and randomly selected households (circled)

Stage four
List names in each selected household and use selection grid to select a person

Sampling size

Small increase in sample size can lead to a substantial increase in accuracy (with relatively small samples; less payoff with large samples).

Size of the population is largely irrelevant for the purposes of accuracy of sample…it is the *absolute* size of the sample that is more important.

The more heterogeneous the population (i.e. the more likely they are to have varied responses) the larger the sample required.

'In the end the sample size must take into account the degree of diversity in the population on key variables, the level of sampling error that is tolerable and the reliability required of the sample. Decisions about one factor have implications for other factors'

Relationship between sample size, sample error, population variance and sample reliability (De Vaus 2014: 82)

In practice…

Decisions on sample size are often a balance between:

⇒ The size of sample subgroups for analysis - '…a key determinant of sample size is the need to look separately at different subgroups. Make sure that the sample is sufficiently large so that when it is broken down into separate subgroups (e.g. age, class, sex) there will be sufficient numbers in each. As a rule of thumb try to ensure that the smallest subgroup has at least 50 to 100 cases…'.

⇒ Practicalities of time, costs and access issues - 'Of course desired accuracy is not the only factor in working out the sample size: cost, time and access to respondents are also key factors. The final sample size will be a compromise between cost, accuracy and ensuring sufficient numbers for meaningful subgroup analysis.' (De Vaus 2014: 83)

MIYO Pilot Survey

The pilot survey to be used in Pilot 2 is available here. The survey comprises two parts – Part 1 collects demographic data from respondents and Part 2 collects data on responses to statements on a scale which reflects key dimensions of the SPICES framework in Scouting.

Co-funded by the European Union

SPICES Framework

There are six dimensions to the SPICES framework reflecting key areas of a young person's development. In constructing and developing questionnaires, principles of question design and other considerations for question development require attention.

SPICES

Physical Development

Social Development

Intellectual Development

Spiritual Development

Characther Development

Emotional Development

Principles of question design

A number of factors are considered when assessing the relative effectiveness and robustness of a survey tool:

⇒ **Reliability** - in practice this means that the survey should elicit same response over time from the same respondent(s), that the tool is a reliable measure of what it is you are measuring

⇒ **_Validity_** – this means that your survey is measuring what it is intended to measure, that the questions asked align with a valid measure of that concept; are valid variables/indicators

⇒ **_Discrimination_** – the questionnaire should tap into differences of opinion/experience, are options limited or inclusive of an appropriate range of response alternatives?

⇒ **_'Response friendliness'_** – how user-friendly is your tool? The questionnaire should encourage and facilitate completion

⇒ **_Consistency/clarity of meaning_** – can different questions be interpreted in different ways? Your questions/concepts should mean the same thing to all respondents

⇒ **_Relevance_** – As questionnaires should not be overly long, the choice of question should have a good rationale for inclusion

Additional considerations for 'closed-choice' questions

⇒ **Exhaustiveness** – For the most part, response categories should cover all likely responses, with the option of 'other' and space to expand on what this might be. The value of this exercise in a pilot is that it allows for the refinement of questions in later phases

⇒ **Exclusiveness** – Clarity on the parameters of categories allows responses to be mutually exclusive, watch out for overlap in response options and ensure clarity in the direction given to respondents on survey forms.

⇒ **Balance 'negative' and 'positive' categories of response** – avoid bias in one direction.

Statistical Analysis

„Statistical analysis is most appropriately [and extensively] used for research that gathers data from a probability sample of a known population, as you can apply the statistical analysis techniques to the sample and then extrapolate, or generalise, your findings to apply to the whole population, not just the sample. However, many of the techniques are also appropriate for…small-scale social research projects not based on a probability sample [that] have collected structured data from a representative group of cases using an opportunistic sampling approach…" (Matthews & Ross 2010: 343-4).

A statistical analysis of data enables us to:

⇒ Summarise the data we have collected and describe the data;
⇒ Describe the features of the data in ways that help us to identify aspects that are relevant to our research questions;
⇒ Explore and test relationships between different sets of data (Matthews & Ross 2010: 345).

Basic Statistical Terms

⇒ **Data**: numbers or measurements collected by making observations.
⇒ **Statistic**: value summarising a characteristic of a sample.
⇒ **Parameter**: value summarising a characteristic of a population.
⇒ **Inferential statistics** calculate the accuracy of a sample statistic as an estimate of a population parameter.
⇒ **Case:** The record of data collection from one respondent (e.g. one completed q'aire).
⇒ **Code:** The individual identifier assigned to each variable in a dataset.
⇒ **Variable:** Individual pieces of information which make up the q'aire (e.g. age, highest level of education, attitude towards religion…).

When survey data is collected there are usually three stages in analysing the results:

Stage 1: Describe the characteristics of the sample.
Stage 2: Describe the relationships between two or more variables.
Stage 3: Determine the probability that these relationships occurred by chance.

Descriptive & inferential statistics

⇒ **Descriptive statistics** is used to summarise or describe our observations.
⇒ **Inferential statistics** is used to describe what you have found within the sample (stage 1 and stage 2 above). By using your observations of the data it allows you to make statements (with more or less accuracy and confidence) about the broader population (stage 3 above).

These summarise the data in terms of:

⇒ The frequency of each answer or code;
⇒ How the answers are distributed across the codes;
⇒ A single number is commonly used to represent a whole set of numbers: averages, percentages, graphs;
⇒ Summary statistics: means, medians and modes, and percentiles.

Exploring relationships: cross-tabulation

[Example follows from Matthews & Ross 2010: 361]

Think about it . . .

What can you learn from a cross-tabulation?

Table D3.6 shows the numbers, with percentages in brackets, of each age group who take part in each free-time activity.

- Which activity is most common? Which least?
- Which activity shows most difference between men and women? Between different age groups?
- Circle any figures that surprise you or you find particularly interesting.
- Try writing a summary of the table in no more than five sentences.

Table D3.6 Cross-tabulation of age group and sex by type of free-time activity

Age and sex by free-time actvities	Watch TV	Listen to music	Internet (other than computer games)	Friends and family	Pubs/ bars and clubs	Sports/ exercise	Computer games	TOTAL in each group
Male – aged 16–24 yrs	10 (71%)	8 (57%)	12 (86%)	10 (71%)	8 (57%)	8 (57%)	10 (71%)	*14 (100%)*
– aged 25–44 yrs	16 (73%)	16 (73%)	18 (82%)	12 (55%)	12 (55%)	14 (64%)	14 (64%)	*22 (100%)*
– aged 45–64 yrs	16 (88%)	10 (55%)	12 (67%)	12 (67%)	10 (55%)	6 (33%)	6 (33%)	*18 (100%)*
– aged 65 yrs and over	16 (100%)	4 (25%)	6 (38%)	14 (88%)	8 (50%)	4 (25%)	2 (13%)	*16 (100%)*
TOTAL MALE DOING ACTIVITY	58 (83%)	38 (54%)	48 (69%)	48 (69%)	38 (54%)	32 (46%)	32 (46%)	70 (100%)

Table 5: SPICES dimension scores by duration of involvement [Belgium]

Years ↓	Social	Physical	Intellectual	Character	Emotional	Spiritual
< 1	3.5	2.58	3.33	2.33	2.72	3.39
1-2	3.35	2.56	2.94	3.17	2.76	3.47
3-4	3.89	3.09	3.08	2.92	3.00	3.42
> 4	4.11	3.35	3.46	3.60	3.52	3.91
TOTAL	4.04	3.65	3.74	3.72	3.71	3.87

Table 5 presents the mean scores for the six SPICES dimensions in the Belgian survey, broken down by the length of time that the respondents have spent in Scouting. Note that this analysis takes account of 'B statements' only (i.e. those relating to the perceived benefit of Scouting rather than the perception of self). There is not a uniform pattern of progression across time. However in the case of all six SPICES dimensions, the Belgian respondents with more than 4 years of experience in Scouting award a higher mean score than those with less than one year of experience.

MIYO Pilot Phase 1 Country Report (Ireland)

There are some notable differences between the two age groups on both the A and B statements. In relation to the A statements (indicating their own current self-perception), the older respondents score themselves much higher on character development and spiritual development (by .78 and .72 respectively), but they score themselves slightly lower than the 14-year-olds on intellectual and physical development.

In the case of the B statements, the 18-year-olds give lower scores for the benefits of Scouting in relation to physical development (by a margin of .35). Their mean score for intellectual development is also slightly lower (by .13). On all four remaining SPICES dimensions, they score Scouting much more highly than the 14-year-olds do: by .65 for social development, .66 for character development, .9 for spiritual development and by 1.09 for emotional development. This latter instance - a difference between subsamples of more than a full point in mean scores – is highly unusual in this research.
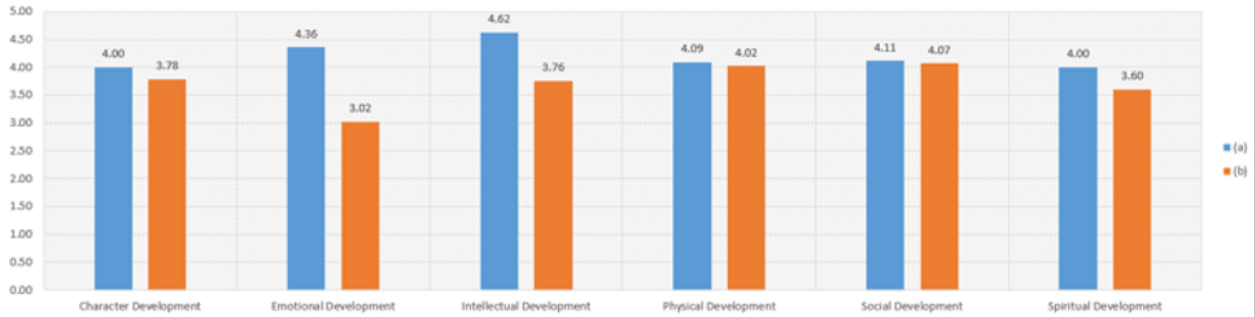
Figure 9: SPICES dimensions mean scores – respondents aged 14 (Ireland)
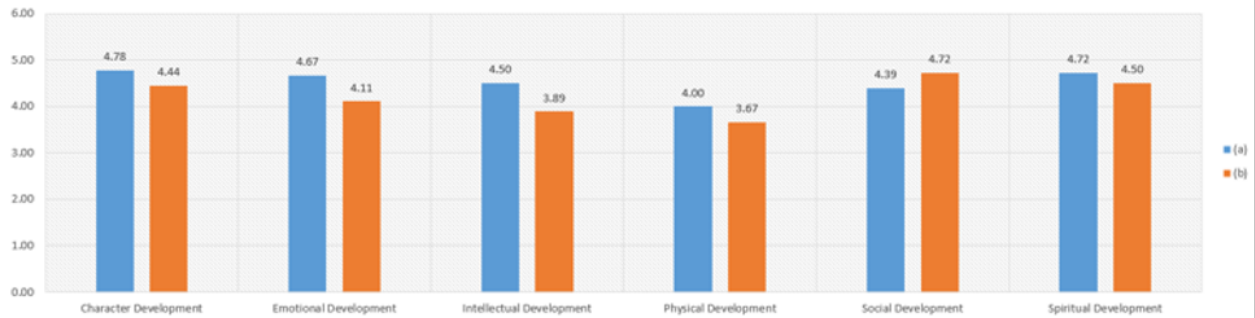

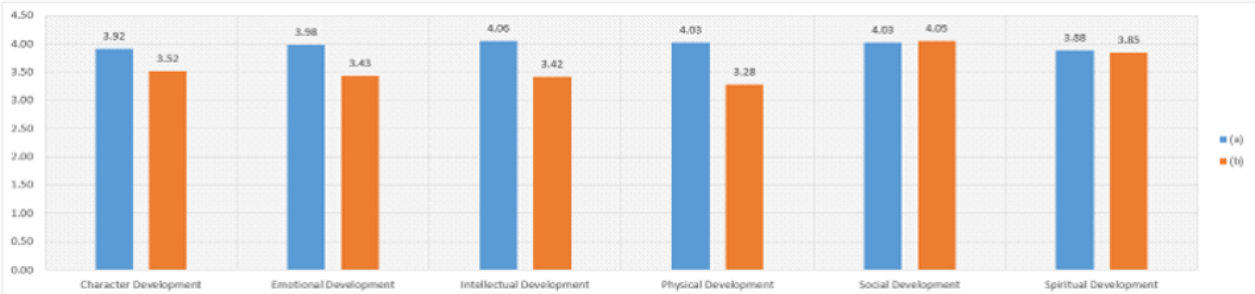Figure 10: SPICES dimensions mean scores – respondents aged 18 (Ireland)

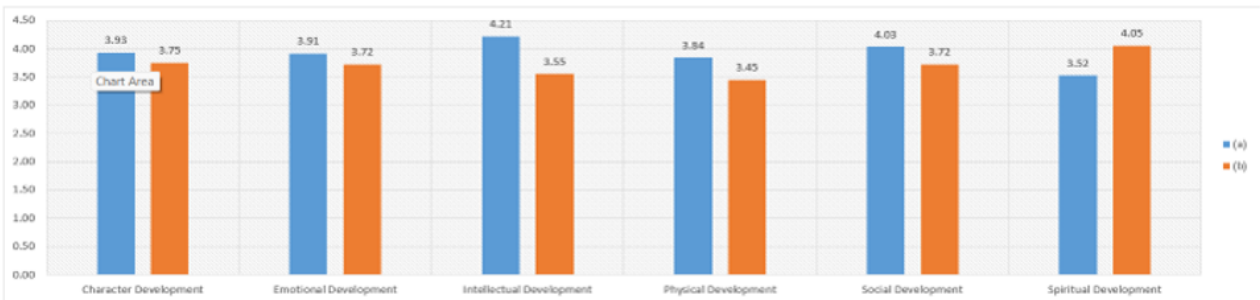Figure 6: SPICES dimensions mean scores – BELGIUM totals

Figure 7: SPICES dimensions mean scores – BELGIUM respondents with longstanding illness or disability (n=11)

MIYO Pilot Phase 1 Country Report (Belgium)

Note that the number in this sub-sample is very small and the analysis presented here is for *illustrative purposes* only. There are some interesting patterns in the responses. On the B statements (orange columns) young people with a longstanding illness or disability give a higher score to their emotional development through Scouting than the full sample (by .29) but a lower score to their social development (by .33).

The current self-perception of the young people with a longstanding illness or disability (blue column) is lower in relation to spiritual development than the score for the full sample (by .32). However, the perceived *benefit from Scouting* in relation to that same dimension of development is higher for young people with a longstanding illness or disability than for young people in general (by .2).

For those with a longstanding illness or disability, the difference between the scores for 'where they are now' (A statements/blue) and how they think they benefit from Scouting (B statements/orange) is striking, at .53 (making it one of the few occasions in the survey analysis for any subgroup to date where an orange column is substantially higher than the corresponding blue column).

Statistical significance

⇒ „Statistical significance is a statement about the likelihood of the observed result, nothing else. It does not guarantee that something important or even meaningful, has been found.“ (Hays, 1993: 68; cited in Matthews & Ross 2010: 344)
⇒ The main purpose of testing for statistical significance is to provide a measure of the probability that the relationships found in the data from the sample will also be found in the wider population.

Factors influencing the choice of statistics

⇒ Random or non-random selection of sample
⇒ Level of measurement of data – nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio
⇒ Whether data is normally distributed

2.3 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is an approach we take to inquiry when we want to know more about people's experiences, thoughts, feelings, values, motivations, behaviours, interactions etc. It provides an opportunity to explore these in-depth, to 'probe' for more information about complex social relations and contexts.

The information collected through qualitative research can yield 'rich' multi-layered data about issues related to power, gender, status, culture etc. There are at least five distinct approaches to Qualitative Research design - see Creswell (2007) article available in the Appendix.

In practice, all approaches go through the following six steps.

An outline of the main steps of qualitative research

1. General research question(s)
2. Selection of relevant site(s) and subjects
3. Collection of relevant data
4. Interpretation of data
5. Conceptual and theoretical work
5a. Tighter specification of the research question(s)
5b. Collection of further data
6. Writing up findings/conclusions
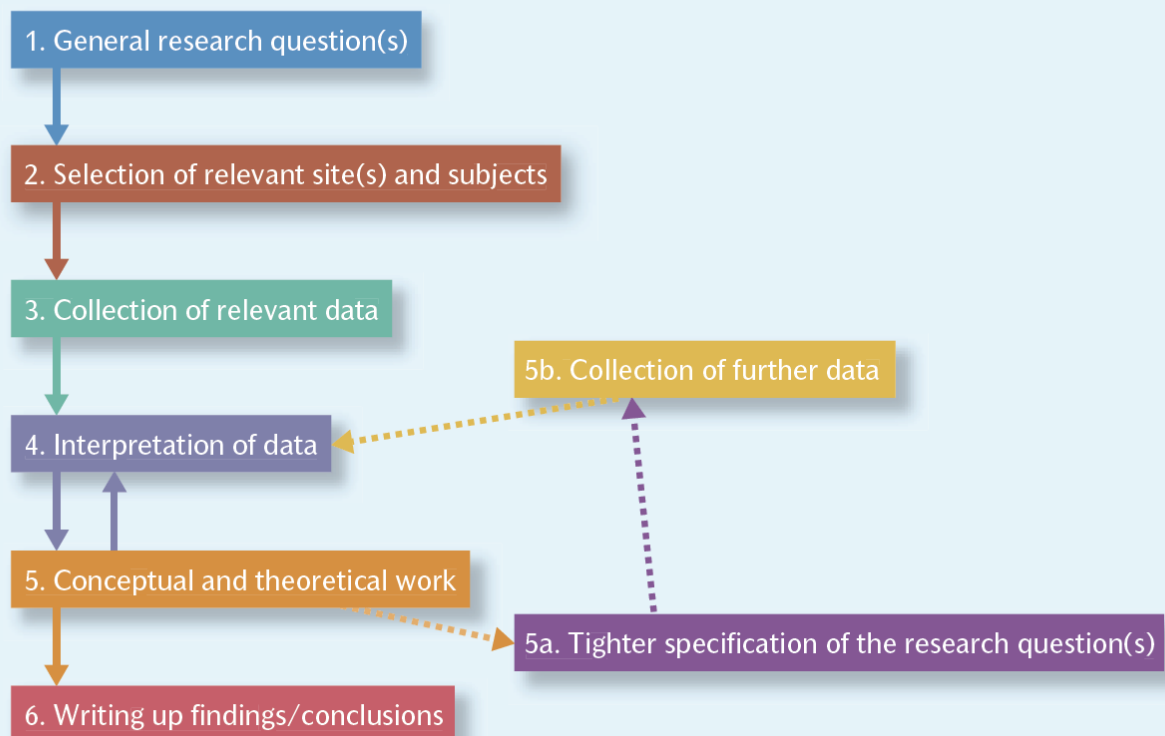
(Alan Bryman p. 384, 2012)

Focus Groups

Focus Groups are a method of qualitative data collection whereby a group is "informally" interviewed for a specific period of time in a specific place – they are not accidental conversations! They are a group discussion with a purpose. They are a way of listening to people and learning from them (often those whose voices may not have been heard before)

Focus groups aim to:

⇒ elicit people's feelings, attitudes, perceptions and experiences about a selected topic (the "FOCUS") by generating lines of communication between participants.
⇒ Focus groups are not intended to generate agreement on issues amongst participants, a focus group welcomes diverse views.
⇒ Based on a planned discussion guide, a trained facilitator/moderator sets the stage and guides the conversation between participants.

Planning Focus Groups

There are a number of factors to consider when planning a focus group:

⇒ **Purpose** – what do you want to explore? Ensuring that the 'focus' is broad enough to enable an interesting discussion amongst participants, yet focused enough that the discussion does not divert off the intended purpose e.g "Exploring how young people experience youth work" instead of a more general "Exploring young people's experience of groups".

⇒ **With whom** - with young people aged….? Who is your intended target group and how best to (1) recruit them (see specific note on recruitment on p.XX) (2) plan for their involvement – do you need to ensure a particular mix of participants in each group depending on age and other factors? (see the next point). How to facilitate involvement and diversity?

⇒ **Numbers of groups** – how many focus groups required in total? Ensuring adequacy and saturation. Is there a sufficient number of focus groups reflecting group diversity? Are the same key issues coming up in each group (is the focus now saturated?) or do you need to recruit further groups?

⇒ **Number of people in a group** –a focus group might include 8-12 people, however, in practice, 6-8 participants is a typical target to ensure meaningful participation from each group member.

⇒ **Group diversity** - gender, ethnicity, ability etc? What is your target population and what kind of variation would need to be reflected in your sample (see further guidance on ensuring group diversity on p. XX).

⇒ **Discussion guide** – what is your plan? How will you decide on key questions and what other techniques might be useful to elicit key data in focus groups?

⇒ **Sampling and Recruitment** – who is your population? How will you sample from this population – what sampling approach will you be using? How will you recruit perspective participants for your study?

⇒ **Ethics** – What are the particular ethical procedures of your jurisdiction and/or institution – ensure you have complied with statutory and institutional processes. As a basic ethical standard your prospective participants will need to see a research Information sheet and consent to taking part, depending on the jurisdiction signed consent may be required from both parents and young people). Furthermore you need to ensure safe management of data throughout the process, who will have access to the data, how will it be stored and for how long, how will it be anonymized?

⇒ **Locations, dates and time** – The location of the group is important in terms of both convenience and suitability – is it convenient for participants to get to? Is it a suitable location/space for holding a discussion? Is it comfortable etc, Also are the proposed dates and times convenient for the participants? For example, if planning focus groups during times when young people come together for an event, how will this be managed without imposing too much on participants' time/taking them from planned activities?

⇒ **Facilitators** - Who will run the group, support the process etc? Consider the role of the facilitator in this process (see more below), is there a trusted leader who might support this process with young people and consider the dynamic this will have on the group itself – e.g. someone in a gatekeeping role providing both opportunities and challenges in a research context.

Thinking more about recruitment

⇒ **Identify the participants** - How will you identify and engage with intended participants? Is there a 'gatekeeper' who might help you identify and engage with prospective participants? Consider whether this might present some challenges i.e. are there some people who may not get identified for inclusion through this gatekeeper? Do you need to engage with other contacts to broaden out your opportunities for participant identification, sampling and recruitment?

⇒ **Composition** – for this research how important are particular age ranges? Would it be preferable to hold groups with older and younger age groups? Certainly the experience from the evidence base (refs) is that holding age specific groups is preferable to mixing older and younger age groups, to encourage meaningful discussion amongst participants and to ensure age appropriate discussion.

⇒ **Eligibility and exclusion criteria** – consider what the criteria are for eligibility to partake in the research and for what reasons someone might be excluded from the opportunity to participate – for example, is length of time involved with the organisation a vital consideration for inclusion/exclusion; do participants need to have been involved with the organisation for at least one year/two years? Is there any value from the perspectives of those who are new to the organisation?

⇒ **Develop sampling strategy for recruitment and information sheets/ consent form/ parental consent as appropriate** – as per the criteria set out above, what are your considerations around sampling? What are your procedures for communicating the information sheet to participants/seeking consents as necessary?

⇒ **Make initial contacts with potential participants** – How does this all fit within the timeline of your project – is there sufficient time to make initial contacts, provide the relevant information/seek consent and hold the groups?

⇒ **Make sure people will attend** – what do you need to put in place? (Krueger, 1998) Think about the notification for focus groups, ensuring participants have the necessary information on location/date/time/directions if needed. Follow up reminders may be required. What is your plan for dealing with cancellations? How will you deal with no-shows or late arrivals on the day?

Moderating/Facilitating a Focus Group

There are a number of practical techniques that can be used in focus groups to promote discussion besides direct questioning. These can work exceptionally well with groups of young people incorporating the kinds of creative practices that take place in youth work settings.

Some suggestions might include:

⇒ Sentence completion
⇒ Vignettes
⇒ Analogies
⇒ Personification
⇒ Collages/pictures
⇒ Small Group Exercise

See the focus group guidance document in the Appendix.

Don't forget Group Dynamics! Remember Tuckman's Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing and Mourning stages (1965) can happen even in a short-term group. Develop insight into and create the conditions that promote open communication, interaction and opportunities to participate among group members

An awareness of group dynamics aids analysis by looking at the process of learning and interactions within the group (what was happening in the group? Why might this have been happening?) and how data came to be generated in particular ways i.e. how the discussion amongst group members evolved, how certain issues came to be raised and debated by the group.

Facilitating a Group

Group facilitation entails being mindful not only of the group dynamic overall but of individual behaviours and how these might impact on group members and group interaction and discussion. Krueger (1998) identifies six types of participant behaviour which can pose a challenge to group dynamic:

- ⇒ Experts
- ⇒ Dominant talkers
- ⇒ Disruptive participants
- ⇒ Ramblers and wanderers
- ⇒ Quiet and shy participants
- ⇒ Inattentive participants

These might be familiar in many group contexts! One critical task for facilitators is to try to manage any challenging behaviours in the group. Some tips include:

- ⇒ Establishing ground rules with the group to begin with about fair discussion and participation.
- ⇒ Interjecting diplomatically to limit discussion being dominated by one or two people.
- ⇒ Regularly check in to see if someone else would like to give their view/if someone has a different perspective or experience.
- ⇒ Using probes to keep the discussion on track.
- ⇒ Encouraging those who are shy or reluctant to speak to contribute through the use of projective techniques if needed.
- ⇒ Managing interruptions/disruption – reminding the group of the agreed ground rules, asking persistent offenders to wait for the next available turn to speak.

Qualitative Research Analysis and Interpretation

Practical steps:

⇒ **Secure** the audio recordings and make a backup copy:Do you have observation notes from the focus groups? If so it would be good to transcribe/digitise these and save with/link to your recording/focus group transcription.

⇒ **Name** the files 'correctly' in a way that you can find them again (e.g. YMCA 1 Dub 230923).

⇒ **Transcribe** – will you do it yourself or pay someone to do it? How will you choose if it is external? Some considerations include whether the transcription service have experience of transcribing focus group discussions for research and the ability to differentiate between different speakers. Remember that the quality of the transcription can really impact the quality of the analysis.

⇒ **Full or partial data set?** What do you want in a transcript - verbatim or 'highlights'? While verbatim transcription is a more time consuming and laborious process, having the full transcript of the discussion aids a strong analysis of both the content and process of discussion. A verbatim transcript includes not just what is said but accounts for the silences, the interjections and the wider nuance of conversation which can provide valuable insights into group interaction. By selecting 'highlights' only to transcribe involves a subjective judgement on what is important and what is not at an early stage and may indeed risk losing what may have been some key data and limit the analysis.

⇒ **Anonymisation** – it is important at the transcription stage to remove identifiers in the data. This includes not only names but other identifying details including location, schools, youth group name etc. Pseudonyms are preferable to GIRL A, BOY C etc to maintain a more natural conversational flow to the transcript.

Analysing text involves several tasks:

1. Discovering themes and subthemes;
2. Winnowing themes to a manageable few (i.e., deciding which themes are essential in any project);
3. Building hierarchies of themes or code books and
4. Linking themes into theoretical concepts/models'.

Ryan and Bernard (2003) article is appended for your convenience.

Qualitative data analysis involves:

⇒ **Data reduction** – for qualitative research, this involves reducing a mass of textual data into observable patterns. Ensure the original transcripts remain intact and data reduction is carried out on a copy;

⇒ **On a practical level**, you will work with either electronic files or hard copy files. Electronic files can be managed through qualitative analysis software (for example N*Vivo), which can be helpful for large-scale projects. The fundamentals of analysis will need to be carried out in any case by identifying patterns/theming the data/colour coding/sorting and organising similar data together etc;

⇒ **What are you looking for in the data?** – your original objectives and your key research questions will direct you in terms of what you are looking for in the data;

⇒ **Looking for patterns** – are young people talking about the same kinds of things? Are they discussing their experiences in similar ways? Are they raising the same kinds of issues when asked about perceived benefits/outcomes?

⇒ **Making comparisons** – are there comparisons to be made in one focus group and can we compare across focus groups e.g. the experiences of young females and young males? The experiences of youth organisations based on location?

⇒ **Contrasting one set of data with another** – for example, taking age as a dimension of analysis can we observe any major patterns in the data of older and younger participants;

⇒ **Developing categories** – identifying key themes and dimensions of analysis of themes e.g. Theme 1 Social development – subtheme 1 experience of leadership – dimensions of analysis based on age, gender, socio-economic background;

⇒ **Looking for confirming evidence** – identify critical data relating to each theme, each subtheme and the dimensions of analysis observed as significant or relevant. This coding can involve colour coding/highlighting of transcripts;

⇒ **Looking for exceptions** – is there any data that does not fit with the emerging patterns? Any young people with different experiences from emerging themes and is there anything in the transcript that can help to explain these differences?

⇒ **Analysis** - The researcher needs to move from artificial summary and description to meaning and understanding.

Thematic Analysis:

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.

⇒ Themes connote (imply the fundamental concepts we are trying to describe (Ryan and Bernard 2003)

⇒ It minimally organises and describes your data in (rich) detail.

⇒ However, frequently it goes further than this and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79).

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006:37)

Coding

Codes are links between the raw data and the researcher's concepts enabling the researcher to **think about the data and with the data** (Seidel and Kelle, 1995; Tesch, 1990). In the first instance this involves moving the data around to reassemble the information into themes and arguments.

Coding begins as a basic exercise in identifying key themes and moves to more sophisticated analysis as the themes/codes become developed, as more evidence emerges to qualify or challenge emerging themes. Initial codes may become subsumed into more general codes or become more refined. The goal of coding is to lead to **Abstraction**: what broader questions can your data answer and what insights can your analysis give?

Coding Interview Transcripts:

⇒ The coding of interview transcripts includes a number of stages. Read and reread the transcripts to get a complete sense of the discussion.
⇒ On subsequent reading, take note of central ideas and concepts.
⇒ Group similar information together, ensuring that a copy of the original transcript remains intact.
⇒ Identify emotive or pertinent stories, a key example in the data.
⇒ Recognise symbolism, how things are described by participants, and the language they use.
⇒ Find themes – begin identifying key themes as you see them emerge in the data

Discovering Patterns:

Discovering patterns to themes involves looking at the data in terms of what is said, how often it is said, who is more typically saying it, what in the data might help explain it and the context within which it is discussed. Look particularly for

⇒ **Frequencies** – how often is this issue/perspective cited?
⇒ **Magnitudes** – the level of the issue – is it minor or more deeply rooted/described/experienced.
⇒ **Structures** – how can we describe it – is the data showing different types, different relationships?
⇒ **Processes** – is there a process observable to give order among the elements of structure.
⇒ **Causes** – what factors are present and what can we observe in the data that might help to understand some of the causes
⇒ **Consequences** – is there observable data around affect, around change?

Thematic Analysis Possibilities

The possibilities for analysis involve a more simple approach and a more complex approach.

The more 'straightforward' approach:

⇒ Describes the data
⇒ Summarises participants' views
⇒ 'Gives voice' to participants through key quotations from the data
⇒ All of these still involve the researcher making interpretative, subjective judgements (Braun & Clarke 2006)

The more 'complex' approach:

⇒ Tells a story from the data with the data
⇒ Locates data/participants within the wider social, cultural, historical, political, ideological contexts
⇒ Is interpretative – moves beyond mere summary to sense making asking – 'what is going on here'
⇒ Draws on theoretical/conceptual analysis – how can we understand this data based on what others have found previously? Based on key theories? Based on conceptual models? Can we develop these theories/challenge existing knowledge/shape new conceptual model and theoretical understanding through this research.

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University of Southern California Available at https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/purpose

University of Southern California Available at https://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/purpose

Appendix

In the Appendix you will find the following resources:

⇒ *Creswell, J. (2007) Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry.*
⇒ *McGarry K., Tierney H., and Devlin M., (2023) Guidance for Focus Group Organisation, Discussion Guide Development and Facilitation, MIYO Pilot Phase 2 October December 2023.*
⇒ *Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. Field methods, 15(1), 85-109.*

Five Qualitative
Approaches to Inquiry

In this chapter, we begin our detailed exploration of narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies. For each approach, I pose a definition, briefly trace its history, explore types of studies, introduce procedures involved in conducting a study, and indicate potential challenges in using the approach. I also review some of the similarities and differences among the five approaches so that qualitative researchers can decide which approach is best to use for their particular study.

Questions for Discussion

- What are a narrative study, a phenomenology, a grounded theory, an ethnography, and a case study?
- What are the procedures and challenges to using each approach to qualitative research?
- What are some similarities and differences among the five approaches?

Narrative Research

Definition and Background

Narrative research has many forms, uses a variety of analytic practices, and is rooted in different social and humanities disciplines (Daiute &

Lightfoot, 2004). "Narrative" might be the term assigned to any text or discourse, or, it might be text used within the context of a mode of inquiry in qualitative research (Chase, 2005), with a specific focus on the stories told by individuals (Polkinghorne, 1995). As Pinnegar and Daynes (2006) suggest, narrative can be both a method and *the phenomenon* of study. As a method, it begins with the experiences as expressed in lived and told stories of individuals. Writers have provided ways for analyzing and understanding the stories lived and told. I will define it here as a specific type of qualitative design in which "narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 17). The procedures for implementing this research consist of focusing on studying one or two individuals, gathering data through the collection of their stories, reporting individual experiences, and chronologically ordering (or using *life course stages*) the meaning of those experiences.

Although narrative research originated from literature, history, anthropology, sociology, sociolinguistics, and education, different fields of study have adopted their own approaches (Chase, 2005). I find a postmodern, organizational orientation in Czarniawska (2004); a human developmental perspective in Daiute and Lightfoot (2004); a *psychological approach* in Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber (1998); sociological approaches in Cortazzi (1993) and Riessman (1993); and quantitative (e.g., statistical stories in event history modeling) and qualitative approaches in Elliott (2005). Interdisciplinary efforts at narrative research have also been encouraged by the *Narrative Study of Lives* annual series that began in 1993 (see, e.g., Josselson & Lieblich, 1993), and the journal *Narrative Inquiry*. With many recent books on narrative research, it is indeed a "field in the making" (Chase, 2005, p. 651). In the discussion of narrative procedures, I rely on an accessible book written for social scientists called *Narrative Inquiry* (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) that addresses "what narrative researchers do" (p. 48).

Types of Narrative Studies

One approach to narrative research is to differentiate types of narrative research by the analytic strategies used by authors. Polkinghorne (1995) takes this approach and distinguishes between "analysis of narratives" (p. 12), using paradigm thinking to create descriptions of themes that hold across stories or taxonomies of types of stories, and "narrative analysis," in which researchers collect descriptions of events or happenings and then configure them into a story using a plot line. Polkinghorne (1995) goes on to

emphasize the second form in his writings. More recently, Chase (2005) presents an approach closely allied with Polkinghorne's "analysis of narratives." Chase suggests that researchers may use paradigmatic reasons for a narrative study, such as how individuals are enabled and constrained by social resources, socially situated in interactive performances, and how narrators develop interpretations.

A second approach is to emphasize the variety of forms found in narrative research practices (see, e.g., Casey, 1995/1996). A *biographical study* is a form of narrative study in which the researcher writes and records the experiences of another person's life. **Autobiography** is written and recorded by the individuals who are the subject of the study (Ellis, 2004). A *life history* portrays an individual's entire life, while a personal experience story is a narrative study of an individual's personal experience found in single or multiple episodes, private situations, or communal folklore (Denzin, 1989a). An *oral history* consists of gathering personal reflections of events and their causes and effects from one individual or several individuals (Plummer, 1983). Narrative studies may have a specific contextual focus, such as teachers or children in classrooms (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002), or the stories told about organizations (Czarniawska, 2004). Narratives may be guided by a theoretical lens or perspective. The lens may be used to advocate for Latin Americans through using *testimonios* (Beverly, 2005), or it may be a feminist lens used to report the stories of women (see, e.g., Personal Narratives Group, 1989), a lens that shows how women's voices are muted, multiple, and contradictory (Chase, 2005).

Procedures for Conducting Narrative Research

Using the approach taken by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) as a general procedural guide, the methods of conducting a narrative study do not follow a lock-step approach, but instead represent an informal collection of topics.

1. Determine if the research problem or question best fits narrative research. Narrative research is best for capturing the detailed stories or life experiences of a single life or the lives of a small number of individuals.

2. Select one or more individuals who have stories or life experiences to tell, and spend considerable time with them gathering their stories through multiples types of information. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to the stories as "field texts." Research participants may record their stories in a journal or diary, or the researcher might observe the individuals and record fieldnotes. Researchers may also collect letters sent by the individuals; assemble

stories about the individuals from family members; gather documents such as memos or official correspondence about the individual; or obtain photographs, memory boxes (collection of items that trigger memories), and other personal-family-social *artifacts*. After examining these sources, the researcher records the individuals' life experiences.

3. Collect information about the context of these stories. Narrative researchers situate individual stories within participants' personal experiences (their jobs, their homes), their culture (racial or ethnic), and their historical contexts (time and place).

4. Analyze the participants' stories, and then "restory" them into a framework that makes sense. *Restorying* is the process of reorganizing the stories into some general type of framework. This framework may consist of gathering stories, analyzing them for key elements of the story (e.g., time, place, plot, and scene), and then rewriting the stories to place them within a chronological sequence (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2000). Often when individuals tell their stories, they do not present them in a chronological sequence. During the process of restorying, the researcher provides a causal link among ideas. Cortazzi (1993) suggests that the chronology of narrative research, with an emphasis on sequence, sets narrative apart from other genres of research. One aspect of the chronology is that the stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Similar to basic elements found in good novels, these aspects involve a predicament, conflict, or struggle; a protagonist, or main character; and a sequence with implied causality (i.e., a plot) during which the predicament is resolved in some fashion (Carter, 1993). A chronology further may consist of past, present, and future ideas (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), based on the assumption that time has a unilinear direction (Polkinghorne, 1995). In a more general sense, the story might include other elements typically found in novels, such as time, place, and scene (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The plot, or story line, may also include Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional narrative inquiry space: the personal and social (the interaction); the past, present, and future (continuity); and the place (situation). This story line may include information about the setting or context of the participants' experiences. Beyond the chronology, researchers might detail themes that arise from the story to provide a more detailed discussion of the meaning of the story (Huber & Whelan, 1999). Thus, the qualitative data analysis may be a description of both the story and themes that emerge from it. A postmodern narrative writer, such as Czarniawska (2004), would add another element to the analysis: a deconstruction of the stories, an unmaking of them by such analytic strategies as exposing dichotomies, examining silences, and attending to disruptions and contractions.

5. Collaborate with participants by actively involving them in the research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). As researchers collect stories, they negotiate relationships, smooth transitions, and provide ways to be useful to the participants. In narrative research, a key theme has been the turn toward the relationship between the researcher and the researched in which both parties will learn and change in the encounter (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2006). In this process, the parties negotiate the meaning of the stories, adding a validation check to the analysis (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Within the participant's story may also be an interwoven story of the researcher gaining insight into her or his own life (see Huber & Whelan, 1999). Also, within the story may be *epiphanies* or turning points in which the story line changes direction dramatically. In the end, the narrative study tells the story of individuals unfolding in a chronology of their experiences, set within their personal, social, and *historical context,* and including the important themes in those lived experiences. "Narrative inquiry is stories lived and told," said Clandinin and Connolly (2000, p. 20).

Challenges

Given these procedures and the characteristics of narrative research, narrative research is a challenging approach to use. The researcher needs to collect extensive information about the participant, and needs to have a clear understanding of the context of the individual's life. It takes a keen eye to identify in the source material gathered the particular stories that capture the individual's experiences. As Edel (1984) comments, it is important to uncover the "figure under the carpet" that explains the multilayered context of a life. Active collaboration with the participant is necessary, and researchers need to discuss the participant's stories as well as be reflective about their own personal and political background, which shapes how they "restory" the account. Multiple issues arise in the collecting, analyzing, and telling of individual stories. Pinnegar and Daynes (2006) raise these important questions: Who owns the story? Who can tell it? Who can change it? Whose version is convincing? What happens when narratives compete? As a community, what do stories do among us?

Phenomenological Research

Definition and Background

Whereas a narrative study reports the life of a *single individual*, a *phenomenological study* describes the meaning for several individuals of their *lived experiences* of a concept or a phenomenon. Phenomenologists focus on

describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon (e.g., grief is universally experienced). The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (a "grasp of the very nature of the thing," van Manen, 1990, p. 177). To this end, qualitative researchers identify a phenomenon (an "object" of human experience; van Manen, 1990, p. 163). This human experience may be phenomena such as insomnia, being left out, anger, grief, or undergoing coronary artery bypass surgery (Moustakas, 1994). The inquirer then collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon, and develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals. This description consists of "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994).

Beyond these procedures, phenomenology has a strong philosophical component to it. It draws heavily on the writings of the German mathematician Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) and those who expanded on his views, such as Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty (Spiegelberg, 1982). Phenomenology is popular in the social and health sciences, especially in sociology (Borgatta & Borgatta, 1992; Swingewood, 1991), psychology (Giorgi, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1989), nursing and the health sciences (Nieswiadomy, 1993; Oiler, 1986), and education (Tesch, 1988; van Manen, 1990). Husserl's ideas are abstract, and, as late as 1945, Merleau-Ponty (1962) still raised the question, "What is phenomenology?" In fact, Husserl was known to call any project currently under way "phenomenology" (Natanson, 1973).

Writers following in the footsteps of Husserl also seem to point to different philosophical arguments for the use of phenomenology today (contrast, for example, the philosophical basis stated in Moutakas, 1994; in Stewart and Mickunas, 1990; and in van Manen, 1990). Looking across all of these perspectives, however, we see that the philosophical assumptions rest on some common grounds: the study of the lived experiences of persons, the view that these experiences are conscious ones (van Manen, 1990), and the development of descriptions of the essences of these experiences, not explanations or analyses (Moustakas, 1994). At a broader level, Stewart and Mickunas (1990) emphasize four **philosophical perspectives** in phenomenology:

- *A return to the traditional tasks of philosophy*. By the end of the 19th century, philosophy had become limited to exploring a world by empirical means, which was called "scientism." The return to the traditional tasks of philosophy that existed before philosophy became enamored with empirical science is a return to the Greek conception of philosophy as a search for wisdom.
- *A philosophy without presuppositions*. Phenomenology's approach is to suspend all judgments about what is real—the "natural attitude"—until they are

founded on a more certain basis. This suspension is called "epoche" by Husserl.

- *The **intentionality of consciousness**.* This idea is that consciousness is always directed toward an object. Reality of an object, then, is inextricably related to one's consciousness of it. Thus, reality, according to Husserl, is not divided into subjects and objects, but into the dual Cartesian nature of both subjects and objects as they appear in consciousness.
- *The refusal of the subject-object dichotomy.* This theme flows naturally from the intentionality of consciousness. The reality of an object is only perceived within the meaning of the experience of an individual.

An individual writing a phenomenology would be remiss to not include some discussion about the philosophical presuppositions of phenomenology along with the methods in this form of inquiry. Moustakas (1994) devotes over one hundred pages to the philosophical assumptions before he turns to the methods.

Types of Phenomenology

Two approaches to phenomenology are highlighted in this discussion: hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen, 1990) and empirical, transcendental, or psychological phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). Van Manen (1990) is widely cited in the health literature (Morse & Field, 1995). An educator, van Manen, has written an instructive book on ***hermeneutical phenomenology*** in which he describes research as oriented toward lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the "texts" of life (hermeneutics) (van Manen, 1990, p. 4). Although van Manen does not approach phenomenology with a set of rules or methods, he discusses phenomenology research as a dynamic interplay among six research activities. Researchers first turn to a phenomenon, an "abiding concern" (p. 31), which seriously interests them (e.g., reading, running, driving, mothering). In the process, they reflect on essential themes, what constitutes the nature of this lived experience. They write a description of the phenomenon, maintaining a strong relation to the topic of inquiry and balancing the parts of the writing to the whole. Phenomenology is not only a description, but it is also seen as an interpretive process in which the researcher makes an interpretation (i.e., the researcher "mediates" between different meanings; van Manen, 1990, p. 26) of the meaning of the lived experiences.

Moustakas's (1994) transcendental or psychological phenomenology is focused less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of participants. In addition, Moustakas focuses on one of Husserl's concepts, ***epoche*** (or bracketing), in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the

phenomenon under examination. Hence, "transcendental" means "in which everything is perceived freshly, as if for the first time" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34). Moustakas admits that this state is seldom perfectly achieved. However, I see researchers who embrace this idea when they begin a project by describing their own experiences with the phenomenon and bracketing out their views before proceeding with the experiences of others.

Besides bracketing, empirical, *transcendental phenomenology* draws on the *Duquesne Studies in Phenomenological Psychology* (e.g., Giorgi, 1985) and the data analysis procedures of Van Kaam (1966) and Colaizzi (1978). The procedures, illustrated by Moustakas (1994), consist of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing out one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon. The researcher then analyzes the data by reducing the information to significant statements or quotes and combines the statements into themes. Following that, the researcher develops a *textural description* of the experiences of the persons (what participants experienced), a *structural description* of their experiences (how they experienced it in terms of the conditions, situations, or context), and a combination of the textural and structural descriptions to convey an overall **essence** of the experience.

Procedures for Conducting Phenomenological Research

I use the psychologist Moustakas's (1994) approach because it has systematic steps in the data analysis procedure and guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions. The conduct of psychological phenomenology has been addressed in a number of writings, including Dukes (1984), Tesch (1990), Giorgi (1985, 1994), Polkinghorne (1989), and, most recently, Moustakas (1994). The major procedural steps in the process would be as follows:

• The researcher determines if the research problem is best examined using a phenomenological approach. The type of problem best suited for this form of research is one in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon. It would be important to understand these common experiences in order to develop practices or policies, or to develop a deeper understanding about the features of the phenomenon.

• A phenomenon of interest to study, such as anger, professionalism, what it means to be underweight, or what it means to be a wrestler, is identified. Moustakas (1994) provides numerous examples of phenomena that have been studied.

• The researcher recognizes and specifies the broad philosophical assumptions of phenomenology. For example, one could write about the combination of objective reality and individual experiences. These lived experiences are furthermore "conscious" and directed toward an object. To fully describe how participants view the phenomenon, researchers must bracket out, as much as possible, their own experiences.

• Data are collected from the individuals who have experienced the phenomenon. Often data collection in phenomenological studies consists of in-depth interviews and multiple interviews with participants. Polkinghorne (1989) recommends that researchers interview from 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. Other forms of data may also be collected, such as observations, journals, art, poetry, music, and other forms of art. Van Manen (1990) mentions taped conversations, formally written responses, accounts of vicarious experiences of drama, films, poetry, and novels.

• The participants are asked two broad, general questions (Moustakas, 1994): What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon? Other open-ended questions may also be asked, but these two, especially, focus attention on gathering data that will lead to a textural description and a structural description of the experiences, and ultimately provide an understanding of the common experiences of the participants.

• *Phenomenological data analysis* steps are generally similar for all psychological phenomenologists who discuss the methods (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989). Building on the data from the first and second research questions, data analysts go through the data (e.g., interview transcriptions) and highlight "significant statements," sentences, or quotes that provide an understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon. Moustakas (1994) calls this step *horizonalization.* Next, the researcher develops *clusters of meaning* from these significant statements into themes.

• These significant statements and themes are then used to write a description of what the participants experienced (*textural description*). They are also used to write a description of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon, called *imaginative variation* or *structural description*. Moustakas (1994) adds a further step: Researchers also write about their own experiences and the context and situations that have influenced their experiences. I like to shorten Moustakas's procedures, and reflect these personal statements at the beginning of the

phenomenology or include them in a methods discussion of the role of the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

• From the structural and textural descriptions, the researcher then writes a composite description that presents the "essence" of the phenomenon, called the ***essential, invariant structure (or essence).*** Primarily this passage focuses on the common experiences of the participants. For example, it means that all experiences have an underlying ***structure*** (grief is the same whether the loved one is a puppy, a parakeet, or a child). It is a descriptive passage, a long paragraph or two, and the reader should come away from the phenomenology with the feeling, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46).

Challenges

A phenomenology provides a deep understanding of a phenomenon as experienced by several individuals. Knowing some common experiences can be valuable for groups such as therapists, teachers, health personnel, and policymakers. Phenomenology can involve a streamlined form of data collection by including only single or multiple interviews with participants. Using the Moustakas (1994) approach for analyzing the data helps provide a structured approach for novice researchers. On the other hand, phenomenology requires at least some understanding of the broader philosophical assumptions, and these should be identified by the researcher. The participants in the study need to be carefully chosen to be individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon in question, so that the researcher, in the end, can forge a common understanding. Bracketing personal experiences may be difficult for the researcher to implement. An interpretive approach to phenomenology would signal this as an impossibility (van Manen, 1990)—for the researcher to become separated from the text. Perhaps we need a new definition of epoche or bracketing, such as suspending our understandings in a reflective move that cultivates curiosity (LeVasseur, 2003). Thus, the researcher needs to decide how and in what way his or her personal understandings will be introduced into the study.

Grounded Theory Research

Definition and Background

Although a phenomenology emphasizes the meaning of an experience for a number of individuals, the intent of a ***grounded theory study*** is to move

beyond description and to ***generate or discover a theory***, an abstract analytical schema of a process (or action or interaction, Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Participants in the study would all have experienced the process, and the development of the theory might help explain practice or provide a framework for further research. A key idea is that this theory-development does not come "off the shelf," but rather is generated or "grounded" in data from participants who have experienced the process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Thus, grounded theory is a qualitative research design in which the inquirer generates a general explanation (a theory) of a process, action, or interaction shaped by the views of a large number of participants (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

This qualitative design was developed in sociology in 1967 by two researchers, Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, who felt that theories used in research were often inappropriate and ill-suited for participants under study. They elaborated on their ideas through several books (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990, 1998). In contrast to the a priori, theoretical orientations in sociology, grounded theorists held that theories should be "grounded" in data from the field, especially in the actions, interactions, and social processes of people. Thus, grounded theory provided for the generation of a theory (complete with a diagram and hypotheses) of actions, interactions, or processes through interrelating categories of information based on data collected from individuals.

Despite the initial collaboration of Glaser and Strauss that produced such works as *Awareness of Dying* (Glaser & Strauss, 1965) and *Time for Dying* (Glaser & Strauss, 1968), the two authors ultimately disagreed about the meaning and procedures of grounded theory. Glaser has criticized Strauss's approach to grounded theory as too prescribed and structured (Glaser, 1992). More recently, Charmaz (2006) has advocated for a ***constructivist grounded theory***, thus introducing yet another perspective into the conversation about procedures. Through these different interpretations, grounded theory has gained popularity in fields such as sociology, nursing, education, and psychology, as well as in other social science fields.

Another recent grounded theory perspective is that of Clarke (2005) who, along with Charmaz, seeks to reclaim grounded theory from its "positivist underpinnings" (p. xxiii). Clarke, however, goes further than Charmaz, suggesting that social "situations" should form our unit of analysis in grounded theory and that three sociological modes can be useful in analyzing these situations—situational, social world/arenas, and positional cartographic maps for collecting and analyzing qualitative data. She further expands grounded theory "after the postmodern turn" (p. xxiv) and relies on postmodern perspectives (i.e., the political nature of research and interpretation, reflexivity

on the part of researchers, a recognition of problems of representing information, questions of legitimacy and authority, and repositioning the researcher away from the "all knowing analyst" to the "acknowledged participant") (pp. xxvii, xxviii). Clarke frequently turns to the postmodern, post-structural writer Michael Foucault (1972) to help turn the grounded theory discourse.

Types of Grounded Theory Studies

The two popular approaches to grounded theory are the systematic procedures of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) and the constructivist approach of Charmaz (2005, 2006). In the more systematic, analytic procedures of Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998), the investigator seeks to systematically develop a theory that explains process, action, or interaction on a topic (e.g., the process of developing a curriculum, the therapeutic benefits of sharing psychological test results with clients). The researcher typically conducts 20 to 30 interviews based on several visits "to the field" to collect interview data to saturate the categories (or find information that continues to add to them until no more can be found). A *category* represents a unit of information composed of events, happenings, and instances (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The researcher also collects and analyzes observations and documents, but these data forms are often not used. While the researcher collects data, she or he begins analysis. My image for data collection in a grounded theory study is a "zigzag" process: out to the field to gather information, into the office to analyze the data, back to the field to gather more information, into the office, and so forth. The participants interviewed are theoretically chosen (called *theoretical sampling*) to help the researcher best form the theory. How many passes one makes to the field depends on whether the categories of information become saturated and whether the theory is elaborated in all of its complexity. This process of taking information from data collection and comparing it to emerging categories is called the *constant comparative* method of data analysis.

The researcher begins with *open coding*, coding the data for its major categories of information. From this coding, axial coding emerges in which the researcher identifies one open coding category to focus on (called the "core" phenomenon), and then goes back to the data and create categories around this core phenomenon. Strauss and Corbin (1990) prescribe the types of categories identified around the core phenomenon. They consist of **causal conditions** (what factors caused the core phenomenon), *strategies* (actions taken in response to the core phenomenon), contextual and *intervening conditions* (broad and specific situational factors that influence the strategies), and

consequences (outcomes from using the strategies). These categories relate to and surround the core phenomenon in a visual model called the *axial coding* paradigm. The final step, then, is *selective coding*, in which the researcher takes the model and develops *propositions* (or hypotheses) that interrelate the categories in the model or assembles a story that describes the interrelationship of categories in the model. This theory, developed by the researcher, is articulated toward the end of a study and can assume several forms, such as a narrative statement (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), a visual picture (Morrow & Smith, 1995), or a series of hypotheses or propositions (Creswell & Brown, 1992).

In their discussion of grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin (1998) take the model one step further to develop a *conditional matrix*. They advance the conditional matrix as a coding device to help the researcher make connections between the macro and the micro conditions influencing the phenomenon. This matrix is a set of expanding concentric circles with labels that build outward from the individual, group, and organization to the community, region, nation, and global world. In my experience, this matrix is seldom used in grounded theory research, and researchers typically end their studies with a theory developed in selective coding, a theory that might be viewed as a substantive, low-level theory rather than an abstract, grand theory (e.g., see Creswell & Brown, 1992). Although making connections between the substantive theory and its larger implications for the community, nation, and world in the conditional matrix is important (e.g., a model of work flow in a hospital, the shortage of gloves, and the national guidelines on AIDS may all be connected; see this example provided by Strauss & Corbin, 1998), grounded theorists seldom have the data, time, or resources to employ the conditional matrix.

A second variant of grounded theory is found in the constructivist writing of Charmaz (see Charmaz, 2005, 2006). Instead of embracing the study of a single process or core category as in the Strauss and Corbin (1998) approach, Charmaz advocates for a social constructivist perspective that includes emphasizing diverse local worlds, multiple realities, and the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions. Constructivist grounded theory, according to Charmaz (2006), lies squarely within the interpretive approach to qualitative research with flexible guidelines, a focus on theory developed that depends on the researcher's view, learning about the experience within embedded, hidden networks, situations, and relationships, and making visible hierarchies of power, communication, and opportunity. Charmaz places more emphasis on the views, values, beliefs, feelings, assumptions, and ideologies of individuals than on the methods of research, although she does describe the practices of gathering rich data, coding the data, memoing, and

using theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2006). She suggests that complex terms or jargon, diagrams, conceptual maps, and systematic approaches (such as Strauss & Corbin, 1990) detract from grounded theory and represent an attempt to gain power in their use. She advocates using active codes, such as gerund-based phrases like "recasting life." Moreover, for Charmaz, a grounded theory procedure does not minimize the role of the researcher in the process. The researcher makes decisions about the categories throughout the process, brings questions to the data, and advances personal values, experiences, and priorities. Any conclusions developed by grounded theorists are, according to Charmaz (2005), suggestive, incomplete, and inconclusive.

Procedures for Conducting Grounded Theory Research

Although Charmaz's interpretive approach has many attractive elements (e.g., reflexivity, being flexible in structure, as discussed in Chapter 2), I rely on Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) to illustrate grounded theory procedures because their systematic approach is helpful to individuals learning about and applying grounded theory research.

• The researcher needs to begin by determining if grounded theory is best suited to study his or her research problem. Grounded theory is a good design to use when a theory is not available to explain a process. The literature may have models available, but they were developed and tested on samples and populations other than those of interest to the qualitative researcher. Also, theories may be present, but they are incomplete because they do not address potentially valuable variables of interest to the researcher. On the practical side, a theory may be needed to explain how people are experiencing a phenomenon, and the grounded theory developed by the researcher will provide such a general framework.

• The research questions that the inquirer asks of participants will focus on understanding how individuals experience the process and identifying the steps in the process (What was the process? How did it unfold?). After initially exploring these issues, the researcher then returns to the participants and asks more detailed questions that help to shape the axial coding phase, questions such as: What was central to the process? (the core phenomenon); What influenced or caused this phenomenon to occur? (causal conditions); What strategies were employed during the process? (strategies); What effect occurred? (consequences).

• These questions are typically asked in interviews, although other forms of data may also be collected, such as observations, documents, and audiovisual materials. The point is to gather enough information to fully

develop (or *saturate*) the model. This may involve 20 to 30 interviews or 50 to 60 interviews.

• The analysis of the data proceeds in stages. In open coding, the researcher forms categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information. Within each category, the investigator finds several *properties*, or subcategories, and looks for data to dimension-alize, or show the extreme possibilities on a continuum of, the property.

• In axial coding, the investigator assembles the data in new ways after open coding. This is presented using a *coding paradigm or logic diagram* (i.e., a visual model) in which the researcher identifies a *central phenomenon* (i.e., a central category about the phenomenon), explores *causal conditions* (i.e., categories of conditions that influence the phenomenon), specifies strategies (i.e., the actions or interactions that result from the central phenomenon), identifies the *context* and *intervening conditions* (i.e., the narrow and broad conditions that influence the strategies), and delineates the **consequences** (i.e., the outcomes of the strategies) for this phenomenon.

• In selective coding, the researcher may write a "story line" that connects the categories. Alternatively, propositions or hypotheses may be specified that state predicted relationships.

• Finally, the researcher may develop and visually portray a conditional matrix that elucidates the social, historical, and economic conditions influencing the central phenomenon. It is an optional step and one in which the qualitative inquirer thinks about the model from the smallest to the broadest perspective.

• The result of this process of data collection and analysis is a theory, a *substantive-level theory*, written by a researcher close to a specific problem or population of people. The theory emerges with help from the process of *memoing*, a process in which the researcher writes down ideas about the evolving theory throughout the process of open, axial, and selective coding. The substantive-level theory may be tested later for its empirical verification with quantitative data to determine if it can be generalized to a sample and population (see mixed methods design procedures, Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Alternatively, the study may end at this point with the generation of a theory as the goal of the research.

Challenges

A grounded theory study challenges researchers for the following reasons. The investigator needs to set aside, as much as possible, theoretical ideas or

notions so that the analytic, substantive theory can emerge. Despite the
evolving, inductive nature of this form of qualitative inquiry, the researcher
must recognize that this is a systematic approach to research with specific
steps in data analysis, if approached from the Strauss and Corbin (1990) per-
spective. The researcher faces the difficulty of determining when categories
are saturated or when the theory is sufficiently detailed. One strategy that
might be used to move toward saturation is to use *discriminant sampling,*
in which the researchers gathered additional information from individuals
similar to those people initially interviewed to determine if the theory holds
true for these additional participants. The researcher needs to recognize that
the primary outcome of this study is a theory with specific components: a
central phenomenon, causal conditions, strategies, conditions and context,
and consequences. These are prescribed categories of information in the
theory, so the Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998) approach may not have the
flexibility desired by some qualitative researchers. In this case, the Charmaz
(2006) approach, which is less structured and more adaptable, may be used.

Ethnographic Research

Definition and Background

Although a grounded theory researcher develops a theory from examin-
ing many individuals who share in the same process, action, or interaction,
the study participants are not likely to be located in the same place or inter-
acting on so frequent a basis that they develop shared patterns of behavior,
beliefs, and *language*. An ethnographer is interested in examining these
shared patterns, and the unit of analysis is larger than the 20 or so individ-
uals involved in a grounded theory study. An *ethnography* focuses on an
entire cultural group. Granted, sometimes this cultural group may be small
(a few teachers, a few social workers), but typically it is large, involving
many people who interact over time (teachers in an entire school, a commu-
nity social work group). Ethnography is a qualitative design in which the
researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values,
behaviors, beliefs, and language of a *culture-sharing group* (Harris, 1968).
As both a process and an outcome of research (Agar, 1980), ethnography is
a way of studying a culture-sharing group as well as the final, written prod-
uct of that research. As a process, ethnography involves extended obser-
vations of the group, most often through *participant observation*, in which
the researcher is *immersed* in the day-to-day lives of the people and observes
and interviews the group participants. Ethnographers study the meaning of

the behavior, the language, and the interaction among members of the culture-sharing group.

Ethnography had its beginning in the comparative cultural anthropology conducted by early 20th-century anthropologists, such as Boas, Malinowski, Radcliffe-Brown, and Mead. Although these researchers initially took the natural sciences as a model for research, they differed from those using traditional scientific approaches through the firsthand collection of data concerning existing "primitive" cultures (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). In the 1920s and 1930s, sociologists such as Park, Dewey, and Mead at the University of Chicago adapted anthropological field methods to the study of cultural groups in the United States (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Recently, scientific approaches to ethnography have expanded to include "schools" or subtypes of ethnography with different theoretical orientations and aims, such as structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, cultural and cognitive anthropology, feminism, Marxism, ethnomethodology, critical theory, cultural studies, and postmodernism (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). This has led to a lack of orthodoxy in ethnography and has resulted in pluralistic approaches. Many excellent books are available on ethnography, including Van Maanen (1988) on the many forms of ethnography; Wolcott (1999) on ways of "seeing" ethnography; LeCompte and Schensul (1999) on procedures of ethnography presented in a toolkit of short books; Atkinson, Coffey, and Delamont (2003) on the practices of ethnography; and Madison (2005) on critical ethnography.

Types of Ethnographies

There are many forms of ethnography, such as a confessional ethnography, life history, autoethnography, feminist ethnography, ethnographic novels, and the visual ethnography found in photography and video, and electronic media (Denzin, 1989a; LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992; Pink, 2001; Van Maanen, 1988). Two popular forms of ethnography will be emphasized here: the realist ethnography and the critical ethnography.

The *realist ethnography* is a traditional approach used by cultural anthropologists. Characterized by Van Maanen (1988), it reflects a particular stance taken by the researcher toward the individuals being studied. Realist ethnography is an objective account of the situation, typically written in the third-person point of view and reporting objectively on the information learned from participants at a site. In this ethnographic approach, the realist ethnographer narrates the study in a third-person dispassionate voice and reports on what is observed or heard from participants. The ethnographer remains in the

background as an omniscient reporter of the "facts." The realist also reports objective data in a measured style uncontaminated by personal bias, political goals, and judgment. The researcher may provide mundane details of every-day life among the people studied. The ethnographer also uses standard categories for cultural description (e.g., family life, communication networks, worklife, social networks, status systems). The ethnographer produces the participants' views through closely edited quotations and has the final word on how the culture is to be interpreted and presented.

For many researchers, ethnography today employs a "critical" approach (Carspecken & Apple, 1992; Madison, 2005; Thomas, 1993) by including in the research an advocacy perspective. This approach is in response to current society, in which the systems of power, prestige, privilege, and authority serve to marginalize individuals who are from different classes, races, and genders. The *critical ethnography* is a type of ethnographic research in which the authors advocate for the emancipation of groups marginalized in society (Thomas, 1993). Critical researchers typically are politically minded individuals who seek, through their research, to speak out against inequality and domination (Carspecken & Apple, 1992). For example, critical ethnographers might study schools that provide privileges to certain types of students, or counseling practices that serve to overlook the needs of under-represented groups. The major components of a critical ethnography include a value-laden orientation, empowering people by giving them more authority, challenging the status quo, and addressing concerns about power and control. A critical ethnographer will study issues of power, empowerment, inequality, inequity, dominance, repression, hegemony, and victimization.

Procedures for Conducting an Ethnography

As with all qualitative inquiry, there is no single way to conduct the research in an ethnography. Although current writings provide more guidance to this approach than ever (for example, see the excellent overview found in Wolcott, 1999), the approach taken here includes elements of both realist ethnography and critical approaches. The steps I would use to conduct an ethnography are as follows:

• Determine if ethnography is the most appropriate design to use to study the research problem. Ethnography is appropriate if the needs are to describe how a cultural group works and to explore the beliefs, language, behaviors, and issues such as power, resistance, and dominance. The literature may be deficient in actually knowing how the group works because the group is not in the mainstream, people may not be familiar with the group, or its ways are so different that readers may not identify with the group.

• Identify and locate a culture-sharing group to study. Typically, this group is one that has been together for an extended period of time, so that their shared language, patterns of behavior, and attitudes have merged into a discernable pattern. This may also be a group that has been marginalized by society. Because ethnographers spend time talking with and observing this group, access may require finding one or more individuals in the group who will allow the researcher in—a *gatekeeper* or *key informants (or participants)*.

• Select cultural themes or issues to study about the group. This involves the *analysis of the culture-sharing group.* The themes may include such topics as enculturation, socialization, learning, cognition, domination, inequality, or child and adult development (LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992). As discussed by Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), Wolcott (1987, 1994b), and Fetterman (1998), the ethnographer begins the study by examining people in interaction in ordinary settings and by attempting to discern pervasive patterns such as life cycles, events, and cultural themes. *Culture* is an amorphous term, not something "lying about" (Wolcott, 1987, p. 41), but something researchers attribute to a group when looking for patterns of their social world. It is inferred from the words and actions of members of the group, and it is assigned to this group by the researcher. It consists of what people do (behaviors), what they say (language), the potential tension between what they do and ought to do, and what they make and use, such as artifacts (Spradley, 1980). Such themes are diverse, as illustrated in Winthrop's (1991) *Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology.* Fetterman (1998) discusses how ethnographers describe a *holistic* perspective of the group's history, religion, politics, economy, and environment. Within this description, cultural concepts such as the social structure, kinship, the political structure, and the social relations or *function* among members of the group may be described.

• To study cultural concepts, determine which type of ethnography to use. Perhaps how the group works needs to be described, or the critical ethnography may need to expose issues such as power, hegemony, and to advocate for certain groups. A critical ethnographer, for example, might address an inequity in society or some part of it, use the research to advocate and call for changes, and specify an issue to explore, such as inequality, dominance, oppression, or empowerment.

• Gather information where the group works and lives. This is called *fieldwork* (Wolcott, 1999). Gathering the types of information typically needed in an ethnography involves going to the research site, respecting the daily lives of individuals at the site, and collecting a wide variety of

materials. Field issues of respect, ***reciprocity***, deciding who owns the data, and others are central to ethnography. Ethnographers bring a sensitivity to fieldwork issues (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995), such as attending to how they gain access, giving back or reciprocity with the participants, and being ethical in all aspects of the research, such as presenting themselves and the study. LeCompte and Schensul (1999) organize types of ethnographic data into observations, tests and measures, surveys, interviews, content analysis, interviews, elicitation methods, audiovisual methods, spatial mapping, and network research. From the many sources collected, the ethnographer analyzes the data for a ***description of the culture-sharing group***, themes that emerge from the group, and an overall interpretation (Wolcott, 1994b). The researcher begins by compiling a detailed description of the culture-sharing group, focusing on a single event, on several activities, or on the group over a prolonged period of time. The ethnographer moves into a theme analysis of patterns or topics that signifies how the cultural group works and lives.

• Forge a working set of rules or patterns as the final product of this analysis. The final product is a holistic ***cultural portrait*** of the group that incorporates the views of the participants (***emic***) as well as the views of the researcher (***etic***). It might also advocate for the needs of the group or suggest changes in society to address needs of the group. As a result, the reader learns about the culture-sharing group from both the participants and the interpretation of the researcher. Other products may be more performance based, such as theater productions, plays, or poems.

Challenges

Ethnography is challenging to use for the following reasons. The researcher needs to have a grounding in cultural anthropology and the meaning of a social-cultural system as well as the concepts typically explored by ethnographers. The time to collect data is extensive, involving prolonged time in the field. In many ethnographies, the narratives are written in a literary, almost storytelling approach, an approach that may limit the audience for the work and may be challenging for authors accustomed to traditional approaches to writing social and human science research. There is a possibility that the researcher will "go native" and be unable to complete the study or be compromised in the study. This is but one issue in the complex array of fieldwork issues facing ethnographers who venture into an unfamiliar cultural group or system. A sensitivity to the needs of individual studies is especially important, and the researcher needs to acknowledge his or her impact on the people and the places being studied.

Case Study Research

Definition and Background

The entire culture-sharing group in ethnography may be considered a case, but the intent in ethnography is to determine how the culture works rather than to understand an issue or problem using the case as a specific illustration. Thus, *case study* research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context). Although Stake (2005) states that case study research is not a methodology but a choice of what is to be studied (i.e., a case within a *bounded system*), others present it as a strategy of inquiry, a methodology, or a comprehensive research strategy (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). I choose to view it as a methodology, a type of design in qualitative research, or an object of study, as well as a product of the inquiry. Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a *case*) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case *description* and case-based themes. For example, several programs (a *multi-site* study) or a single program (a *within-site* study) may be selected for study.

The case study approach is familiar to social scientists because of its popularity in psychology (Freud), medicine (case analysis of a problem), law (case law), and political science (case reports). Case study research has a long, distinguished history across many disciplines. Hamel, Dufour, and Fortin (1993) trace the origin of modern social science case studies through anthropology and sociology. They cite anthropologist Malinowski's study of the Trobriand Islands, French sociologist LePlay's study of families, and the case studies of the University of Chicago Department of Sociology from the 1920s and 30s through the 1950s (e.g., Thomas and Znaniecki's 1958 study of Polish peasants in Europe and America) as antecedents of qualitative case study research. Today, the case study writer has a large array of texts and approaches from which to choose. Yin (2003), for example, espouses both quantitative and qualitative approaches to case study development and discusses explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive qualitative case studies. Merriam (1998) advocates a general approach to qualitative case studies in the field of education. Stake (1995) systematically establishes procedures for case study research and cites them extensively in his example of "Harper School." Stake's most recent book on multiple case study analysis presents a step-by-step approach and provides rich illustrations of multiple case studies in the Ukraine, Slovakia, and Romania (Stake, 2006).

Types of Case Studies

Types of qualitative case studies are distinguished by the size of the bounded case, such as whether the case involves one individual, several individuals, a group, an entire program, or an activity. They may also be distinguished in terms of the intent of the case analysis. Three variations exist in terms of intent: the single instrumental case study, the collective or multiple case study, and the *intrinsic case study*. In a single *instrumental case study* (Stake, 1995), the researcher focuses on an issue or concern, and then selects one bounded case to illustrate this issue. In a *collective case study* (or multiple case study), the one issue or concern is again selected, but the inquirer selects multiple case studies to illustrate the issue. The researcher might select for study several programs from several research sites or multiple programs within a single site. Often the inquirer purposefully selects multiple cases to show different perspectives on the issue. Yin (2003) suggests that the multiple case study design uses the logic of replication, in which the inquirer replicates the procedures for each case. As a general rule, qualitative researchers are reluctant to generalize from one case to another because the contexts of cases differ. To best generalize, however, the inquirer needs to select representative cases for inclusion in the qualitative study. The final type of case study design is an intrinsic case study in which the focus is on the case itself (e.g., evaluating a program, or studying a student having difficulty—see Stake, 1995) because the case presents an unusual or unique situation. This resembles the focus of narrative research, but the case study analytic procedures of a detailed description of the case, set within its context or surroundings, still hold true.

Procedures for Conducting a Case Study

Several procedures are available for conducting case studies (see Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). This discussion will rely primarily on Stake's (1995) approach to conducting a case study.

• First, researchers determine if a case study approach is appropriate to the research problem. A case study is a good approach when the inquirer has clearly identifiable cases with boundaries and seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the cases or a comparison of several cases.

• Researchers next need to identify their case or cases. These cases may involve an individual, several individuals, a program, an event, or an activity. In conducting case study research, I recommend that investigators first consider what type of case study is most promising and useful. The case can be single or collective, multi-sited or within-site, focused on a case or on an issue

(intrinsic, instrumental) (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). In choosing which case to study, an array of possibilities for *purposeful sampling* is available. I prefer to select cases that show different perspectives on the problem, process, or event I want to portray (called "purposeful maximal sampling,"; Creswell, 2005), but I also may select ordinary cases, accessible cases, or unusual cases.

• The data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials. For example, Yin (2003) recommends six types of information to collect: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observations, and physical artifacts.

• The type of analysis of these data can be a *holistic analysis* of the entire case or an *embedded analysis* of a specific aspect of the case (Yin, 2003). Through this data collection, a detailed description of the case (Stake, 1995) emerges in which the researcher details such aspects as the history of the case, the chronology of events, or a day-by-day rendering of the activities of the case. (The gunman case study in Appendix F involved tracing the campus response to a gunman for 2 weeks immediately following the near-tragedy on campus.) After this description ("relatively uncontested data"; Stake, 1995, p. 123), the researcher might focus on a few key issues (or *analysis of themes*), not for generalizing beyond the case, but for understanding the complexity of the case. One analytic strategy would be to identify issues within each case and then look for common themes that transcend the cases (Yin, 2003). This analysis is rich in the *context of the case* or setting in which the case presents itself (Merriam, 1988). When multiple cases are chosen, a typical format is to first provide a detailed description of each case and themes within the case, called a *within-case analysis,* followed by a thematic analysis across the cases, called a *cross-case analysis*, as well as *assertions* or an interpretation of the meaning of the case.

• In the final interpretive phase, the researcher reports the meaning of the case, whether that meaning comes from learning about the issue of the case (an instrumental case) or learning about an unusual situation (an intrinsic case). As Lincoln and Guba (1985) mention, this phase constitutes the "lessons learned" from the case.

Challenges

One of the challenges inherent in qualitative case study development is that the researcher must identify his or her case. I can pose no clear solution to this challenge. The case study researcher must decide which bounded system to study, recognizing that several might be possible candidates for

this selection and realizing that either the case itself or an issue, which a case or cases are selected to illustrate, is worthy of study. The researcher must consider whether to study a single case or multiple cases. The study of more than one case dilutes the overall analysis; the more cases an individual studies, the less the depth in any single case. When a researcher chooses multiple cases, the issue becomes, "How many cases?" There is not a set number of cases. Typically, however, the researcher chooses no more than four or five cases. What motivates the researcher to consider a large number of cases is the idea of "generalizability," a term that holds little meaning for most qualitative researchers (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Selecting the case requires that the researcher establish a rationale for his or her purposeful sampling strategy for selecting the case and for gathering information about the case. Having enough information to present an in-depth picture of the case limits the value of some case studies. In planning a case study, I have individuals develop a data collection matrix in which they specify the amount of information they are likely to collect about the case. Deciding the "boundaries" of a case—how it might be constrained in terms of time, events, and processes—may be challenging. Some case studies may not have clean beginning and ending points, and the researcher will need to set boundaries that adequately surround the case.

The Five Approaches Compared

All five approaches have in common the general process of research that begins with a research problem and proceeds to the questions, the data, the data analysis, and the research report. They also employ similar data collection processes, including, in varying degrees, interviews, observations, documents, and audiovisual materials. Also, a couple of potential similarities among the designs should be noted. Narrative research, ethnography, and case study research may seem similar when the unit of analysis is a single individual. True, one may approach the study of a single individual from any of these three approaches; however, the types of data one would collect and analyze would differ considerably. In *narrative research*, the inquirer focuses on the stories told from the individual and arranges these stories in chronological order. In ethnography, the focus is on setting the individuals' stories within the context of their culture and culture-sharing group; in case study research, the single case is typically selected to illustrate an issue, and the researcher compiles a detailed description of the setting for the case. As Yin (2003) comments, "You would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions—believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study" (p. 13). My approach is to

recommend, if the researcher wants to study a single individual, the narrative approach or a single case study because ethnography is a much broader picture of the culture. Then when comparing a narrative study and a single case to study a single individual, I feel that the narrative approach is seen as more scholarly because narrative studies *tend* to focus on single individual; whereas, case studies often involve more than one case.

From these sketches of the five approaches, I can identify fundamental differences among these types of qualitative research. As shown in Table 4.1, I present several dimensions for distinguishing among the five approaches. At a most fundamental level, the five differ in what they are trying to accomplish—their foci or the primary objectives of the studies. Exploring a life is different from generating a theory or describing the behavior of a cultural group. Moreover, although overlaps exist in discipline origin, some approaches have single-disciplinary traditions (e.g., grounded theory originating in sociology, ethnography founded in anthropology or sociology) and others have broad interdisciplinary backgrounds (e.g., narrative, case study). The data collection varies in terms of emphasis (e.g., more observations in ethnography, more interviews in grounded theory) and extent of data collection (e.g., only interviews in phenomenology, multiple forms in case study research to provide the in-depth case picture). At the data analysis stage, the differences are most pronounced. Not only is the distinction one of specificity of the analysis phase (e.g., grounded theory most specific, narrative research less defined), but the number of steps to be undertaken also varies (e.g., extensive steps in phenomenology, few steps in ethnography). The result of each approach, the written report, takes shape from all the processes before it. A narrative about an individual's life forms narrative research. A description of the essence of the experience of the phenomenon becomes a phenomenology. A theory, often portrayed in a visual model, emerges in grounded theory and a holistic view of how a culture-sharing group works results in an ethnography. An in-depth study of a bounded system or a case (or several cases) becomes a case study.

Relating the dimensions of Table 4.1 to research design within the five approaches will be the focus of chapters to follow. Qualitative researchers have found it helpful to see at this point a general sketch of the overall structure of each of the five approaches. Let's examine in Table 4.2 the structure of each approach.

The outlines in Table 4.2 may be used in designing a journal-article-length study; however, because of the numerous steps in each, they also have applicability as chapters of a dissertation or a book-length work. I introduce them here because the reader, with an introductory knowledge of each approach, now can sketch the general "architecture" of a study. Certainly, this architecture will emerge and be shaped differently by the conclusion of

Table 4.1   Contrasting Characteristics of Five Qualitative Approaches

Characteristics	Narrative Research	Phenomenology	Grounded Theory	Ethnography	Case Study
Focus	Exploring the life of an individual	Understanding the essence of the experience	Developing a theory grounded in data from the field	Describing and interpreting a culture-sharing group	Developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases
Type of Problem Best Suited for Design	Needing to tell stories of individual experiences	Needing to describe the essence of a lived phenomenon	Grounding a theory in the views of participants	Describing and interpreting the shared patterns of culture of a group	Providing an in-depth understanding of a case or cases
Discipline Background	Drawing from the humanities including anthropology, literature, history, psychology, and sociology	Drawing from philosophy, psychology, and education	Drawing from sociology	Drawing from anthropology and sociology	Drawing from psychology, law, political science, medicine
Unit of Analysis	Studying one or more individuals	Studying several individuals that have shared the experience	Studying a process, action, or interaction involving many individuals	Studying a group that shares the same culture	Studying an event, a program, an activity, more than one individual

Characteristics	Narrative Research	Phenomenology	Grounded Theory	Ethnography	Case Study
Data Collection Forms	Using primarily interviews and documents	Using primarily interviews with individuals, although documents, observations, and art may also be considered	Using primarily interviews with 20–60 individuals	Using primarily observations and interviews, but perhaps collecting other sources during extended time in field	Using multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, documents, artifacts
Data Analysis Strategies	Analyzing data for stories, "restorying" stories, developing themes, often using a chronology	Analyzing data for significant statements, meaning units, textural and structural description, description of the "essence"	Analyzing data through open coding, axial coding, selective coding	Analyzing data through description of the culture-sharing group; themes about the group	Analyzing data through description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes
Written Report	Developing a narrative about the stories of an individual's life	Describing the "essence" of the experience	Generating a theory illustrated in a figure	Describing how a culture-sharing group works	Developing a detailed analysis of one or more cases

Table 4.2   Reporting Structures for Each Approach

Reporting Approaches	Narrative	Phenomenology	Grounded Theory	Ethnography	Case Study
General Structure of Study	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (a narrative, significance of individual, data collection, analysis outcomes) • Report of stories • Individuals theorize about their lives • Narrative segments identified • Patterns of meaning identified (events, processes, epiphanies, themes) • Summary (Adapted from Denzin, 1989a, 1989b)	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (a phenomenology and philosophical assumptions, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Significant statements • Meanings of statements • Themes of meanings • Exhaustive description of phenomenon (Adapted from Moustakas, 1994)	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (grounded theory, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Open coding • Axial coding • Selective coding and theoretical propositions and models • Discussion of theory and contrasts with extant literature (Adapted from Strauss & Corbin, 1990)	• Introduction (problem, questions) • Research procedures (ethnography, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Description of culture • Analysis of cultural themes • Interpretation, lessons learned, questions raised (Adapted from Wolcott, 1994b)	• Entry vignette • Introduction (problem, questions, case study, data collection, analysis, outcomes) • Description of the case/cases and its/their context • Development of issues • Detail about selected issues • Assertions • Closing vignette (Adapted from Stake, 1995)

the study, but it provides a framework for the design issue to follow. I recommend these outlines as general templates at this time. In Chapter 5, we will examine five published journal articles, with each study illustrating one of the five approaches, and explore the writing structure of each.

Summary

In this chapter, I described each of the five approaches to qualitative research—narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. I provided a definition, some history of the development of the approach, and the major forms it has assumed, and I detailed the major procedures for conducting a qualitative study. I also discussed some of the major challenges in conducting each approach. To highlight some of the differences among the approaches, I provided an overview table that contrasts the characteristics of focus, the type of research problem addressed, the discipline background, the unit of analysis, the forms of data collection, data analysis strategies, and the nature of the final, written report. I also presented outlines of the structure of each approach that might be useful in designing a study within each of the five types. In the next chapter, we will examine five studies that illustrate each approach and look more closely at the compositional structure of each type of approach.

Additional Readings

Several readings extend this brief overview of each of the five approaches of inquiry. In Chapter 1, I presented the major books that will be used to craft discussions about each approach. Here I provide a more expanded list of references that also includes the major works.

In narrative research, I will rely on Denzin (1989a, 1989b), Czarniawska (2004), and especially Clandinin and Connelly (2000). I add to this list books on life history (Angrosino, 1989a), humanistic methods (Plummer, 1983), and a comprehensive handbook on narrative research (Clandinin, 2006).

Angrosino, M. V. (1989a). *Documents of interaction: Biography, autobiography, and life history in social science perspective.* Gainesville: University of Florida Press.

Clandinin, D. J. (Ed.). (2006). *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Czarniawska, B. (2004). *Narratives in social science research.* London: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (1989a). *Interpretive biography.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (1989b). *Interpretive interactionism.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Elliot, J. (2005). *Using narrative in social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches.* London: Sage.

Plummer, K. (1983). *Documents of life: An introduction to the problems and literature of a humanistic method.* London: George Allen & Unwin.

For phenomenology, the books on phenomenological research methods by Moustakas (1994) and the hermeneutical approach by van Manen (1990) will provide a foundation for chapters to follow. Other procedural guides to examine include Giorgi (1985), Polkinghorne (1989), Van Kaam (1966), Colaizzi (1978), Spiegelberg (1982), Dukes (1984), Oiler (1986), and Tesch (1990). For basic differences between hermeneutic and empirical or transcendental phenomenology, see Lopez and Willis (2004) and for a discussion about the problems of bracketing, see LeVasseur (2003). In addition, a solid grounding in the philosophical assumptions is essential, and one might examine Husserl (1931, 1970), Merleau-Ponty (1962), Natanson (1973), and Stewart and Mickunas (1990) for this background.

Colaizzi, P. F. (1978). Psychological research as the phenomenologist views it. In R. Vaile & M. King (Eds.), *Existential phenomenological alternatives for psychology* (pp. 48–71). New York: Oxford University Press.

Dukes, S. (1984). Phenomenological methodology in the human sciences. *Journal of Religion and Health, 23,* 197–203.

Giorgi, A. (Ed.). (1985). *Phenomenology and psychological research.* Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.

Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology* (D. Carr, Trans). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology* (D. Carr, Trans). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

LeVasseur, J. J. (2003). The problem with bracketing in phenomenology. *Qualitative Health Research, 31*(2), 408–420.

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Exercises

1. Select one of the five approaches for a proposed study. Write a brief description of the approach, including a definition, the history, and the procedures associated with the approach. Include references to the literature.

2. Take a proposed qualitative study that you would like to conduct. Begin with presenting it as a narrative study, then shape it into a phenomenology, a grounded theory, an ethnography, and finally a case study. Discuss for each type of study the focus of the study, the types of data collection and analysis, and the final written report.

Exercises

MIYO Pilot Phase 2 October – December 2023

Guidance for Focus Group Organisation, Discussion Guide Development and Facilitation

Prepared by Kathryn McGarry, Hilary Tierney and Maurice Devlin

Recruitment

o   A total of three focus groups is advised for the pilot phase.

o   A general rule of thumb is that groups should consist of between 8-12 people, however, 6-8 participants is a more typical target number per group. Remember higher numbers in focus groups usually means lower participation for each participant given the time available. Ensure, however, that sufficient numbers have been recruited per group to allow for any last minute withdrawals from the research.

o   As per standard ethical guidelines, information sheets need to be provided to all prospective participants detailing the purpose of the focus group, the nature of participation and the rights of participants to anonymity, confidentiality and to participate voluntarily. Depending on the legal context/organisational procedures, written consent may be required from all participants and in the case of those under the age of 18 years parental consent may also be required. Please comply with the specific ethical requirements of your jurisdiction.

o   In line with wider MIYO objectives, recruitment for focus group should incorporate consideration of diversity, particularly age, gender, ability, location (urban/rural) and socio-economic status and ethnicity if relevant within the context of the pilot country.

o   It is advisable to keep young people in age-appropriate groups, therefore, having a separate group with younger (e.g. 14/15 year olds) and older (16-18 year olds) participants.

o   Recommendations arising from the Phase 1 pilots also suggest gender mix can be a problematic dynamic among some youth focus groups. A suggestion is to hold one

female only, one male only and one mixed gender focus group. On a practical note, facilitators/moderators should seek to ensure that all focus groups members have an equal opportunity to contribute. They should pay particular attention to gender dynamics, that might inhibit participation, in mixed groups.

Practicalities

At the outset consider some of the practicalities of focus group organization ensuring that the space is conducive to both a comfortable discussion and the recording of the discussion.

o   Room set up – chairs in a circle? Table if required for activities?

o   Test recording equipment and placement of recording device for optimal recording

o   Refreshments before or after not during to avoid noise disturbance

o   Typically a focus group should run between 60-90 minutes. Allowing sufficient time either side of introductions and wind down for discussion on the 'focus' of the focus group means that the number of questions posed should be limited (avoid a long list of questions).

o   Question type then is very important in focus groups to ensure questions can generate a good discussion – "Can you tell me about…", "How was that experience for you.." etc.

o   Ensure that the same key areas/key discussion questions are posed in each of the separate focus groups to allow for the collection of comparable data from pilot countries. While discussion can go in different directions the role of the facilitator is important in being able to probe where needed and to keep the focus group on track.

Warm Up/Introduction

The type of warm up might depend on the composition of the group – whether it is an established group who know each other well or a mixed group unfamiliar with each other. In the case of the latter, a little ice breaker and a round of introductions would be a good starting point.

o   Welcome by facilitator to include:

o   why you are here

o   what the focus group will entail

o   ground rules

Opening Qs –

o   Ask each young person at the beginning to say hello, their name, their age, where they are from, how long they have been in Scouts/YMCA – these will be changed to pseudonyms/anonymized but for the transcriber it can be useful to get all the voices on tape at the beginning in order to allow to differentiate/identify speakers

o   What does it mean to you to be a Scout/in the YMCA?

o   What kinds of things do you most enjoy here?

Possible probes:

-   Who else feels the same?

-   Who has a different experience?

Main Body of Questioning

The purpose of the focus group is to explore young people's understanding of their journey and learning in Scouting/YMCA and how this experience is shaped by youth leaders. Key questions here should explore their understanding of what it means to be involved in the organization, how (if it all) they perceive it has impacted their life and learning, how (if it at all) important the relationships with youth leaders are in this perceived impact and for Scouts particularly how they perceive their experiences in terms of the SPICES (social, physical, intellectual, character, emotional and spiritual development).

Types of discussion questions here could include:

o   Can you describe what kind of learning happens here? – in other words what kinds of things do you know or what kinds of things can you do that you wouldn't if you didn't come here?

o   What have you learned about yourself since becoming a Scout/since joining the YMCA?

o   How do youth leaders support that learning?

o   How are these experiences different to other experiences you have with adults in school, sports clubs, other extracurricular activities?

o   What is it that youth leaders do that make your experiences here enjoyable?

o   Is there anything you would change if you could?

Focusing on the SPICES some options for questions/probes might be:

o   Drawing out discussion of SPICES overall:

"The people who lead Scouting/YMCA/youth organisations often talk about the different ways that they hope young people will develop through participating, for example that they might develop 'socially', 'spiritually' or in terms of their 'character'. Do these words make sense to you when you think of your own learning through Scouting/YMCA? Let's look at each of the words in turn, what do you think they mean?

Follow up prompts if required on each of the SPICES, for example:

o   "In what ways, if any, does your experience of being a Scout/being in the YMCA/being in a youth organisation makes a difference to you socially…

> Physically…
>
> Intellectually…
>
> In terms of your character (who you are)
>
> Emotionally…
>
> Spiritually…."

o   e.g. Social or Character:

"Some young people in Scouts/being in a youth organisation describe developing leadership skills and enjoying increasing responsibility in Scouting – what are your experiences of this?"

o   e.g. Spiritual

"What does spirituality mean to you?" and "In what ways, if any, has Scouting made a difference to how you think about this and what it means in your life?"

Option to include a projective technique/group exercise here to elicit discussion from the group on some of the key questions above/specifically in relation to the SPICES – see below:

Examples of Projective Techniques:

o   Vignette/case study:

A short hypothetical scenario regarding the journey of a young person through a Scouting programme/through YMCA which touches on key elements of SPICES.

Young people get a copy of the vignette to read and the facilitator reads through and poses a question or two at the end asking participants to reflect on the vignette and the learning outcomes..

o   Creative task/personification/collage/picture

The group is tasked with for example devising an advertisement poster or a picture or creating a personification of a Scout - identifying different attributes of learning, different values, outcomes based on SPICES. As the group work together their ongoing discussion on what should be highlighted can be probed by the facilitator and at the end of the task the group should present and describe what they came up with and the reasons they chose to incorporate various elements/words/symbols and leave out others

Cool down

Opportunity here to include young people in both programme and methodological evaluation.

o   Ask the group for any advice they would give to young people joining Scouts/YMCA and to new youth leaders? And how would they advise those who develop and implement programmes for Scouts/YMCA – what could be done differently and for what reason?

o   Now that the focus group has come to an end ask participants to identify anything that has not yet been covered that would be important to include in such a focus group, any

question that would be important to ask in such a discussion and that could also be posed to the next group of participants.

Considerations:

The importance of probing

Continuation probe – "could you give me some more detail.."

Example probe – probing for concrete example - "could you give me an example of this.."

Validation probe – "summarise participant views to ensure the intended meaning has been conveyed and allow space for further qualification/explanation"

Group dynamics – ensure everyone in the group has the opportunity to participate, that dominant talkers are managed as part of the group and that group discussion is maintained – facilitator should interrupt diplomatically where required to ask "who else has had this experience/feels like this", "Does anyone have a different experience they would like to share"

Avoid "Why" questions – it implies that participants should have a logical explanation for their perspective/can make participants defensive – instead break down a "why" question into purposive inquiry e.g. "What do you think are the reasons for..", "What issues/factors are involved in your experience.."

Techniques to Identify Themes

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Theme identification is one of the most fundamental tasks in qualitative research. It also is one of the most mysterious. Explicit descriptions of theme discovery are rarely found in articles and reports, and when they are, they are often relegated to appendices or footnotes. Techniques are shared among small groups of social scientists, but sharing is impeded by disciplinary or epistemological boundaries. The techniques described here are drawn from across epistemological and disciplinary boundaries. They include both observational and manipulative techniques and range from quick word counts to laborious, in-depth, line-by-line scrutiny. Techniques are compared on six dimensions: (1) appropriateness for data types, (2) required labor, (3) required expertise, (4) stage of analysis, (5) number and types of themes to be generated, and (6) issues of reliability and validity.

Keywords: theme identification; qualitative analysis; text analysis; open coding; qualitative research methods

Analyzing text involves several tasks: (1) discovering themes and subthemes, (2) winnowing themes to a manageable few (i.e., deciding which themes are important in any project), (3) building hierarchies of themes or code books, and (4) linking themes into theoretical models.

We focus here on the first task: discovering themes and subthemes in texts—and in other qualitative data, like images or artifacts, for that matter.[1] We outline a dozen techniques, drawn from across the social sciences and from different theoretical perspectives. The techniques range from simple word counts that can be done by a computer to labor-intensive, line-by-line analyses that, so far, only humans can do.

Each technique has advantages and disadvantages. Some methods are more suited to rich, complex narratives, while others are more appropriate for short responses to open-ended questions. Some require more labor and expertise on behalf of the investigator, others less.

Making explicit the techniques we use for discovering themes in qualitative data is important for three reasons. First, discovering themes is the basis

of much social science research. Without thematic categories, investigators have nothing to describe, nothing to compare, and nothing to explain. If researchers fail to identify important categories during the exploratory phase of their research, what is to be said of later descriptive and confirmatory phases?

Second, being explicit about how we establish themes allows consumers of qualitative research (including those who fund it) to assess our methodological choices.

Third, qualitative researchers need an explicit and jargon-free vocabulary to communicate with each other across disciplines and across epistemological positions. As we see it, theme discovery is practiced by avowed positivists and interpretivists alike. In fact, some of the techniques we describe are drawn from the interpretivist tradition, while others reflect the efforts of positivists who analyze qualitative data. We see nothing wrong with this. All the techniques we describe can help researchers see their data in a new light. Each has its advantages and disadvantages.

We rarely see descriptions (even in footnotes or appendices) of how researchers came to discover the themes they report in their articles. The techniques we use for finding themes are, of course, shared within invisible colleges, but wider sharing is impeded by disciplinary or epistemological boundaries. "Many researchers," said Renata Tesch (1990:115), "read only certain authors and remain quite ignorant of analysis purposes and procedures different from the ones their favorite methodological writers describe." More than a decade later, little appears to have changed.

WHAT IS A THEME?

This problem has a long history. Seventy years ago, Thompson ([1932-1936] 1993) created an index of folktale motifs that filled six volumes. Anthropologist Morris Opler (1945) saw the identification of themes as a key step in analyzing cultures. "In every culture," he said,

> are found a limited number of dynamic affirmations, called themes, which control behavior or stimulate activity. The activities, prohibitions of activities, or references which result from the acceptance of a theme are its expressions. . . . The expressions of a theme, of course, aid us in discovering it. (pp. 198-99)

Opler (1945) established three principles for thematic analysis. First, he observed that themes are only visible (and thus discoverable) through the manifestation of expressions in data. And conversely, expressions are meaningless without some reference to themes.

Second, Opler (1945) noted that some expressions of a theme are obvious and culturally agreed on, while others are subtler, symbolic, and even idiosyncratic.

Third, Opler (1945) observed that cultural systems comprise sets of inter-related themes. The importance of any theme, he said, is related to (1) how often it appears, (2) how pervasive it is across different types of cultural ideas and practices, (3) how people react when the theme is violated, and (4) the degree to which the number, force, and variety of a theme's expression is controlled by specific contexts.

Today, social scientists still talk about the linkage between themes and their expressions but use different terms to do so. Grounded theorists talk about "categories" (Glaser and Strauss 1967), "codes" (Miles and Huberman 1994), or "labels" (Dey 1993:96). Opler's (1945) "expressions" are called "incidents" (Glaser and Strauss 1967), "segments" (Tesch 1990), "thematic units" (Krippendorf 1980), "data-bits" (Dey 1993), and "chunks" (Miles and Huberman 1994). Lincoln and Guba (1985) referred to expressions as "units" (p. 345). Strauss and Corbin (1990) called them "concepts."

For Strauss and Corbin (1990), the links between expressions and themes are "conceptual labels placed on discrete happenings, events, and other instances of phenomena." Themes, or categories, are the classification of more discrete concepts. "This classification is discovered when concepts are compared one against another and appear to pertain to a similar phenomenon. Thus, the concepts are grouped together under a higher order, more abstract concept called a category" (p. 61).

Here, we follow Agar's (1979, 1980) lead and remain faithful to Opler's (1945) terminology. To us, the terms "theme" and "expression" more naturally connote the fundamental concepts we are tying to describe. In everyday language, we talk about themes that appear in texts, paintings, and movies and refer to particular instances as expressions of anger and evil. In selecting one set of terms over others, we surely ignore subtle differences, but the basic ideas are just as useful under many glosses.

HOW DO YOU KNOW A THEME WHEN YOU SEE ONE?

To us, themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that link not only expressions found in texts but also expressions found in images, sounds, and objects. You know you have found a theme when you can answer the question, What is this expression an example of? Themes come in all shapes and sizes. Some themes are broad and sweeping constructs that link many differ-ent kinds of expressions. Other themes are more focused and link very spe-

cific kinds of expressions. When we describe themes as the conceptual linking of expressions, it is clear that there are many ways in which expressions can be linked to abstract constructs.

WHERE DO THEMES COME FROM?

Themes come both from the data (an inductive approach) and from the investigator's prior theoretical understanding of the phenomenon under study (an a priori approach). A priori themes come from the characteristics of the phenomenon being studied; from already agreed on professional definitions found in literature reviews; from local, commonsense constructs; and from researchers' values, theoretical orientations, and personal experiences (Bulmer 1979; Strauss 1987; Maxwell 1996). Strauss and Corbin (1990:41–47) called this theoretical sensitivity. Investigators' decisions about what topics to cover and how best to query informants about those topics are a rich source of a priori themes (Dey 1993:98). In fact, the first pass at generating themes often comes from the questions in an interview protocol (Coffey and Atkinson 1996:34). Unlike pure literature reviews, these themes are partly empirical.

Mostly, though, themes are induced from empirical data—from texts, images, and sounds. Even with a fixed set of open-ended questions, one cannot anticipate all the themes that arise before analyzing the data (Dey 1993:97–98). The act of discovering themes is what grounded theorists call open coding and what classic content analysts call qualitative analysis (Berelson 1952) or latent coding (Shapiro and Markoff 1997).

There are many variations on these methods, and individual researchers have different recipes for arriving at the preliminary set of themes (Tesch 1990:91). We next describe eight observational techniques—things to look for in texts—and four manipulative techniques—ways of processing texts. These twelve techniques are not exhaustive and are often combined in practice.

SCRUTINY TECHNIQUES—THINGS TO LOOK FOR

Looking for themes in written material typically involves pawing through texts and marking them up with different colored pens. Sandelowski (1995:373) observed that analysis of texts begins with proofreading the material and simply underlining key phrases "because they make some as yet inchoate sense." For those who tape their interviews, the process of identify-

ing themes probably begins with the act of transcribing the tapes. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:165) suggested reading over the text at least twice. Whether the data come in the format of video, audio, or written documents, handling them is always helpful for finding themes. Here is what researchers look for.

Repetitions

Repetition is one of the easiest ways to identify themes. Some of the most obvious themes in a corpus of data are those "topics that occur and reoccur" (Bogdan and Taylor 1975:83) or are "recurring regularities" (Guba 1978:53). "Anyone who has listened to long stretches of talk," said D'Andrade (1991), "knows how frequently people circle through the same network of ideas" (p. 287). Claudia Strauss (1992), for example, did several in-depth interviews with Tony, a retired blue-collar worker in Connecticut, and found that Tony repeatedly referred to ideas associated with greed, money, businessmen, siblings, and "being different." Strauss concluded that these ideas were important themes in Tony's life. She displayed the relationships among these ideas by writing the concepts on a piece of paper and connecting them with lines to Tony's verbatim expressions, much as researchers today do with text analysis software. The more the same concept occurs in a text, the more likely it is a theme. How many repetitions are enough to constitute an important theme, however, is an open question and one only the investigator can decide.

Indigenous Typologies or Categories

Another way to find themes is to look for local terms that may sound unfamiliar or are used in unfamiliar ways. Patton (1990:306, 393–400) referred to these as "indigenous categories" and contrasted them with "analyst-constructed typologies." Grounded theorists refer to the process of identifying local terms as in vivo coding (Strauss 1987:28; Strauss and Corbin 1990:61–74). Ethnographers call this the search for typologies or classification schemes (Bogdan and Taylor 1975:83) or cultural domains (Spradley 1979:107–19).

Spradley (1972) recorded conversations among tramps at informal gatherings, meals, and card games. As the men talked to each other about their experiences, they made many references to making a flop. Spradley searched through his recorded material and notes looking for verbatim statements made by informants about this topic. He found that he could categorize most statements into subthemes such as kinds of flops, ways to make flops, ways to make your own flop, kinds of people who bother you when you flop, ways to make a bed, and kinds of beds. Spradley then returned to his informants and sought additional information from them on each of the subthemes. For other

examples of coding for indigenous categories, see Becker's (1993) description of medical students' use of the word "crock" and Agar's (1973) description of drug addicts' understandings of what it means to shoot up.

Metaphors and Analogies

In pioneering work, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) observed that people often represent their thoughts, behaviors, and experiences with analogies and metaphors. Analysis, then, becomes the search for metaphors in rhetoric and deducing the schemas or underlying themes that might produce those metaphors (D'Andrade 1995; Strauss and Quinn 1997).

Naomi Quinn (1996) analyzed hundreds of hours of interviews to discover fundamental themes underlying American marriages and to understand how these themes are tied together. She found that people talk about their surprise at the breakup of a marriage by saying that they thought the couple's marriage was "like the Rock of Gibraltar" or that they thought the marriage had been "nailed in cement." People use these metaphors because they assume that their listeners know that cement and the Rock of Gibraltar are things that last forever.

Quinn (1996) reported that the hundreds of metaphors in her corpus of texts fit into eight linked classes that she labeled lastingness, sharedness, compatibility, mutual benefit, difficulty, effort, success (or failure), and risk of failure. For example, when informants said of someone's marriage that "it was put together pretty good" or was a "lifetime proposition," Quinn saw these metaphors as exemplars of the expectation of lastingness in marriage.

Other examples of the search for cultural schemas in texts include Holland's (1985) study of the reasoning that Americans apply to interpersonal problems, Kempton's (1987) study of ordinary Americans' theories of home heat control, and Strauss's (1997) study of what chemical plant workers and their neighbors think about the free-enterprise system.

Transitions

Naturally occurring shifts in content may be markers of themes. In written texts, new paragraphs may indicate shifts in topics. In speech, pauses, changes in voice tone, or the presence of particular phrases may indicate transitions. Agar (1983) examined transcripts of arguments presented by independent truckers at public hearings of the Interstate Commerce Commission. He noticed that each speech was divided into topical sections that were often demarcated by metaphors. In semistructured interviews, investigators steer the conversation from one topic to another, creating transitions, while in two-party and multiparty natural speech, transitions occur continually. Analysts

of conversation and discourse examine features such as turn taking and speaker interruptions to identify these transitions. (For an overview, see Silverman 1993:114–43.)

Similarities and Differences

What Glaser and Strauss (1967:101–16) called the "constant comparison method" involves searching for similarities and differences by making systematic comparisons across units of data. Typically, grounded theorists begin with a line-by-line analysis, asking, What is this sentence about? and How is it similar to or different from the preceding or following statements? This keeps the researcher focused on the data rather than on theoretical flights of fancy (Glaser 1978:56–72; Charmaz 1990, 2000; Strauss and Corbin 1990:84–95).

Another comparative method involves taking pairs of expressions—from the same informant or from different informants—and asking, How is one expression different from or similar to the other? The abstract similarities and differences that this question generates are themes. If a particular theme is present in both expressions, then the next question to ask is, Is there any difference, in degree or kind, in which the theme is articulated in both of the expressions? Degrees of strength in themes may lead to the naming of subthemes. Suppose an investigator compares two video clips and finds that both express the theme of anxiety. On careful scrutiny, the researcher notices that the two instances of anxiety are both weak, but one is expressed verbally and the other through subtle hand gestures. The investigator codes these as two new subthemes.

Researchers also compare pairs of whole texts, asking, How is this text different from the preceding text? and What kinds of things are mentioned in both? They ask hypothetical questions such as, What if the informant who produced this text had been a woman instead of a man? and How similar is this text to my own experience? Bogdan and Biklen (1982:153) recommended reading through passages of text and asking, "What does this remind me of?" Just as a good journalist would do, investigators compare answers to questions across people, space, and time. (For more formal techniques of identifying similarities and differences among segments of text, see the discussion below on cutting and sorting.)

Linguistic Connectors

Another approach is to look carefully for words and phrases such as "because," "since," and "as a result," which often indicate causal relations. Words and phrases such as "if" or "then," "rather than," and "instead of" often sig-

nify conditional relations. The phrase "is a" is often associated with taxonomic categories, as in "a lion is a kind of cat." Time-oriented relationships are expressed with words such as "before," "after," "then," and "next." Typically, negative characteristics occur less often than do positive ones. Simply searching for the words "not," "no," "none," or the prefix "non-" (and its allomorphs, "un-," "in-," "il-," "im-," etc.) may be a quick way to identify some themes. Investigators can discover themes by searching for such groups of words and looking to see what kinds of things the words connect.

What other kinds of relationships might be of interest? Casagrande and Hale (1967) suggested looking for attributes (e.g., X is Y), contingencies (e.g., if X, then Y), functions (e.g., X is a means of affecting Y), spatial orientations (e.g., X is close to Y), operational definitions (e.g., X is a tool for doing Y), examples (e.g., X is an instance of Y), comparisons (e.g., X resembles Y), class inclusions (X is a member of class Y), synonyms (e.g., X is equivalent to Y), antonyms (e.g., X is the negation of Y), provenience (e.g., X is the source of Y), and circularity (e.g., X is defined as X). (For lists of other kinds of relationships that may be useful for identifying themes, see Lindsay and Norman 1972; Burton and Kirk 1980:271; and Werner and Schoepfle 1987.)

Metaphors, transitions, and connectors are all part of a native speaker's ability to grasp meaning in a text. By making these features more explicit, we sharpen our ability to find themes.

Missing Data

The next scrutiny-based approach works in reverse from typical theme-identification techniques. Instead of asking, What is here? we can ask, What is missing? Researchers have long recognized that much can be learned from qualitative data by what is not mentioned. Bogdan and Taylor (1975) suggested being "alert to topics that your subjects either intentionally or unintentionally avoid" (p. 82).

For instance, women who have strong religious convictions may fail to mention abortion during discussions of birth control. In power-laden interviews, silence may be tied to implicit or explicit domination (Gal 1991). In a study of birth planning in China, Greenhalgh (1994) reported that she could not ask direct questions about resistance to government policy but that respondents "made strategic use of silence to protest aspects of the policy they did not like" (p. 9). Obviously, themes that are discovered in this manner need to be carefully scrutinized to ensure that investigators are not finding only what they are looking for.

In fact, lacunae in texts may indicate primal cultural assumptions. Spradley (1979:57–58) observed that when people tell stories, they leave out information that "everyone knows." He called this process abbreviating. The statement "John was broke because it was the end of the month" requires a great deal of cultural understanding. It requires knowing that there is absolutely no causal relationship between financial solvency and dates, that people are often paid at the end of the month, and that people sometimes spend all their money before getting their next paycheck. Price (1987) suggested looking for missing information by translating people's narratives into the worldview of a different audience. When she finds herself filling in the gaps, she knows she has found fundamental themes.

Searching for missing information is not easy. People may not trust the interviewer, may not wish to speak when others are present, or may not understand the investigator's questions. Distinguishing between when informants are unwilling to discuss a topic and when they assume the investigator already knows about the topic requires a lot of familiarity with the subject matter.

A variant on the missing data technique is to scrutinize any expressions that are not already associated with a theme (Ryan 1999). This means reading a text over and over. On the first reading, salient themes are clearly visible and can be quickly and readily marked with highlighters. In the next stage, the researcher searches for themes in the data that remain unmarked. This tactic—marking obvious themes early and quickly—forces the search for new and less obvious themes in the second pass.

Theory-Related Material

In addition to identifying indigenous themes—themes that characterize the experience of informants—researchers are interested in understanding how qualitative data illuminate questions of importance to social science. Spradley (1979:199–201) suggested searching interviews for evidence of social conflict, cultural contradictions, informal methods of social control, things that people do in managing impersonal social relationships, methods by which people acquire and maintain achieved and ascribed status, and information about how people solve problems. Bogdan and Biklen (1982:156–62) suggested examining the setting and context, the perspectives of the informants, and informants' ways of thinking about people, objects, processes, activities, events, and relationships. Strauss and Corbin (1990:158–75) urged investigators to be more sensitive to conditions, actions/interactions, and consequences of a phenomenon and to order these

conditions and consequences into theories. "Moving across substantive areas," said Charmaz (1990), "fosters developing conceptual power, depth, and comprehensiveness" (p. 1163).

There is a trade-off, of course, between bringing a lot of prior theorizing to the theme-identification effort and going at it fresh. Prior theorizing, as Charmaz (1990) said, can inhibit the forming of fresh ideas and the making of surprising connections. And by examining the data from a more theoretical perspective, researchers must be careful not to find only what they are looking for. Assiduous theory avoidance, on the other hand, brings the risk of not making the connection between data and important research questions.

The eight techniques described above can all be used with pencil and paper. Once you have a feel for the themes and the relations among them, we see no reason to struggle bravely on without a computer. Of course, a computer is required from the onset if the project involves hundreds of interviews, or if it is part of a multisite, multi-investigator effort. Even then, there is no substitute for following hunches and intuitions in looking for themes to code in texts (Dey 1993).

Next, we describe four techniques that require more physical or computer-based manipulation of the text itself.

PROCESSING TECHNIQUES

Some techniques are informal—spreading texts out on the floor, tacking bunches of them to a bulletin board, and sorting them into different file folders—while others require special software to count words or display word-word co-occurrences.

Cutting and Sorting

After the initial pawing and marking of text, cutting and sorting involves identifying quotes or expressions that seem somehow important and then arranging the quotes/expressions into piles of things that go together. Lincoln and Guba (1985:347–51) offered a detailed description of the cutting and sorting technique. Their method of constant comparison is much like the pile-sorting task used extensively in cognitive research (e.g., Weller and Romney 1988).

There are many variations on this technique. We cut out each quote (making sure to maintain some of the context in which it occurred) and paste the material on a small index card. On the back of each card, we write down the quote's reference—who said it and where it appeared in the text. Then we lay

out the quotes randomly on a big table and sort them into piles of similar quotes. Then we name each pile. These are the themes.

Clearly, there are many ways to sort the piles. Splitters, who maximize the differences between passages, are likely to generate more fine-grained themes. Lumpers, who minimize the differences, are likely to identify more overarching or metathemes. As the first exploratory step in the data analysis, investigators are most concerned with identifying as wide a range of themes as possible. In later steps, they will need to address the issue of which themes are the most important and worthy of further analysis.

In another variation, the principal investigator on a large project might ask several team members to sort the quotes into named piles independently. This is likely to generate a longer list of possible themes than would be produced by a group discussion. And if the people sorting the quotes are unaware of whom the quotes came from, this is an unbiased way of comparing themes across different groups.

In really large projects, investigators might have pairs of team members sort the quotes together and decide on the names for the piles. Ryan (1995) has found it particularly helpful to audiotape the conversations that occur when pairs of people perform pile-sorting tasks. The conversations often provide important insights into the underlying criteria and themes people use to sort items.

Barkin, Ryan, and Gelberg (1999) provided yet another variation. They interviewed clinicians, community leaders, and parents about what physicians could do and did to prevent violence among youth. These were long, complex interviews, so Barkin, Ryan, and Gelberg broke the coding process into two steps. They started with three major themes that they developed from theory. The principal investigator went through the transcripts and cut out all the quotes that pertained to each of the major themes. Then, four other coders independently sorted the quotes from each major theme into piles.

For each major theme, Barkin, Ryan, and Gelberg (1999) converted the pile sort data into a quote-by-quote similarity matrix. The numbers in the cells, which ranged from 0 to 4, indicated the number of coders who had placed the quotes in the same pile. The researchers analyzed each matrix with multidimensional scaling (MDS) and cluster analysis. The MDS displayed the quotes in a map, where pairs of quotes that were sorted into the same pile by all four coders appeared closer together than did pairs of quotes that were never placed together. The cluster analysis identified groups of quotes shared across coders. Barkin, Ryan, and Gelberg used these results to identify subthemes. (See Patterson, Bettini, and Nussbaum 1993 for another example.)

Jehn and Doucet (1997) used a similar approach but skipped the first steps of cutting the data into individual expressions. They asked seventy-six U.S. managers who had worked in Sino-American joint ventures to describe recent interpersonal conflicts with business partners. Each person described two conflicts: one with a same-culture manager and another with a different-culture manger. The descriptions were usually short paragraphs. From these 152 texts, Jehn and Doucet identified the 30 intracultural and the 30 inter-cultural scenarios that they felt were the most clear and pithy. They recruited fifty more expatriate managers to assess the similarities (on a five-point scale) of 60–120 randomly selected pairs of scenarios. When combined across informants, the managers' judgments produced two aggregate, scenario-by-scenario similarity matrices—one for the intracultural conflicts and one for the intercultural conflicts. Jehn and Doucet analyzed each with MDS.

Jehn and Doucet (1997) found they needed four dimensions in the MDS to explain the intercultural data. They interpreted these dimensions as (1) open versus resistant to change, (2) situational causes versus individual traits, (3) high- versus low-resolution potential based on trust, and (4) high- versus low-resolution potential based on patience. In the scaling of the intracultural similarity data, they identified four different dimensions: (1) high versus low cooperation, (2) high versus low confrontation, (3) problem solving versus accepting, and (4) resolved versus ongoing.

The Jehn-Doucet technique for finding themes is quite novel. Unlike other investigators, they chose not to break up their textual data into smaller expressions or quotes. Furthermore, they asked fifty expert informants, rather than one or two members of the research team, to sort the data. They did not have sorters identify themes but simply asked them to evaluate how similar pairs of responses were to each other. They then used the results of MDS to interpret the larger, overarching themes.

Word Lists and Key Words in Context (KWIC)

Word lists and the KWIC technique draw on a simple observation: If you want to understand what people are talking about, look closely at the words they use. To generate word lists, researchers first identify all the unique words in a text and then count the number of times each occurs. Computer programs perform this task effortlessly.

Ryan and Weisner (1996) told fathers and mothers of adolescents, "Describe your children. In your own words, just tell us about them." Ryan and Weisner transcribed the verbatim responses and produced a list of all the

unique words (not counting 125 common English words, including mostly prepositions, articles, and conjunctions). Ryan and Weisner counted the number of times each unique word was used by mothers and by fathers. They found that mothers were more likely than fathers to use words such as "friends," "creative," "time," and "honest"; fathers were more likely than were mothers to use words such as "school," "good," "lack," "student," "enjoys," "independent," and "extremely." The words suggested that parents were concerned with themes related to their children's independence and to their children's moral, artistic, social, athletic, and academic characteristics. Ryan and Weisner used this information as clues for themes that they would use later in actually coding the texts.

Word-counting techniques produce what Tesch (1990:139) called data condensation or data distillation, which helps researchers concentrate on the core of what might otherwise be a welter of confusing data. But concentrated data such as word lists and counts take words out of their original context. A KWIC approach addresses this problem. In this technique, researchers identify key words or phrases and then systematically search the corpus of text to find all instances of each key word or phrase. Each time they find an instance, they make a copy of it and its immediate context. Themes get identified by physically sorting the examples into piles of similar meaning.

Word-based techniques are fast and are an efficient way to start looking for themes, particularly in the early stages of research. Word lists and KWIC techniques can, of course, be combined and are particularly helpful when used along with ethnographic sources of information.

Word Co-Occurrence

This approach, also known as collocation, comes from linguistics and semantic network analysis and is based on the idea that a word's meaning is related to the concepts to which it is connected. As early as 1959, Charles Osgood (1959) created word co-occurrence matrices and applied factor analysis and dimensional plotting to describe the relation of major themes to one another. The development of computers has made the construction and analysis of co-occurrence matrices much easier and has stimulated the development of this field (Danowski 1982, 1993; Barnett and Danowski 1992).

Jang and Barnett (1994) examined whether a national culture—U.S. or Japanese—was discernible in the annual letters to stockholders of CEOs in U.S. and Japanese corporations. Jang and Barnett selected thirty-five *Fortune* 500 companies, including eighteen U.S. and seventeen Japanese firms, matched by their type of business. For example, Ford was matched with Honda, Xerox with Canon, and so on. All of these firms are traded on the New

York Stock Exchange, and each year, stockholders receive an annual message from the CEO or president of these companies. (Japanese firms that trade on the New York Exchange send the annual letters in English to their U.S. stockholders.)

Jang and Barnett (1994) read through the 1992 annual letters to shareholders and (ignoring a list of common words such as "the," "because," "if," and so on) isolated ninety-four words that occurred at least eight times across the corpus of thirty-five letters. This produced a 94 (word) × 35 (company) matrix, where the cells contained a number from 0 to 25, 25 being the largest number of times any word ever occurred in one of the letters.

Next, Jang and Barnett (1994) created a 35 (company) × 35 (company) similarity matrix, based on the co-occurrence of words in their letters. In this case, they used the correlation coefficient to measure similarity among companies. They could have used a number of other measures, including first dichotomizing the original matrix based on whether the word was mentioned and then calculating the percentage of times that each company used the same words. It is unclear to what degree such choices affect outcomes, and this is clearly an area that needs further research.

Next, Jang and Barnett (1994) analyzed the company-by-company matrix with MDS and found that the companies divided into two clearly distinct styles of corporate reporting to stockholders, one American and one Japanese. Next, Jang and Barnett asked, "Which words were important in distinguishing the groups, and what were their relationships to the two groups?"

Discriminant analysis indicated that twenty-three words had a significant effect on differentiating between the groups, so Jang and Barnett (1994) used correspondence analysis to analyze the 35 (company) × 23 (word) matrix. Correspondence analysis clusters row and column items simultaneously. In this case, then, the analysis showed clusters of words and clusters of companies. The analysis showed that thirteen words were close to the American group and were tightly clustered together: "board," "chief," "leadership," "president," "officer," "major," "position," "financial," "improved," "good," "success," "competitive," and "customer." To Jang and Barnett, these words represented two themes: financial information and organizational structure.

Six words were close to the Japanese companies: "income," "effort," "economy," "new," "development," and "quality." To Jang and Barnett (1994), these words represented organizational operations and reflected Japanese concern for the development of new quality products in order to compete in the American business environment. The remaining four words ("company," "marketplace," "people," and "us") fell between the American

and Japanese clusters. Jang and Barnett felt that these words represented a more neutral category and did not consider them a theme.

For other examples of how word co-occurrences can be used to identify themes, see Kirchler's (1992) examination of business obituaries, Danowski's (1982) analysis of Internet-based conferences, Nolan and Ryan's (2000) analysis of students' descriptions of horror films, and Schnegg and Bernard's (1996) analysis of German students' reasons for studying anthropology. What is so appealing about word-by-word co-occurrence matrices is that they are produced by computer programs and there is no coder bias introduced other than to determine which words are examined. (See Borgatti 1992 and Doerfel and Barnett 1996 for computer programs that produce word-by-word co-occurrence matrices.)

There is, of course, no guarantee that any analysis of a word co-occurrence matrix will be meaningful, and it is notoriously easy to read pattern (and thus meaning) into any set of items.

Metacoding

Metacoding examines the relationship among a priori themes to discover potentially new themes and overarching metathemes. The technique requires a fixed set of data units (paragraphs, whole texts, pictures, etc.) and a fixed set of a priori themes. For each data unit, the investigator asks which themes are present and, possibly, the direction and valence of each theme. The data are recorded in a unit-by-theme matrix. This matrix can then be analyzed statistically. Factor analysis, for example, indicates the degree to which themes coalesce along a limited number of dimensions. Correspondence analysis, cluster analysis, or MDS show graphically how units and themes are distributed along dimensions and into groups or clusters.

This technique tends to produce a limited number of large metathemes. Jehn and Doucet (1996, 1997) used metacoding in their analysis of intracultural and intercultural conflicts. First, two coders read the 152 conflict scenarios (76 intracultural and 76 intercultural) and evaluated those scenarios (on a five-point scale) for twenty-seven different themes they had identified from the literature on conflict.[2] This produced two 76×27 scenario-by-theme profile matrices—one for the intracultural conflicts and one for the intercultural conflicts. The first three factors from the intercultural matrix reflect (1) interpersonal animosity and hostility, (2) aggravation, and (3) the volatile nature of the conflict. The first two factors from the intracultural matrix reflect (1) hatred and animosity with a volatile nature and (2) conflicts conducted calmly with little verbal intensity.

Themes like these are often not readily apparent, even after a careful and exhaustive scrutinizing of the text. Because metacoding involves analyzing fixed units of texts for a set of a priori themes, it works best when applied to short, descriptive texts of one or two paragraphs.

SELECTING AMONG TECHNIQUES

Given the variety of methods available for coding texts, the obvious question is, When are the various techniques most appropriate? Clearly, there is no one right way to find themes, but some techniques are more effective under some conditions than others. Below, we evaluate the techniques on five dimensions: (1) kind of data types, (2) required expertise, (3) required labor, (4) number and types of themes to be generated, and (5) issues of reliability and validity.

Kind of Data

Qualitative researchers work with many kinds of data—textual and nontextual, verbatim and nonverbatim, long and short. Although all the techniques we have described are appropriate for discovering themes in some kinds of textual data, only half are useful for nontextual data. For pictures, sounds, and objects, investigators are limited to looking for repetitions, similarities and differences, missing data, and theory-related material and to using sorting or metacoding techniques.

In writing field notes, the researcher acts as a kind of theme filter, choosing (often subconsciously) what data are important to record and what data are not. In this sense, producing field notes is a process of identifying themes. This inherent filtering process poses a particular set of problems for analyzing field notes. When applying techniques that use informant-by-variable matrices, researchers need to remember that patterns discovered in such data may come from informants as well as from investigators' recording biases.

With the exception of metacoding, all twelve techniques can be applied to rich narrative data. As texts become shorter and less complex, looking for transitions, metaphors, and linguistic connectors becomes less efficient. Discovering themes by looking for what is missing is inappropriate for very short responses to open-ended questions because it is hard to say whether missing data represent a new theme or are the result of the data elicitation technique. Though not impossible, it is inefficient to look for theory-related material in short answers, so we do not recommend metacoding for this kind of data.

Expertise

Not all techniques are available to all researchers. One needs to be truly fluent in the language of the text to use techniques that rely on metaphors, linguistic connectors, and indigenous typologies or that require spotting subtle nuances such as missing data. Researchers who are not fluent in the language should rely on cutting and sorting and on the search for repetitions, transitions, similarities and differences, and etic categories (theory-related material). Word lists and co-occurrences, as well as metacoding, also require less language competence and so are easier to apply.

Investigators who plan to use word co-occurrence or metacoding need to know how to manipulate matrices and how to use methods for exploring and visualizing data—methods such as MDS, cluster analysis, factor analysis, and correspondence analysis. Those without these skills should use the scrutiny techniques, such as looking for repetitions, similarities and differences, indigenous typologies, metaphors, transitions, or linguistic connectors, and the process techniques, such as cutting and sorting, word lists, and KWIC, which do not require skills in handling matrix analysis.

Figure 1 offers suggestions on how to select among the various theme-identification techniques. Clearly, looking for repetitions and similarities and differences as well as cutting and sorting techniques are by far the most versatile techniques for discovering themes. Each can be applied to any type of qualitative data. Not surprisingly, it is these techniques that are most often described in texts about qualitative methods.
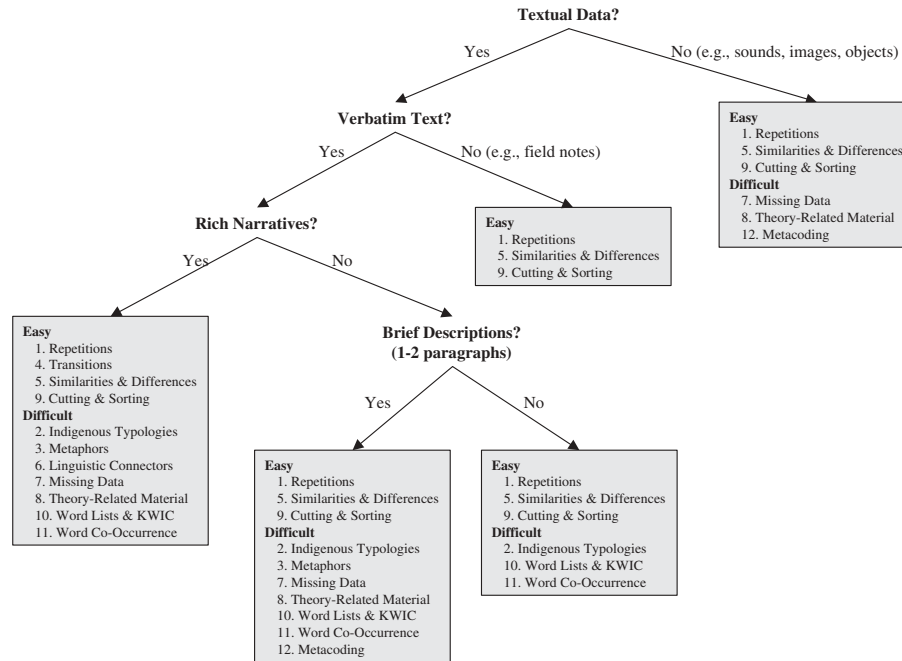
Labor

A generation ago, scrutiny-based techniques required less effort and resources than did process techniques. Today, computers have made counting words and co-occurrences of words much easier. Software also has made it easier to analyze larger corpora of texts.

Still, some of the scrutiny-based techniques (searching for repetitions, indigenous typologies, metaphors, transitions, and linguistic connectors) are best done by eyeballing, and this can be quite time consuming.

Of all the techniques, we find that using software to generate a common word list is an efficient way to start looking for themes. (Use packages like TACT, ANTHROPAC, or Code-A-Text to generate frequency counts of key words.[3]) A careful look at a word frequency list and perhaps some quick pile sorts are often enough to identify quite a few themes. Word co-occurrence and metacoding require more work and produce fewer themes, but they are excellent for discovering big themes hidden within the details and nuances of the texts.

FIGURE 1
Selecting among Theme-Identification Techniques

Textual Data?

Yes   No (e.g., sounds, images, objects)

Easy
1. Repetitions
5. Similarities & Differences
9. Cutting & Sorting
Difficult
7. Missing Data
8. Theory-Related Material
12. Metacoding

Verbatim Text?

Yes   No (e.g., field notes)

Easy
1. Repetitions
5. Similarities & Differences
9. Cutting & Sorting

Rich Narratives?

Yes   No

Easy
1. Repetitions
4. Transitions
5. Similarities & Differences
9. Cutting & Sorting
Difficult
2. Indigenous Typologies
3. Metaphors
6. Linguistic Connectors
7. Missing Data
8. Theory-Related Material
10. Word Lists & KWIC
11. Word Co-Occurrence

Brief Descriptions?
(1-2 paragraphs)

Yes   No

Easy
1. Repetitions
5. Similarities & Differences
9. Cutting & Sorting
Difficult
2. Indigenous Typologies
3. Metaphors
7. Missing Data
8. Theory-Related Material
10. Word Lists & KWIC
11. Word Co-Occurrence
12. Metacoding

Easy
1. Repetitions
5. Similarities & Differences
9. Cutting & Sorting
Difficult
2. Indigenous Typologies
10. Word Lists & KWIC
11. Word Co-Occurrence

NOTE: KWIC = key words in context.

Number and Kinds of Themes

In theme discovery, more is better. It is not that all themes are equally important. Investigators must eventually decide which themes are most salient and how themes are related to each other. But unless themes are first discovered, none of this additional analysis can take place.

We know of no research comparing the number of themes that each technique generates, but our experience suggests that there are differences. Looking for repetitions, similarities and differences, and transitions and linguistic connectors that occur frequently in qualitative data will likely produce more themes than will looking for indigenous metaphors and indigenous categories that occur less frequently. Of all the scrutiny techniques, searching for theory-related material or for missing data will likely produce the least number of new themes. Of the process techniques, we find that cutting and sorting and word lists yield an intermediate number of themes, while word co-occurrence and metacoding produce only a few metathemes. If the primary goal is to discover as many themes as possible, then the best strategy is to apply several techniques.

Cutting and sorting is the most versatile technique. By sorting expressions into piles at different levels of abstraction, investigators can identify themes, subthemes, and metathemes. Searching for indigenous typologies and combining word lists and KWIC is particularly useful for identifying subthemes. In contrast, techniques that analyze aggregated data such as word co-occurrences and metacoding are particularly good at identifying more abstract metathemes.

Reliability and Validity

Theme identification does not produce a unique solution. As Dey (1993) noted, "there is no single set of categories [themes] waiting to be discovered. There are as many ways of 'seeing' the data as one can invent" (pp. 110–11). Jehn and Doucet (1996, 1997) used three different discovery techniques on the same set of data, and each produced a different set of themes. All three emically induced theme sets have some intuitive appeal, and all three yield analytic results that are useful. Jehn and Doucet might have used any of the other of the techniques we describe to discover even more themes.

How do investigators know if the themes they have identified are valid? There is no ultimate demonstration of validity, but we can maximize clarity and agreement and make validity more, rather than less, likely.[4] First, theme identification involves judgments on the part of the investigator. If these judgments are made explicit and clear, then readers can argue with the

researcher's conclusions (Agar 1980:45). This is one of our motivations for outlining in detail the techniques investigators use.

Second, we see validity as hinging on the agreement across coders, methods, investigations, and researchers. Intercoder reliability refers to the degree to which coders agree with each other about how themes are to be applied to qualitative data. Reliability is important in that it indicates that coders are measuring the same thing. Strong intercoder agreement also suggests that the concept is not just a figment of the investigator's imagination and adds to the likelihood that a theme is also valid (Sandelowski 1995). Agreement across techniques gives us further confidence that we have identified appropriate themes in the same way that finding similar themes across multiple investigations does.

Bernard (1994) argued that ultimately, the validity of a concept depends on the utility of the device that measures it and the collective judgment of the scientific community that a construct and its measure are valid. "In the end," he said, "we are left to deal with the effects of our judgments, which is just as it should be. Valid measurement makes valid data, but validity itself depends on the collective opinion of researchers" (p. 43). Denzin (1970) assigned even greater significance to the role of the research community in establishing validity. "Rules for establishing a sound sample, a reliable test, or a valid scale," he said, "are only symbolic—they have no meaning other than that given by the community of scientists" (p. 106).

Patton (1990:468) referred to such an agreement among investigators as "triangulation through multiple analysts." It is what makes Lincoln and Guba's (1985) team approach to sorting and naming piles of expressions so appealing. Agreement need not be limited to members of the core research team. Recall that Jehn and Doucet (1997) asked local experts to sort word lists into thematic categories, and Barkin, Ryan, and Gelberg (1999) had both experts and novices sort quotes into piles. The more agreement among team members, the more confidence we have in themes being valid.

Some investigators also recommend that respondents be given the opportunity to examine and comment on themes and categories (e.g., Lincoln and Guba 1985:351; Patton 1990:468–69). This is appropriate when one of the goals of research is to identify and apply themes that are recognized or used by the people whom one studies, but this is not always possible. The discovery of new ideas derived from a more theoretical approach may involve the application of etic rather than emic themes—that is, understandings held by outsiders rather than those held by insiders. In such cases, researchers would not expect their findings necessarily to correspond to ideas and beliefs held by study participants.

FURTHER RESEARCH

We still have much to learn about finding themes. Further research is needed in five broad areas:

1. How reliable is each technique? To what degree do the same coders find similar themes when performing the task at different points in time? To what degree do different coders find the same themes on the same data sets?
2. How do identification techniques compare when applied to the same data sets? For example, do some techniques systematically produce significantly more themes or subthemes than others? And to what extent do the different techniques produce overlapping or similar themes? Jehn and Doucet (1996, 1997) have already provided a model for addressing such questions that can now be applied to other techniques as well.
3. How do identification techniques compare when applied to different data sets? How much of an effect does the size and complexity of the qualitative data corpus have on the number, kind, and organization of themes that coders identify?
4. To what extent is theme identification dependent on the number and expertise of coders? For instance, under what conditions can we expect novices to find the same number and kinds of themes as novices? And to what extent does increasing or decreasing the number of coders affect the size and composition of themes?
5. Finally, to what extent can we develop automated procedures for finding themes? Can we create word- and grammar-based algorithms to identify themes that mirror the processes used and the themes found by human coders?

Only by addressing such issues directly will we be able to explicitly justify our methodological choices.

NOTES

1. For thorough overviews of linking themes to specific expressions, see Carey, Morgan, and Oxtoby (1996). For suggestions about how to describe themes, see Miles and Huberman (1994) and Ryan and Bernard (2000). For building thematic hierarchies and code books, we recommend Dey (1993), Carey, Morgan, and Oxtoby (1996), and MacQueen et al. (1998). For identifying "important" themes and linking them to theoretical models, Strauss and Corbin (1990), Dey (1993), and Miles and Huberman (1994) are quite helpful.

2. To ensure interrater reliability, the two raters coded thirty-five scenarios in common. The final rating used in these thirty-five common scenarios was the agreement reached when the raters met together to discuss discrepancies. Rater 1 coded seventy scenarios, rater 2 coded forty scenarios, and they coded thirty-five scenarios in common (70 + 40 + 35 = 152).

3. TACT(CHASS), ANTHROPAC (Analytic Technologies), and Code-A-Text (Cartwright) are software packages that have the capacity to convert free-flowing texts into word-by-document matrices. TACT is a powerful DOS program created by the University of Toronto and

available free on the Web at http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/cch/tact.html. Code-A-Text is distributed in the United States by Scolari, Sage Publications. ANTHROPAC is created and distributed by Analytic Technologies, Inc., 11 Ohlin Lane, Harvard, MA 01451; phone: (978) 456-7372; fax: (978) 456-7373; e-mail: sales@analytictech.com; Web: www.analytictech.com.

4. For reviews of key issues related to reliability and validity, see Campbell (1957), Campbell and Stanley (1963), Cook and Campbell (1979); Guba (1981), Guba and Lincoln (1982); Lincoln and Guba (1985), Fielding and Fielding (1986), Kirk and Miller (1986), Hammersley (1992), and Denzin (1997).

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