

Practitioner Research Workshop

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What is research?

Psychometricians try to measure **it**
Experimentalists try to control **it**
Interviewers ask questions about **it**
Observers watch **it**
Participant observers do **it**
Statisticians count **it**
Evaluators value **it**
Qualitative inquirers find meaning in it

Halcombe's Laws of Inquiry

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The process of RESEARCH

When in doubt, observe and ask questions

When certain, observe at length and ask many more questions

Halcombe's Laws of Inquiry

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Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative inquiry cultivates the most useful of all human capacities:

The capacity to **learn**

Halcombe's Laws of Inquiry

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Innovation and Research

Innovators are told "Think outside the box"

Researchers are told "Study the box, Observe it. Inside. Outside. From inside to outside and outside to inside. Where is it? How did it get there? What's around it? *Who* says it's a box?..."

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Practitioner Research:

WHY

Response to need or curiosity

HOW

- Ad hoc
- As part of formal PD activities
 - University higher degrees
 - Performance management activities
 - other

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Practitioner Research: What is it?

Systematic enquiry undertaken by practitioners about aspects of their work in order to improve their everyday practice

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What is involved

- Design
- Ethics
- Process
- Support
- Dissemination

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Design

- Literature search and review
- Planning process
- Need to think through the project carefully
- Design of data collecting tools
- Gain ethics approval

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Ethics

Do no harm

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Process

- Data collection
- Data management
- Data analysis
- Findings
- Making recommendations
 - Change in practice
 - Follow-up research

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Support

- Developing necessary skills
- Access to other research material
- Develop and use critical friends

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Now I'm really confused ...

- ❖ Primacy of the research question
- ❖ Need to be passionate about the research question
- ❖ The methodology will sort itself out – be patient
- ❖ Don't lose heart
- ❖ Don't lose focus
- ❖ Enjoy the journey
- ❖ Don't show this to your academic supervisor

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Six Essential Questions

- ❖ What are the purposes of the research?
- ❖ Who are the primary audiences for the findings?
- ❖ What questions will guide the inquiry?
- ❖ What data will illuminate the inquiry question?
- ❖ What resources are available to support the inquiry?
- ❖ What criteria will be used to support the inquiry?

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