

Book Notes

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- Why do we do research
 - Integral part of the planning, program development, and measurement process
 - Effective public relations professionals conduct formative research (research carried out prior to the campaign to lay foundation or to inform the campaign) and evaluative research (research done during and right after the campaign to determine-evaluate- whether tactics are working to meet objectives)
 - Studies show that public relations departments typically spend 3%-5% of their budgets on research; however some experts say it should be as much as 10%
- Primary and secondary research
 - Primary research: new and original information that is generated to answer a specific question
 - Interviews
 - Focus groups
 - Surveys
 - Secondary research: the use of already existing information in books, magazine articles, electronic databases, etc
 - Library and online data bases
 - Organizational materials
 - The internet
- Qualitative research
 - "Soft" data
 - Usually uses open-ended questions, unstructured
 - Exploratory in nature; probing "fishing expedition" type of research
 - Usually valid but not reliable
 - Rarely projectable to larger audiences
 - Typically uses nonrandom samples
 - Examples: focus groups; one-on-one interviews; observation; participation; role-playing studies; convenience polling
- Quantitative research

- "Hard" data
- Usually uses closed-ended questions, requires forced choices, high structured
- Descriptive or explanatory type of research
- Usually valid and reliable
- Usually projectable to larger audiences
- Typically uses random samples
- Examples: Telephone polls; mail surveys; mall-intercept studies; face-to-face interviews; shared cost, or omnibus studies; panel studies
- Random sampling
 - Everyone in the targeted audience (as defined by the researcher) has an equal or known chance of being selected for the survey
 - A group selected in this manner is also called a probability sample
- Different Survey types
 - Mail questionnaires
 - Telephone surveys
 - Personal interviews
 - Piggyback surveys
 - Omnibus survey: a organization "buys" a question in a national survey conducted by a survey organization