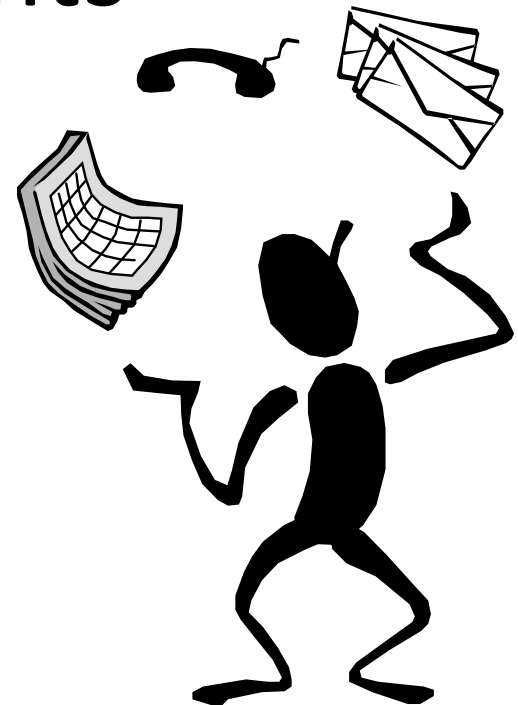


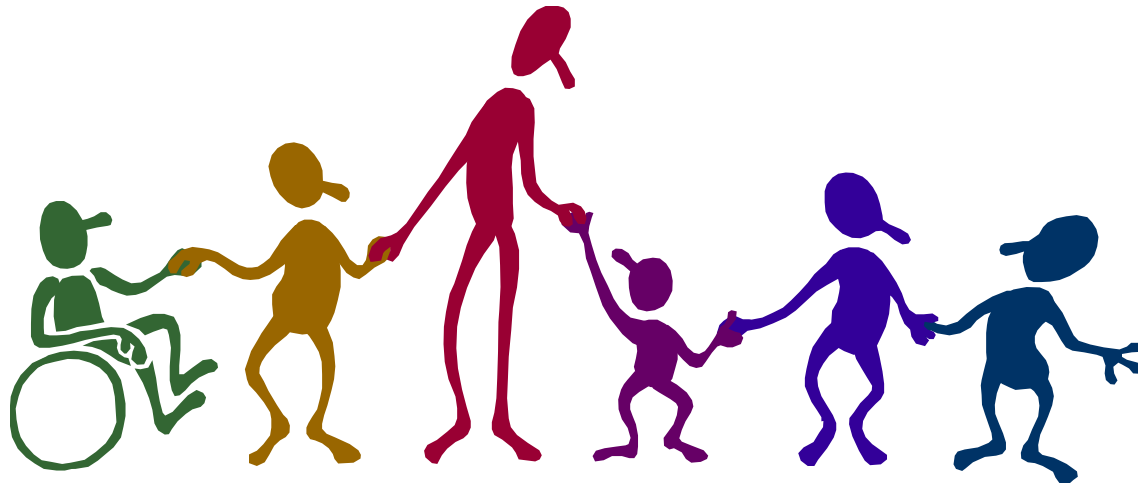
Soft Skills: Communication and Negotiation with Respondents

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Personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people.



*<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/soft-skills>

Soft Skills Definition

Industrial Relations & HR Terms:
Desirable qualities for certain forms of employment that do not depend on acquired knowledge: they include common sense, the ability to deal with people, and a positive flexible attitude.



*<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/soft+skills>

Before you approach the respondents



What is
your game
plan?

Select research method to collect data that can answer your research questions.

Prepare for data collection based on research method chosen.

Collect quality data from your respondents.

Conducting the interview

How to gain maximum information from respondents?



- Arrive early at interview venue.
- Always ask permission to record the interview.
- Arrange the seating position to best advantage.
- Spend first few minutes to put the interviewee at ease.
- Introduce aims of the research and origins of the researcher's own interest in the research topic.
- Start with an 'easy' question.
- Let the interviewee know when the interview is coming to an end. Ask for final comments. Example: Are there any other factors that you consider as important?
- Conclude by thanking them.

- Needs to be attentive.
- Sensitive to the feelings of the informant.
- Able to tolerate silences during the interview, and knows when to shut up and say nothing.
- Adept to using prompts – subtle and avoid an aggressive stance.
- Adept at using checks.



* Denscombe, M. (2007), *The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects*, Open University Press, New York.

Tactics for interviews

Tactics for interviews	Prompt/Probe/Check
Remain silent	Prompt
Repeat the question	Prompt
Repeat the last few words spoken by the interviewee	Prompt
Offer some examples	Prompt
Ask for an example	Probe
Ask for clarification	Probe
Ask for more details	Probe
Summarize their thoughts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “So, if I understand you correctly...”• “What this means, then, is that...”	Check

* Denscombe, M. (2007), *The good research guide: for small-scale social research projects*, Open University Press, New York.

Examples of probes

Clarity

- Can you give me an example of this?
- What do you mean?
- Can you explain that again?

Relevance

- How do you think that relates to the issue?
- Can you explain how these factors influence each other?

Depth

- Can you explain that in more detail?
- Can you give me examples?

* Collis, J. and Hussey, R. (2009) *Business research: a practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. 3rd ed. Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan. Pg. 146

Significance

- How much does it affect you?
- What do you think is the most important?
- Would you change your opinion if X was to happen?

Comparison

- Can you give me an example where this did not happen?
- Can you give me an example of a different situation?
- In what way does your opinion differ from the views of other people?

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WHAT SKILLS SHOULD BE IMPROVED TO CONDUCT RESEARCH EFFECTIVELY?



Communication skills

Listen effectively

Communicate accurately and
concisely

Effective oral communication

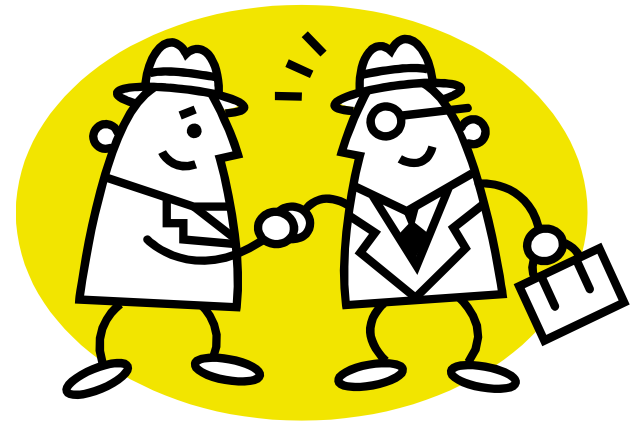
Communicate pleasantly and
professionally

Effective written communication

Ask good questions

Being a good negotiator

- Always do your homework
- Clearly explain your requirements
- Timing is important
- Show respect
- Build rapport
- Keep it businesslike
- Close the deal – both sides have struck a balanced deal.



Identify and
analyse
problems

Take
appropriate
and
effective
action

Realise the
effect of
decisions –
Can it be
justified?

Find
creative and
innovative
solutions

Transfer
knowledge
from one
situation to
another -
Lateral
thinking

Self management skills

Efficient and effective work habits – ORGANISED!

Self-starting

Well developed ethic and integrity

Sense of urgency to address and complete tasks

Work well under pressure

Adapt and apply appropriate technology

How to be organised?



- Make a list
- Back up your work
- Document and keep track of the collected data
- What else can you do while you collect data?
- Keep a logbook
- Always write your ideas down
- Monitor your progress throughout your PhD
- What's your back up plan? Anticipate best, worst and ideal outcome.

Visualise your whole research

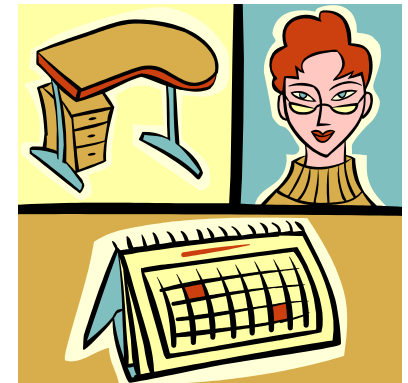


Ability to visualise your
research as a whole

When you collect data, visualise how you are going to arrange or format your data for analysis and for your thesis.

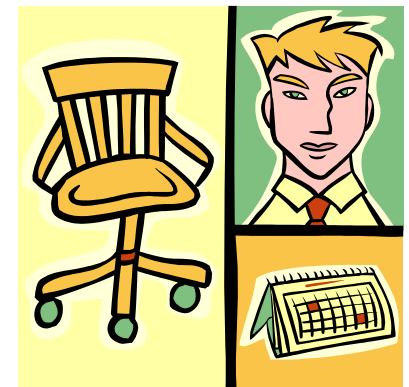
Use your Gantt chart to plan

- When are you going to collect data?
- Survey:
 - ✓ 1st email with link - what day of the week?
 - ✓ Reminder email - 2 weeks after 1st email sent
 - ✓ Key in data

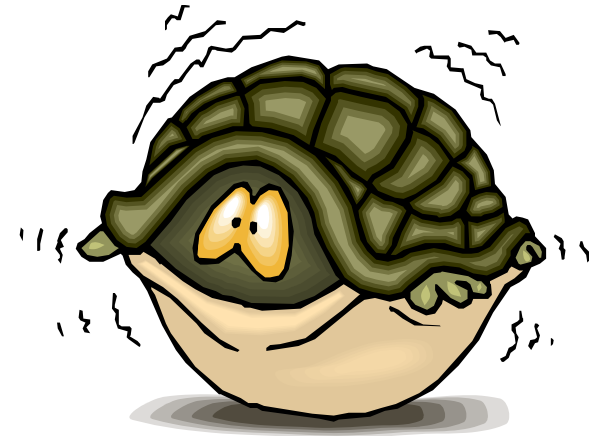


Use your Gantt chart to plan

- Interview:
 - ✓ Identify specific respondent
 - ✓ Communicate interest to interview
 - ✓ Make an appointment for the interview
 - ✓ Expect interviews to be rescheduled
 - ✓ Plan your journey
 - ✓ Keep in mind your travelling budget
 - ✓ Transcribe



- Face your fears head on.
- Know where you stand now.
- Improve by practising.
- Expect the unexpected.
- When in doubt, read, read, read and then seek for expert opinion.





Thank You