

## Preface

The first European edition of this book was very well received and this second edition has been designed to build on its successes. It keeps the successful features of the first edition, such as:

- **A good balance of quantitative and qualitative methods** acknowledging that both approaches help us to better understand business phenomena.
- **A student-focused pedagogic approach** examining student and academic research and helping students to design and conduct research for assignments and theses.
- The usage of **European and international examples**, which are most relevant to real-life experience.
- **An accompanying CD-ROM containing five complete chapters on data analysis.** This acknowledges that research and analysis methods are highly interwoven and allows the book to be used on both courses that focus on research methods and courses that combine both.
- **The inclusion of different types of questions** at the end of each chapter. There are questions to support the student in checking whether they have grasped the knowledge presented, questions which ask the students to apply their knowledge and questions which address the trade-offs that many research decisions involve.
- **An accompanying website that offers additional resources for students and instructors** including:
  - **NEW** Research Skills Centre – contains bonus resources, including an interactive research guide, to help get students started with a research project.

Based on my and my students' experience with the first edition, as well as useful comments by other users of the book and reviewers, the following changes were made.

- A running case study that continues from chapter to chapter to show how the issues discussed in each chapter play a role in a real research project.
- A new chapter covering case study research and qualitative, semi-structured interviews.
- The chapter on research proposals now contains an example of a well-written proposal.
- The former chapter on observation and action research has been extended with sub-sections on content analysis and narrative analysis.
- The chapters on literature review, sampling, and survey research discuss the use of the Internet to conduct research more deeply reflecting recent developments.
- The chapter on writing up and presenting research outcomes now gives practical guidelines on how to motivate a piece of research, how to integrate literature in the theory section and how to present limitations.
- The order of the chapters has been changed to fit better with the structure of many courses.
- Boxes have been updated to include more recent examples.

### **Pedagogical features**

Each chapter starts with clear **learning objectives** and concludes with a **summary** which highlights the important aspects of each chapter. All chapters are complemented by many real-life examples that show students how research methods may be applied in practice. These examples enable students to see how each of the research methods topics applies to business situations.

The **running case study** which features in each chapter shows how issues discussed in the chapters play a role in a real research project.

The **end of chapter questions** will help students gauge their understanding of the core chapter concepts. These questions are pitched at different levels, both for individual study and class discussion.

The book also features a separate 'Cases' section that presents six diverse case studies, along with questions suitable for individual or group work. These cases offer a more detailed example of research methods relating directly to business scenarios that complement the examples given in the chapters.

A CD-ROM containing additional chapters on data analysis and the data files referred to in the text accompanies the book. These supplementary chapters can be used by students for additional study or by those students taking courses where a more quantitative approach is taken.

The book and CD-ROM are also supported by an Online Learning Centre featuring supplementary material that includes a selection of cases, and both tutor and student downloads. For more details see page xiv.

### **Thank you!**

The response to the first European edition of the book under my authorship was flattering and I am very happy that it was so well received. My overriding motivation for being a researcher is the curiosity to understand by asking why? I understand that answering the 'why' question often asks for a sound descriptive account of 'what', but if we want to improve situations we describe, we need to understand why things are as they are, thus we need to go beyond the what. It is only if we have understood the 'why' that we can have ideas about how to change.