

TABLE 3.1 Questions to Be Addressed at the Various Stages of the Research Process

Stage in the Process	Typical Questions
Formulate problem	What is the purpose of the study — to solve a problem? Identify an opportunity? Is additional background information necessary? What information is needed to make the decision? How will the information be used? Should research be conducted?
Determine research design	How much is already known? Can a hypothesis be formulated? What types of questions need to be answered? What type of study will best address the research questions?
Determine data collection method and forms	Can existing data be used to advantage? What is to be measured? How? What is the source of the data? Are there any cultural factors that need to be taken into account in designing the data-collection method? What are they? Are there any legal restrictions on the collection methods? What are they? Can objective answers be obtained by asking people? How should people be questioned? Should the questionnaires be administered in person, over the phone, or through the mail? Should electronic or mechanical means be used to make the observations? What specific behaviors should the observers record? Should structured or unstructured items be used to collect the data? Should the purpose of the study be made known to the respondents? Should rating scales be used in the questionnaires?

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TABLE 3.1 *Continued*

Stage in the Process	Typical Questions
Design sample and collect the data	What is the target population? Is a list of population elements available? Is a sample necessary? Is a probability sample desirable? How large should the sample be? How should the sample be selected? Who will gather the data? How long will the data gathering take? How much supervision is needed? What operational procedures will be followed? What methods will be used to ensure the quality of the data collected?
Analyze and interpret the data	Who will handle the editing of the data? How will the data be coded? Who will supervise the coding? Will computer or hand tabulation be used? What tabulations are called for? What analysis techniques will be used?
Prepare the research report	Who will read the report? What is their technical level of sophistication? Are managerial recommendations called for? What will be the format of the written report? Is an oral report necessary? How should the oral report be structured?