About the authors ix

Preface to the third edition xi

Acknowledgements xiii

1 Introduction 1

Introduction 2
What is management? 3
Why is management research distinctive? 5
Levels and outcomes of management research 8
Levels of research 9
Conclusion 11
Further reading 12

2 The ingredients of successful research 13

Introduction 14
Motivation 14
Support and supervision 15
Style and creativity 18
Style 18
Disciplined imagination 20
Conceptualization 21
Skills and qualities 21
Getting started 24
Conclusion 27
Further reading 28

3 Doing a literature review 29

Introduction 30
What is a literature review? 30
Search and preparation for the review 31
Knowing the journals 31
Exploring potential sources 32

Time devoted to literature searching 33
Focusing the research 33
Learning 33
Getting access to sources of information 33
Sources 33
Electronic searches 34
Alignment with study context and approach 35
Library resources 37
Books 38
Journals 39
Theses, dissertations and research in progress 40
Government publications, official statistics 42
Reference books, general and specialized bibliographic guides 42
Web sites: the Internet as an enabler and an adjunct 43
Organizing your material and being systematic 45
Organizing 45
Systematic reviews 46
Writing reviews 48
Plagiarism 50
Examples of plagiarism 51
Conclusion 52
Further reading 53

4 The philosophy of management research 55

Introduction 56
Two contrasting traditions: positivism versus social constructionism 56
Positivism 57
Social constructionism 58
Broadening the philosophical debate 60
Ontology and epistemology 61
Epistemology and methodology 62

Research philosophies underlying management research practice 64
Positivist management research 65
Relativist management research 66
Social constructionist management research 68
Mixed methods in management research 70
Strengths and weaknesses of the main traditions 71
Overviews of other philosophies 73
Critical theory 74
Feminism 74
Hermeneutics 75
Postmodernism 75
Pragmatism 76
Structuration theory 77
Conclusion 77
Further reading 78

5 Designing management research 81

Introduction 82
Qualitative and quantitative designs 83
Positivist research designs 84
Experimental designs 84
Quasi-experimental designs 86
Validity of positivist designs 87
Relativist research designs 90
Survey research design 90
Validity of research designs 92
Constructionist research designs 93
Action research and cooperative inquiry 93
Ethnography 94
Narrative methods 95
Validity of constructionist designs 96
Broad-based methods 97
Case studies 97
Grounded theory 100
Generic issues 102
Identifying the unit of analysis 102
Universal theory or local knowledge? 104
Theory or data first? 105
Reductionism versus holism 105
Verification or falsification 105
Contributing to theory 107

Implications 108
Contrasting views on validity 108
Research design template 108
Conclusion 110
Further reading 112

6 The politics and ethics of management research 113

Introduction 114
Political influences on the research question 115
The experience of the researcher 116
Academic stakeholders 118
Corporate stakeholders 123
The subject of study 125
Context and models of research 126
Politics of access 129
Ethics 132
Utilization of research 135
Conclusion 138
Further reading 139

7 Creating qualitative data 141

Main methods of qualitative data collection 142
Collecting natural language data 142
Interviews: how much structure? 142
In-depth interviews 144
Interviewing skills 145
Laddering 146
Avoiding bias 147
General interview issues 147
Critical incident technique 150
Group and focus interviews 151
Diary methods 152
Video recording 153
Ethnographic approaches 155
Complete participation 156
Research as the explicit role 158
Interrupted involvement 159
Observation alone 160
Semi-concealed research 160
Choice of roles 161
Understanding through interaction 161
Photographs and visual metaphors 162
Action research 165

General issues in relation to qualitative methods 166
Conclusion 168
Further reading 170

8 Making sense of qualitative data 171

Introduction 172
Analysing transcripts 172
Content analysis 173
Grounded analysis 175
Discourse analysis 182
Narrative analysis 182
Conversation analysis 183
Argument analysis 183
Using computers and software to analyse qualitative data 185
NVivo in use: evolution of business knowledge in SMEs 187
An example of using Atlas.ti 191
Coding 194
Network diagrams 194
Repertory grids 197
Cognitive mapping 202
Individual cognitive maps 204
Group maps 204
Conclusion 208
Further reading 209

9 Creating quantitative data 211

Introduction 212
Sampling design 212
Principles in designing a sample 212
Probability sampling designs 216
Non-probability sampling 217
Sources of quantitative data 219
Collecting data through surveys 219
Collecting data through observational methods 221
Using secondary data – databases 223
The process of measurement 227
Principles in designing structured questions for surveys and interviews 227
Measurement scales for recording responses 228

Conclusion 231
Further reading 231

10 Making sense of quantitative data 233

Introduction 234
Example dataset for the chapter 235
Summarizing and describing data 239
Showing the shape of data distributions 239
Summary measures of location 242
Summary measures of spread 245
Comparing summary measures of spread 246
Importance of symmetry 247
Formal features of summary measures 247
Going beyond a sample 249
Rationale of hypothesis testing 249
Formal steps in hypothesis testing 251
Testing for group differences – comparing groups 257
Testing association between variables 260
Conclusion 267
Further reading 267

11 Multivariate analysis 269

Introduction 270
Domain of multivariate analysis 270
Forms of interdependence in management research 271
Ways of dealing with interdependence within quantitative analysis 271
Multivariate analysis of measurement models 275
Rationale for measurement models 275
Structure of measurement models 276
Analysis methods for measurement models 277
Multivariate analysis of causal models 279
Rationale for causal models 279
Analysis of causal models for observed variables 284
Analysis of observed and latent variables – structural equation modelling 296
Conclusion 302
Further reading 303

12 Writing and disseminating management research 305

Introduction 306
The skills of writing 306
Writing as a habit 307
Developing structures 307
Templates for writing papers and research reports 309
Topping and tailing 310
Outputs and evaluation 313
Private outputs: reports, dissertations and theses 313

Public outputs: conferences, journals and books 315
Dissemination strategies 317
Conclusion 319
Further reading 320

Answers to exercises 321

Glossary 326

Bibliography 335

Index 347