



# A Practical Introduction to In-depth Interviewing

By Alan Morris

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**Are you new to qualitative research or a bit rusty and in need of some inspiration? Are you doing a research project involving in-depth interviews? Are you nervous about carrying out your interviews?**

This book will help you complete your qualitative research project by providing a nuts and bolts introduction to interviewing. With coverage of ethics, preparation strategies and advice for handling the unexpected in the field, this handy guide will help you get to grips with the basics of interviewing before embarking on your research. While recognising that your research question and the context of your research will drive your approach to interviewing, this book provides practical advice often skipped in traditional methods textbooks.

Written with the needs of social science students and those new to qualitative research in mind, the book will help you plan, prepare for, carry out and analyse your interviews.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

I cannot recommend Alan Morris' excellent book on in-depth interviewing too highly for all aspiring social science interviewers. It should be essential reading for postgraduate and undergraduate students who want to know exactly how to design, undertake and analyse semi-structured interviews. (Paul Watt)

There are books about qualitative methods, but Alan Morris brings his considerable experience and social science research expertise to a book specifically about the in-depth interview. The book covers not only 'how to do' excellent, subject-sensitive interviews. In a very engaging analytical style Morris takes the reader through the history of interviewing, the various approaches to interviewing, the research ethics challenges, and importantly, how to conduct the data analysis. This is a must read for any qualitative social scientist, whether trainee or highly experienced. (Gaby Ramia)

This is an excellent guide to the essential aspects of in-depth interviewing, highly valuable for newcomers and a great source for more experienced interviewers. The deep knowledge of the author shows through in the insightful comments about interview strategies and analysis. This book will help you obtain better quality data to produce more robust and reliable research. It also includes vital advice on negotiating university ethics committees. From planning through to execution and analysis, it provides an all-round guide to one of the most important research methodologies for students today. (Dr Nick Turnbull)

In-depth interviewing is amongst the richest methods of social science research. But it is a highly skilled craft, and for the novice, can be intimidating to embark on, and difficult to use successfully. In this book, Alan Morris provides the ideal guide for anyone starting out on the path of in-depth interviews. Morris writes in a highly engaging style, characterized by clarity and conciseness. He draws on relevant and interesting examples from the literature and from his vast experience as a researcher in both South Africa and Australia. Morris is a wise guide through the ethical minefield with which the researcher is sometimes confronted. The steps necessary in preparing, executing and analyzing interviews are well laid out. The reader is alerted to difficult or even dangerous problems that can arise along the way. It would be hard to imagine a better text for the beginner in using in-depth interviews. (Jonathan Hyslop)

This should be required reading for everyone who uses in-depth interviewing during their research process. The author is an award winning sociologist with rich research experience in widely different social contexts. The book is extremely erudite, drawing on a vast knowledge of the relevant literature, as well as on the author's own extensive research encounters with a variety of informants. It is lively, practical and - most importantly - is aimed at increasing the enjoyment of those using this powerful method to obtain new knowledge. This is a strong contrast with the conventionally 'dry' academic approaches to research methodology. (Jacklyn Cock)

...Immensely readable and highly accessible, Morris introduces difficult concepts clearly and illustrates each point with real-life examples and helpful activities...This clear and authoritative guide is a must-read for any student or researcher embarking on interview research and wanting practice-based guidance. (Jessica Frawley, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology)

#### About the Author

Alan Morris is an urban sociologist based in the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, at

the University of Technology, Sydney. He has a PhD in Sociology from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa. His PhD was a major qualitative study of inner city transition in Johannesburg during the final years of apartheid. The book based on his PhD, *Bleakness and Light: Inner-City Transition in Hillbrow, Johannesburg*, (1999, reprinted 2001) is viewed as one of the key South African texts in urban studies. In Australia his main research focus has been on the impact of housing tenure on older people who are dependent on the age pension for their income. His research interests include, housing, ageing, urban marginality and social policy. He has published extensively in peer-reviewed journals in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States and South Africa.

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