The Research Question
Chapter Objectives

1. Describe the importance of choosing the correct research question
2. Explain the process of obtaining internal information through written records and interviews
3. Understand the components of the research proposal
4. Introduce the different types of firms that conduct research
Question Writing Process

- Gather assumptions about cause of problem
- Conduct internal research to check assumptions
- Write research question based on real cause of problem
Sources of Internal Data

- Previous research
- Box office numbers
- Customer database
- Sales receipts
- Website hits
Sources of Information from Employees

- **Finance**
  - Changes in revenue
- **Box Office**
  - Customer complaints
- **Human Resources**
  - Hiring issues
- **Employees**
  - New customers
- **Receptionist/Front desk**
Well Written Question

- Specific as possible
- Addresses information needed
- Addresses source of information
- Uses specific quantities rather than generalities
  - Example: “Twenty percent of customers will prefer” rather than “Many customers will prefer”
Rationale for Research Proposal

- Action plan to keep everyone on track
- Agreement on needed financial, time and staff resources
- Holds people accountable for assigned responsibilities
Research Proposal - Problem

- Provide information on author of proposal
  - Previous research experience
  - Sources of information and expertise
- Research objective
- Research question
Research Proposal - Methodology

- **Research approach**
  - Quantitative descriptive or qualitative exploratory

- **Methodology**
  - Explain method and rationale for choice

- **Information on research participants**
  - Who they will be
  - Sampling method
Types of analysis used
- Statistical
- Qualitative

Types of recommendations that will be provided

Types of reports that will be given
Research Proposal - Appendices

- Resumes
- Samples of methodology from previous research
- Budget
- Timeline
Internal Marketing Department

- Large organizations
  - Specialized marketing research groups

- Smaller organization
  - Marketing employees handle research needs

- Very small organizations
  - All employees share all responsibilities
External Providers of Research

- Advertising agencies: Research one of many services
- Syndicated research firms: Produce data for sell
- Specialized recruiting firms: Find research participants
- Custom research firms: Conduct research on specific industries or groups
- Full service research firms: Conduct any type of research
Guidelines for Hiring Research Assistance

- Ask for references
- Explain organization’s mission
- Get firm figures and dates
- Learn who will conduct the research