

# Qualitative Data Collection Methods

-CASA Session 4-



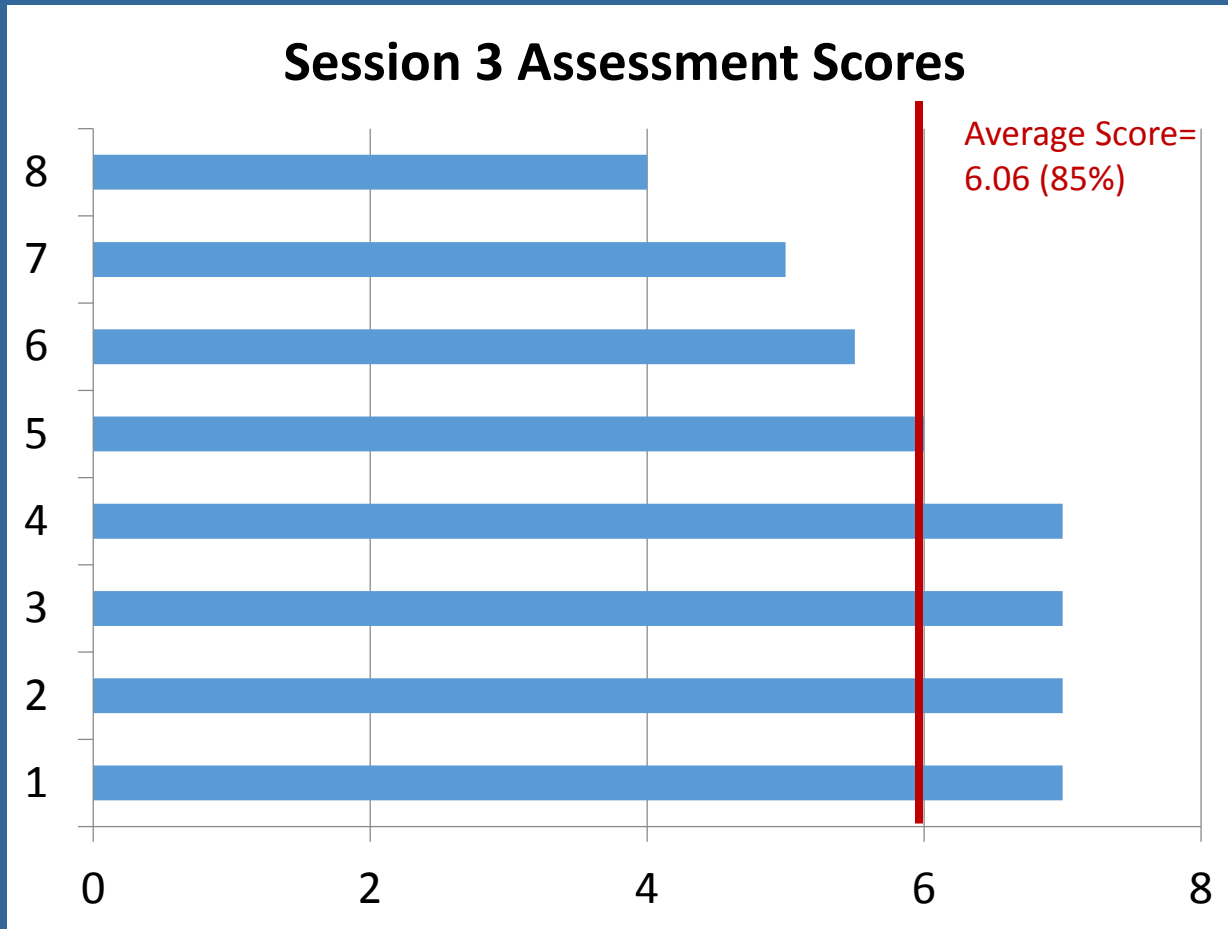
# Session 4 Overview

- Session 3 assessment results
- Session 4 learning outcomes
- Overview of Qualitative and Quantitative Paradigms
- Qualitative Research & Data Collection Methods
- BREAK
- Logistics of Conducting Qualitative Research
- Interviewing Activity
- For Next Session...

# Jogging Memories from Last time

Assessment results from Session 3:

“Context of Assessment”



# Areas from Session 3 to Review:

Beneficence is best described as acting in ways that add value/benefit, not in ways that cause unnecessarily great risk

Do you have any remaining questions/concerns from content covered in Session 3?



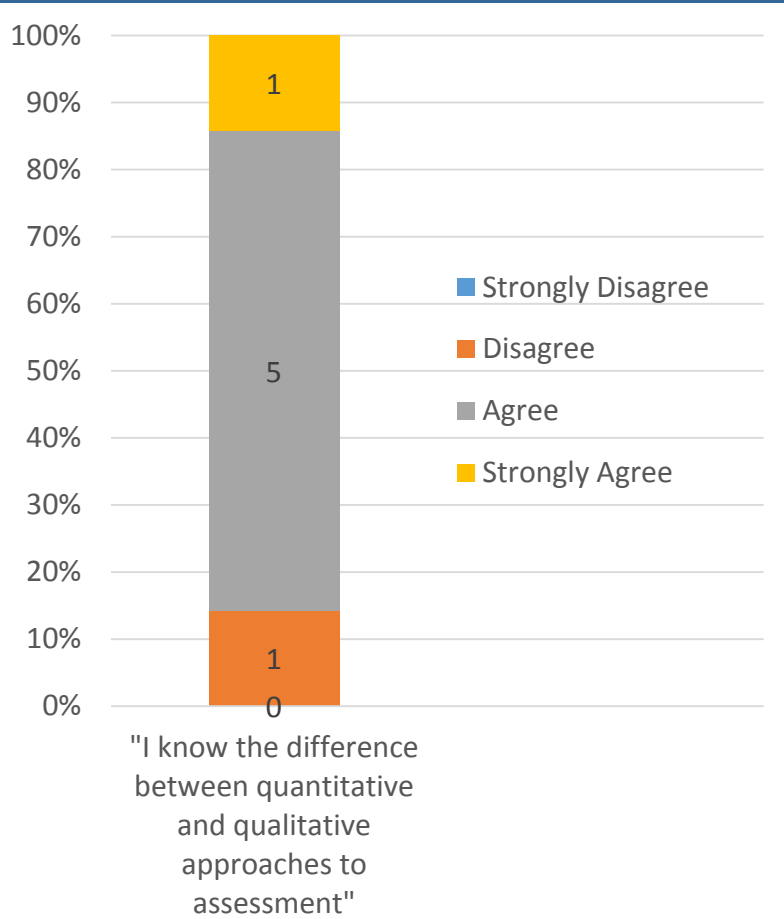
# Assessment Plan Peer Feedback

- 1) Switch Assessment Plans with a partner
  - 1) Rate each section using the assessment plan rubric.
  - 2) Provide written notes/suggestions in space provided.
  
- 2) Return Assessment Plans and Feedback Sheet
  - 1) Discuss your ratings with your partner.
  - 2) Identify ways each of you can improve these sections.
  - 3) Authors make notes for themselves regarding next steps.



# Where we are, where we are going...

## Confidence Barometer

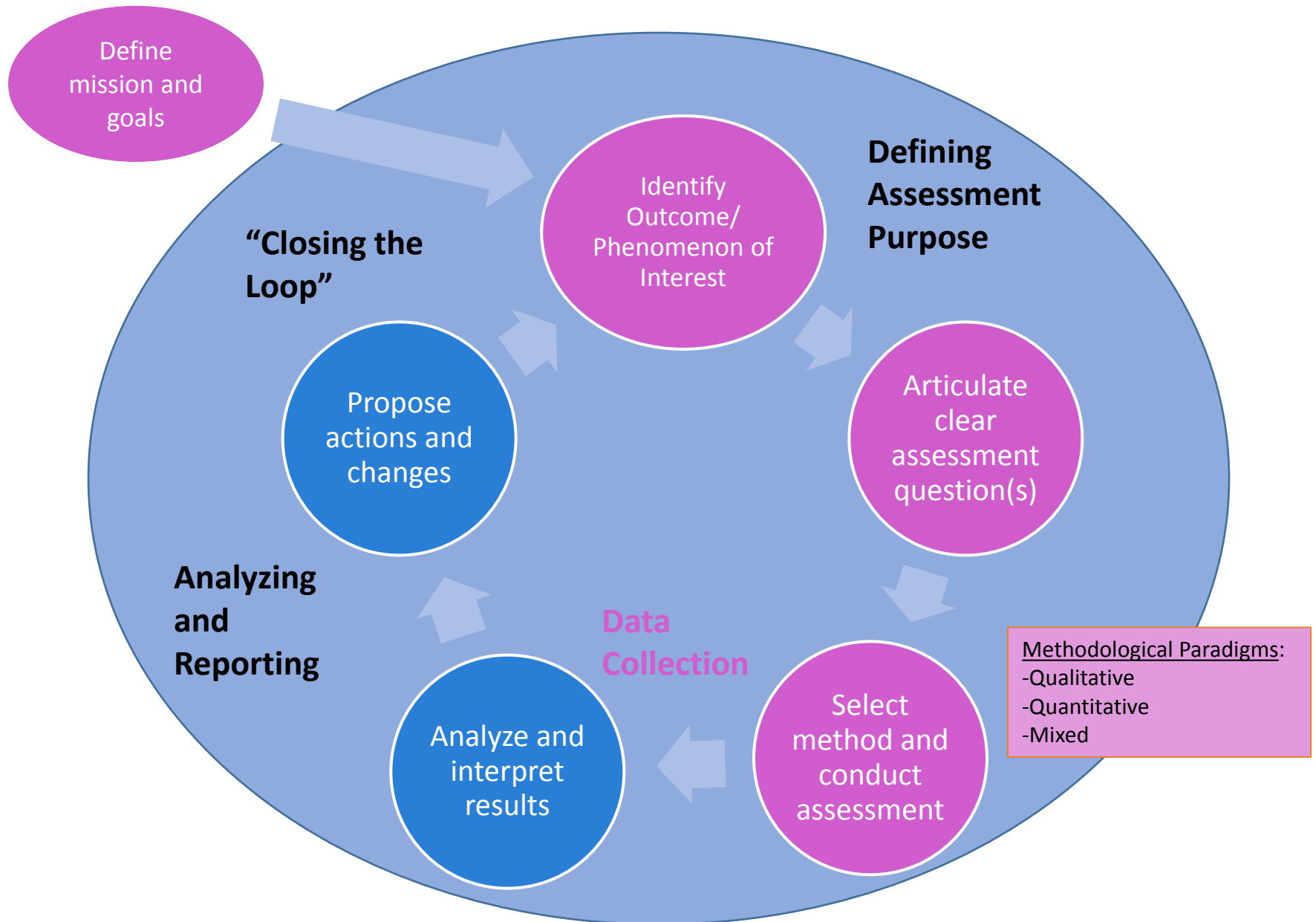


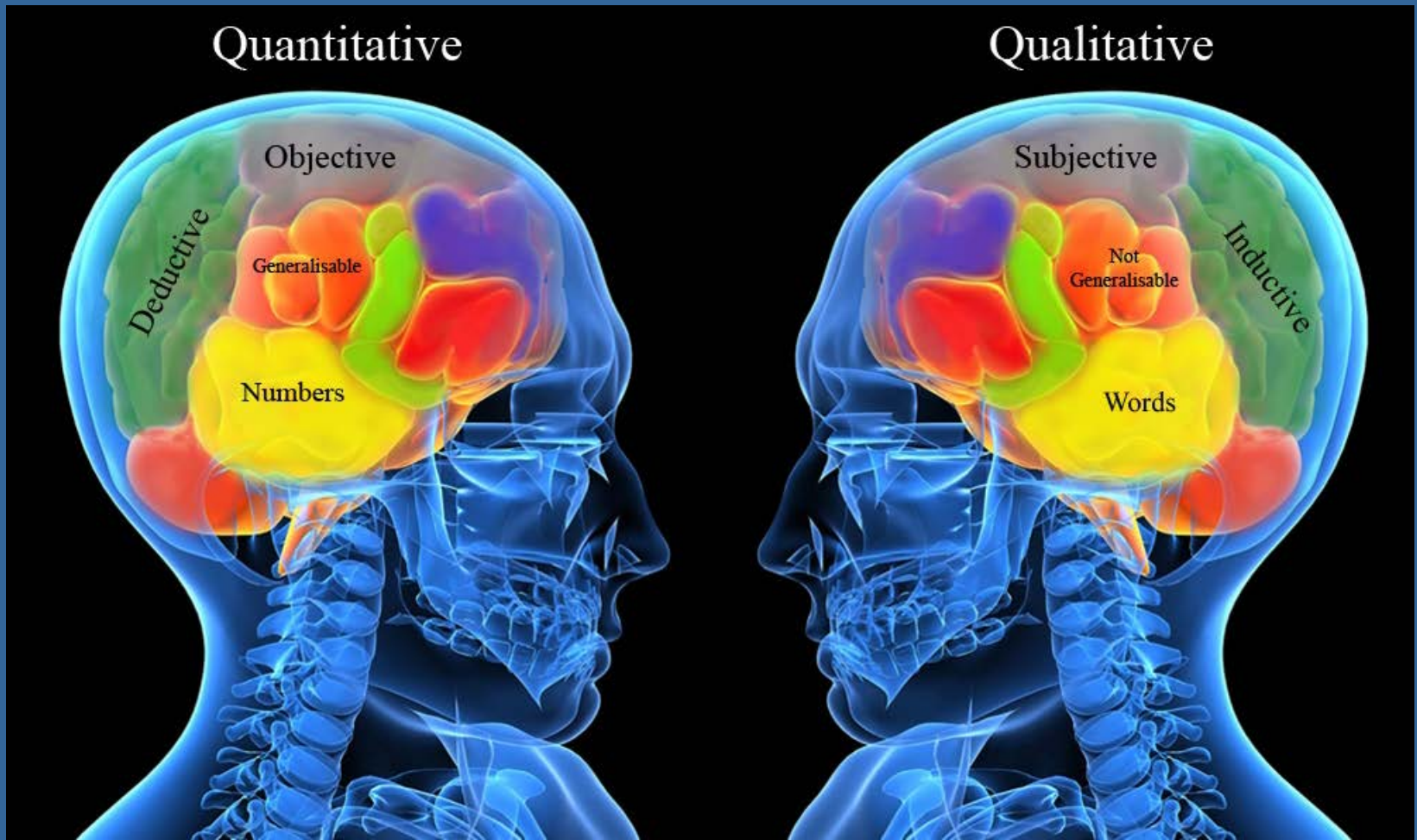
## Today's Learning Outcomes

After today, you should be able to:

- Understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative approaches
- Identify different possible quantitative and qualitative assessment methods
- Understand the logistics involved in various assessment methods

# The Assessment Cycle





## Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment

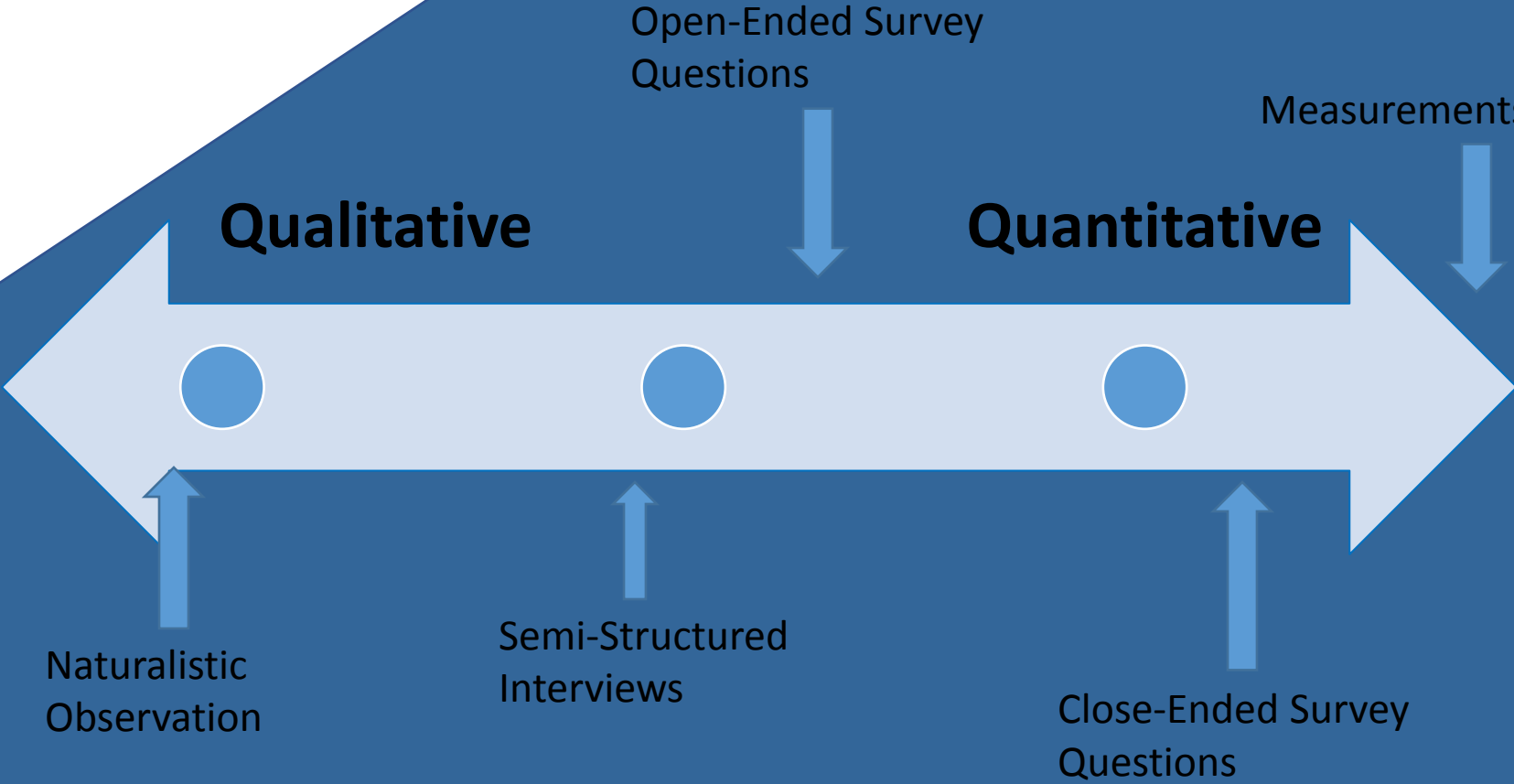
An Overview of the Methodological Paradigms



# Overview of “Paradigms”

	Qualitative Methods	Quantitative Methods
<b>Objectives/Purpose</b>	Understand process, underlying reasons and motivations	Describe incidence and prevalence, generalize for a population, predict future results
<b>Sources of Data</b>	Interviews, focus groups, observations, documents; “flexible” methods	Surveys, counts, student records; “fixed” methods
<b>Focus</b>	On meanings and details of experiences (Depth)	On generalizable experiences that represent a population (Breadth)
<b>What you Report</b>	Themes, quotes	Numbers, charts, graphs, trends (longitudinal data)
<b>Characteristics</b>	Open-ended questions	Close-ended questions, Measurement of specific variables
	Fewer participants (resource intensive per participant)	Large number of respondents (with fewer resources, sometimes)

# Methodological Paradigms Do Not Exist as a Dichotomy



# The Qualitative vs. quantitative “debate”

- The approach you choose should depend on *the questions being asked*.
- Both paradigms lend themselves to quality research, to answering complex questions.
  - One is not “harder” than the other.
  - You are not “smarter” if you do quantitative work.
- Reality (let’s be frank): one paradigm *may* be valued over another in a given context.

# Qualitative Research and Data Collection

## Understanding Methods



# Qualitative Methodology

Reasons for choosing a qualitative approach:

- Hope to tell a story
- Desire for rich description
- Need to uncover nuances, details, insights
- Want to hear the unique “voices” of participants

“Methodology” vs. “Method”

Examples of qualitative methodologies:

- Ethnography
- Interview Research
- Case Study
- Participatory Action Research

# Role of the Qualitative Researcher

“The researcher is the instrument.”

- Acknowledge biases, assumptions, blind spots
- Subjectivity and relativity
- Positionality and reflexivity



- Being respectful and establishing trust
- Reciprocity with participants
- Being aware of unequal power dynamics and avoiding coercion

# Three Common Qualitative Data Collection Methods

## **1. Observation**

- Direct observation
- Indirect observation
- Participant observation

## **2. Document Analysis**

- Use of written, audio, and visual texts
- Secondary data

## **3. Interviews**

- Individual interviewing
- Focus group interviewing

# Observation

- **Direct observation:** observing behavior as it occurs
  - Individual collecting the data is present at the data collection site and actively recording tallies/counts, field-notes/anecdotal observations, etc.
- **Indirect observation:** observing the effects or results of the behavior rather than the behavior itself
  - Individual collecting data is not necessarily present (though could be at site) to record in-time observations (like direct observation), but instead gathers information about what has happened by observing evidence left behind.
    - Example: The Career Center hosted a luncheon for its employees and wished learn what foods the staff enjoyed most. At the end of the luncheon, they ascertained this by examining the amount of leftover food in each hotplate.
- **Participant observation:** observing behavior while also participating in the behavior
  - Individual collecting data does so while immersing themselves (yay HuffPost!) within the environment and interacting with those in it.



# STUDENT AFFAIRS EXAMPLE: OBSERVATION of Student Lounge

## *Assessment Question:*

“What is the most appropriate way to remodel this student lounge?”

## *Some Observation Questions:*

- How is the lounge currently being used?
- What do students do in the lounge (and how often/ with what regularity?)
- What is the ambience of the lounge?



# Observation: KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Gaining access and trust
- Remaining unobtrusive
- Field notes and recordings
- Patience and attention to detail
- Time-intensive
- Can be overwhelming in volume of possible data
- Researcher bias



## 2. Document Analysis

### Types of documents

#### **Written documents**

- Official records and reports
- Newspapers
- Correspondence
- Personal journals/blogs

#### **Audio, visual, and digital documents**

- Photos
- Videos
- Audio recordings
- Artwork
- Websites/social media

#### **Secondary data**

- Survey responses
- Satisfaction cards

### Approaches to Document Analysis

- Content analysis
- Historical analysis
- Behavioral and spatial mapping



# STUDENT AFFAIRS EXAMPLE: Document Analysis of Student Lounge

## Assessment Question:

“What is the most appropriate way to remodel the student lounge?”



### Written documents

- Space reservation records
- Student manager/RA event reports
- Strategic plans
- Marketing and advertisement materials
- Student newspaper coverage
- User thank you and complaint correspondence
- Utility bills and maintenance records

### Audio and visual documents

- Student organization photo albums
- Facility blueprints
- Videos of important events
- Audio recordings of planning meetings
- Facility/program websites

### Secondary data

- Compiled write-in responses to a resident satisfaction survey
- Campus survey results about how students spend their “out-of-classroom” time

# Document Analysis: Key Considerations

- Choosing documents
- Accessing restricted or hard-to-get documents
- Coding strategies
- Researcher interpretation/bias
- Distance from phenomenon of interest
- Reliance on others' "framing" of events
- Preservation of sensitive, fragile documents
- Data storage, organization, and management
- Technology

# 3. Interviews

Individual interviewing



Focus group interviewing



# Individual Interviewing

## Formats

- Structured
- Semi-structured
- Unstructured/open-ended

## Purpose

- Yields ample data in short period of time
- Allows researcher to understanding the meaning held by the participant
- Develop basis for future quantitative exploration

## Considerations

- Breadth vs. depth
- Not observing people in a natural setting
- Communication style/characteristics of participants

# Focus Group Interviewing

## Format

- A discussion among a small group where the facilitator supplies the topics and moderates the discussion

## Purpose

- The purpose is to gather information about a specific (or focused) topic in a group environment.

## Considerations

- Difficult to assemble
- Groups can influence individual opinions
- Strength of data drawn from focus group is largely dependent on the strength of the facilitator(s)
- Lack of control over discussion



# STUDENT AFFAIRS EXAMPLE: Interviews about Student Lounge

## *Assessment Question:*

“What is the most appropriate way to remodel the student lounge?”

## *Individual interviews with alumni:*

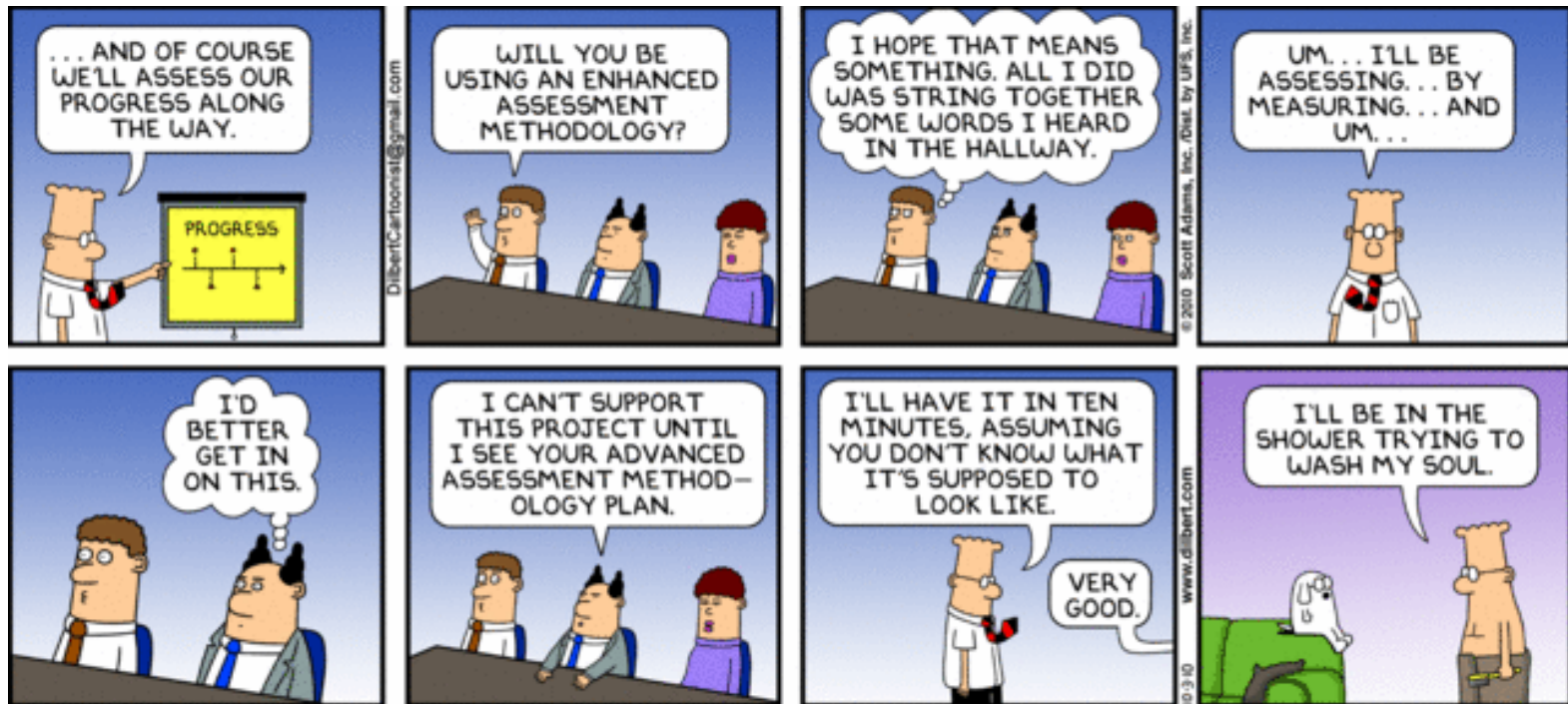
- What were your experiences with the lounge when you were a student here?
- What legacy would like to pass on to future students?

## *Focus groups with students:*

- What are some of your favorite places on campus?
- Why do you think students find these places attractive?
- What is the reputation on-campus about this lounge space?



# Break



# Logistics of Collecting Qualitative Data

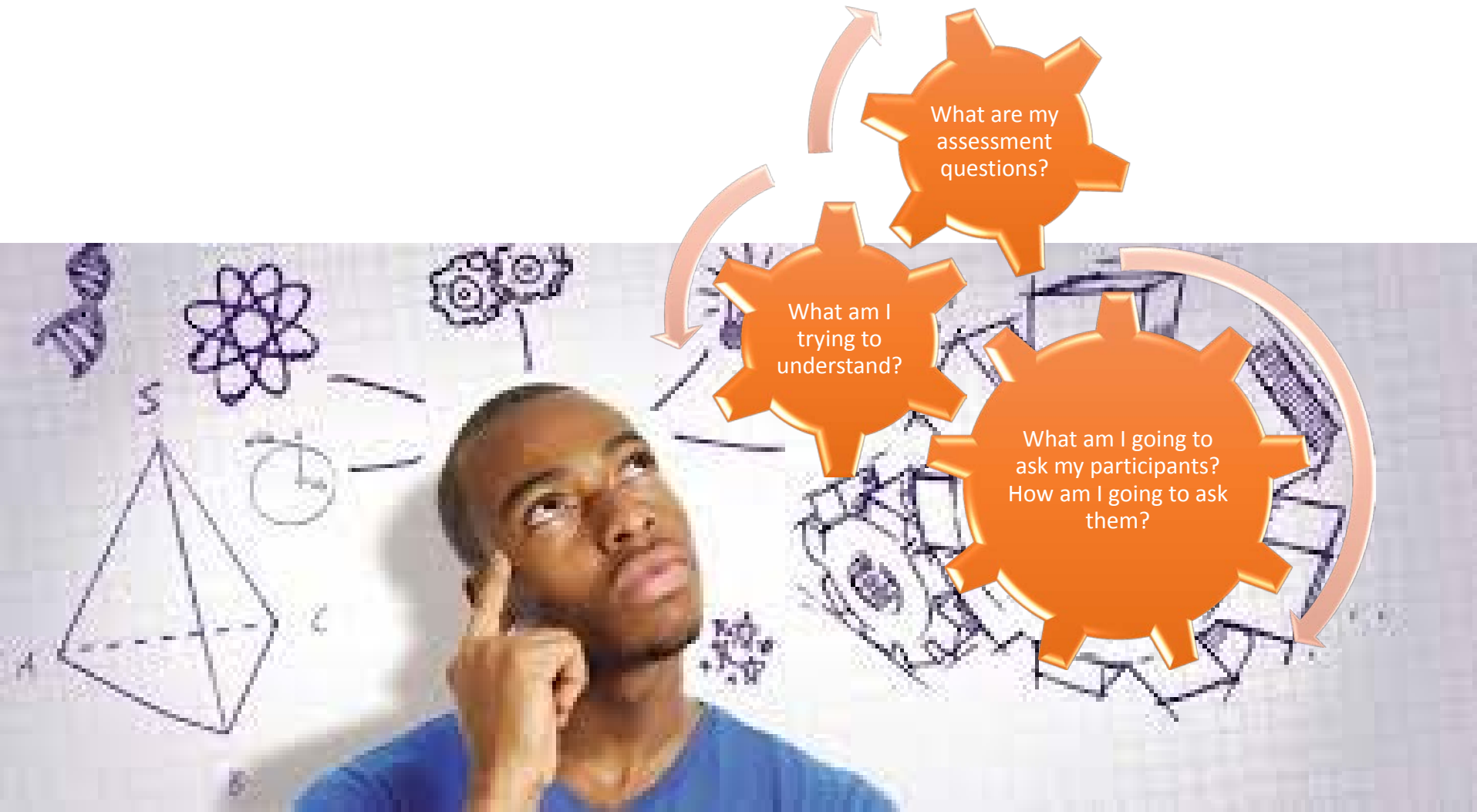
- Individual interviews
- Focus groups



# Logistics of conducting an interview or focus-group

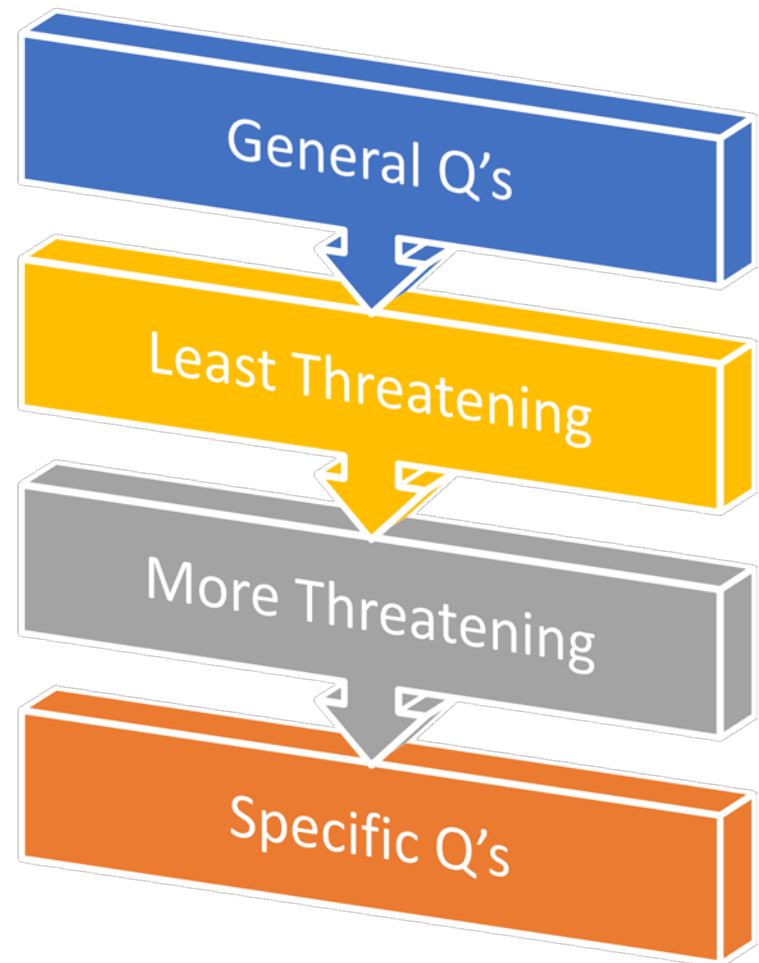
- Developing protocol (interview/ focus-group questionnaire, consent form, intake form)
- Recruitment and publicity materials
- Setting up interview/ focus-group location (making reservation, providing confidential space)
  - Focus-group vs. Interview
- Incentives
- Accommodations for specific populations
- Technology (recording, data storage, data protection, etc. )
- Transcription

# Developing an Interview protocol



# Developing an Interview protocol

- List of questions to ask participants
- Ask concrete, specific, simple, and open-ended rather than complex, loaded, or close-ended questions.



# Types of Interview Questions

## **Experience** and **behavior** questions

- What resources on campus do you use?

## **Opinion** and **values** questions

- What could UCLA administrators and staff do to provide a nurturing environment for LGB students?

## **Feelings** questions

- When you first came to UCLA, what did it feel like to be out on campus?

## **Knowledge** questions

- What are the resources available to members of the LGB community on campus?

## **Sensory/environmental** questions

- What makes the UCLA campus welcoming or not welcoming to LGB students?

## **Background** and **demographic** questions

- If you feel comfortable, please tell us with which gender you identify.

# Example: LGBTQ Experiences

## Campus Climate

- Do you think UCLA is accepting toward LGBTQ individuals? Why or why not?

## Challenges

- What challenges, if any, have you experienced as an LGB student at UCLA?
- Has being a part of a LGB identity made it difficult to succeed in any way at UCLA? Why or why not?

## Sources of Support

- Given the challenges you've articulated, how could the overall experience for LGB students be improved?
- You've identified several places of support thus far. What about these places or people are supportive of LGB students?
- *Could these sources of support be helpful to all LGB students. Why or why not?*



# EXAMPLE: PROJECT Timeline

survey project timetable												
Pre-interviews (3-6 weeks)	Month 1				Month 2				Month 3			
	wk1	wk2	wk3	wk4	wk1	wk2	wk3	wk4	wk1	wk2	wk3	wk4
Initial instrument development	█	█										
Review/ revision of the instrument		█	█	█								
Recruitment and Publicity		█	█	█	█							
IRB submission				█	█							
Scheduling the interviews				█	█							
Execute pre-survey communications				█	█							
Interviews (2-4 weeks)												
Interviews (and sending reminders prior to meet)						█	█	█	█			
Transcribing of recordings							█	█	█	█		
Post-Interviews(4 weeks at least)												
Coding of the interview transcripts										█	█	█
Analysis and Reporting												█



## For next session...

1. Revise/edit “Context and Stakeholders” section of your assessment plan based on peer feedback from today.
2. Draft notes for “Assessment Methods” section. Answer as many questions as possible (the written draft of this section will not be due until after we cover quantitative data collection).
3. If you are interested in doing a qualitative pilot assessment, choose a method and draft an instrument or protocol.