

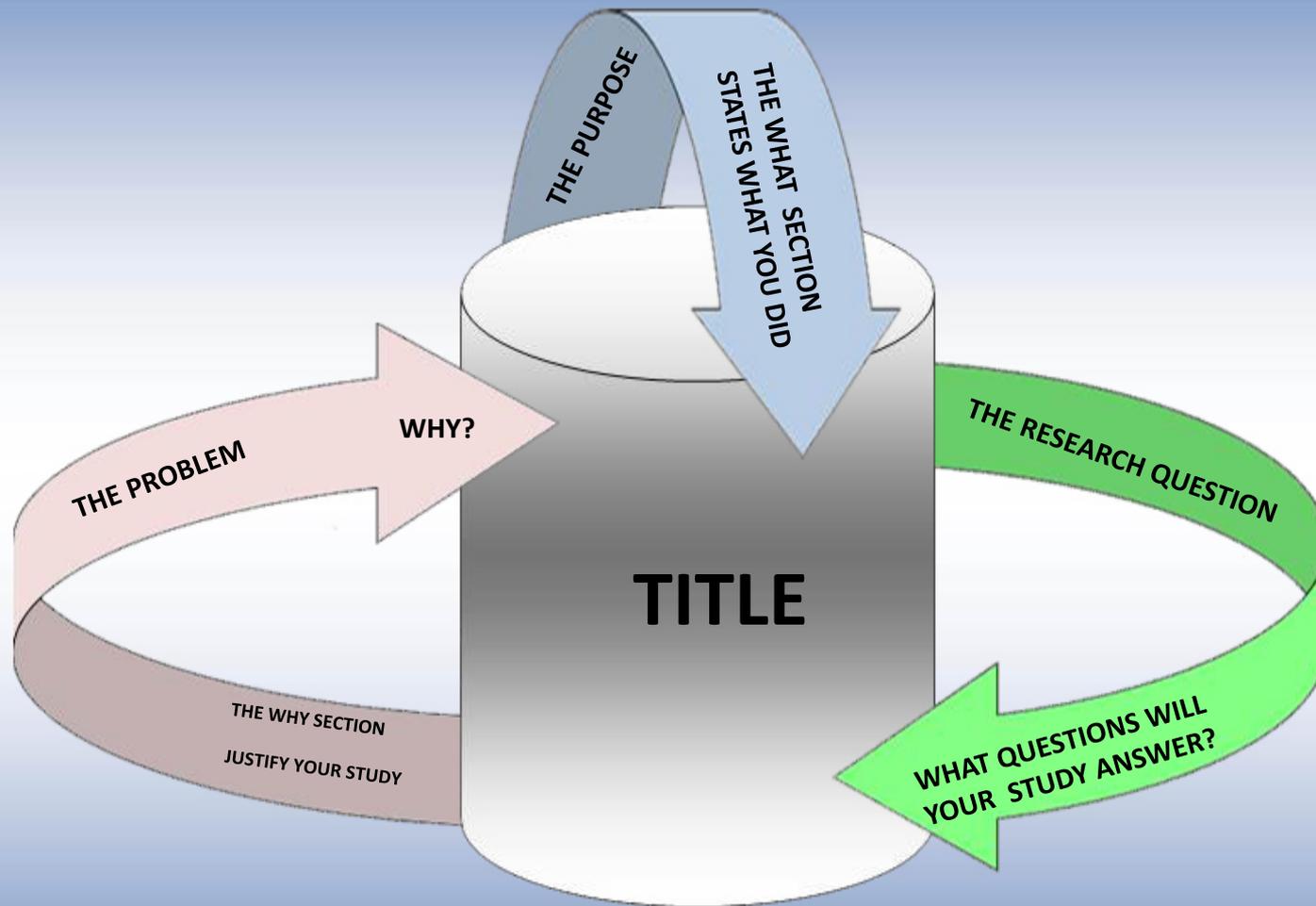
**BUILDING CONSISTENCY BETWEEN TITLE, PROBLEM,
PURPOSE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
To Improve the Quality of Research Plans and Reports

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BUILDING CONSISTENCY MODEL



TITLE

- WHAT?** Academic titles are long so they can clarify the main elements of the research. **WHAT** words are used to list the variables or constructs the study explores. **WHO** words name the people, groups, sample or population within which these variables and constructs will be studied. **HOW** words suggest the research design of the study, indicating how data on the constructs are collected from the people. This can be broadly stated as quantitative or qualitative, or more narrowly focused on data collection like interviews or surveys, or even data analysis as factor analysis or multivariate analysis of variance. **WHERE** words tell us where the people and the data was collected, such as in a nation, region, a military organization, or 3rd grade classrooms in Detroit.
- WHO?**
- HOW?**
- WHERE?**

PROBLEM

The problem sections highlights the relevant literature, data, trends or related information that justifies the study. Sometimes called the purpose statement, or the introduction with a short problem statement, this section tells **WHY** the study should or was done. It gives the reader the main reasons for the study.

PURPOSE

This purpose section states succinctly **WHAT** will be done or was done to address the problem. The WHAT statement should be one paragraph, two at the most. It is a link between the longer WHY section and the next section on research questions. It tells what will be done or was done to collect data to address the why.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions summarize in at least one but often up to four or five questions the main inquiry for which data was collected. For **NIH these might be the 2 to 4 Specific Aims** Using key words in the title and key relationships noted in the problem and purpose help craft questions consistent with the aim of the study. These questions can then be used to **rework the title, problem and purpose.**

CONSISTENCY RUBRIC

AREA	BEST	GOOD	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
TITLE	Has 2 or more of the elements that show WHAT, WHO, HOW, WHERE, and WHEN of this study and is parsimonious (less than 25 words)	Has 2 or more of the elements that show WHAT, WHO, HOW, WHERE, and WHEN of this study and is parsimonious (less than 25 words)	Has 2 or more of the elements that show WHAT, WHO, HOW, WHERE, and WHEN of this study and is parsimonious (less than 25 words)
WHY	Contain proficient expression of the need importance of the study Show a clear connection to relevant literature, data , trends or related Information to back justification of study, and create a strong argument for the research	Contain a clear purpose of study but with less than sufficient relevant literature , trends, or data. Able to connect relevant literature, data and information to purpose, but fails to create a strong argument for study	Contain ambiguous purpose of study with minimal relevant literature, data or information , and lacks justification of study. The study lacks basic argument for the proposed research
WHAT	Contain excellent and clearly stated plan followed (or data collection method or what the study did) to fill the gap or solve the problem created by the WHY—need of study	Contain a fairly clear plan followed (or data collection method or what the study did) to fill the gap or solve the problem created by the WHY—need of study	Contain a poor plan followed (or data collection method or what the study did) to fill the gap or solve the problem created by the WHY —need of study
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	Contain All relevant variables and show relationships between the WHY and WHAT statements of the study	Contain some variables and show relationships between the WHY and WHAT statements of the study	Contain some variables but does not show relationships between the WHY and WHAT statements of the study
OVERALL	All the key words in the title show up in the WHY section, the WHAT section and the Research Questions	Most of the key words in the title show up in the WHY section, the WHAT section and the Research Questions	Few of the key words in the title show up in the WHY section, the WHAT section and the Research Questions

LAST BUT NOT LEAST

2 WORDS TO STAY AWAY FROM:

1. **Cause**: this is an extremely loaded word
2. **Effect**: Unless you are doing Path Analysis or Structural Equation Modeling. If you have an RCT we can talk about it.

REFERENCES

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