

Writing a Research Proposal – Practical guidelines for business students: A book review

The new textbook *Writing a Research Proposal – Practical guidelines for business students* by Professor Pumela Msweli published by Juta ISBN 978-0-70218-877-0 is a professionally produced easy to access guide to a very important aspect of academic research. The research proposal is the first step in any important research project. It is the research proposal which sets the agenda for the research, indicates its feasibility and most of all it demonstrates the researcher's ability to undertake the work required. It is therefore most important that a competent research proposal is developed.

This short book which is only 120 pages is a good guide to the work involved when developing the research proposal. It is designed for the novice to have with him or herself during the early days of their research while they are finding their feet. Over the 8 Chapters the author addresses all the important issues in an easy to understand way. Another important aspect of the book is that many of the key concepts and terms which are used in academic research are explained. Useful diagrams and tables are supplied.

The issue of research language is an important one. Many novice researchers find it very difficult to get started because they do not know the terms which are used by researchers. Novices stumble over issues like deduction and induction and non sequitur are explained. However a Glossary of terms would be a helpful addition to the next edition of this book.

Books by their nature have a target readership and this one is written for the novice researcher in the business studies field. Books also have a pre-determined scope and depth and this book is written as a starter-book which is really needed and no doubt this book will be a great success. When considering a master degree more depth may be required even at MBA and MBL level. Perhaps the book would be fully adequate for those undertaking honours level research.

Finally publishers are always optimistic about the utility of their books and on the back cover it is suggested that *Research Proposal – Practical guidelines for business students* would be of use to doctoral students. It is true that even doctoral students have to start somewhere but I would say that a doctoral degree candidate would need to move on to more detailed texts rather soon.

The book is available on Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/Writing-Research-Proposal-Practical-Guidelines/dp/0702188778>

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