

Information about required **Primary Sources** for Group Project

Each group is required to do primary research by conducting original interviews with relevant business people related to the group's topic. Each group should aim to conduct three to four original interviews. Three to four interviews per group will guarantee great original data for the presentation.

A group may also supplement interviews by designing, administering, and analyzing an original survey. Three interviews and a survey will guarantee great original data for the presentation.

Original Interviews. Interviews with relevant business people related to the group project are an important source of information for the group projects. Because business people are busy, it is vital that your group decide early in the semester the people you plan to interview. Most students choose one to three organizations from among the group members' current or prior workplaces. We will learn about the "six degrees of separation"—with a little help and determination, a friend of the family or a friend of a friend may help students find relevant people to interview.

International students are highly encouraged to interview people from businesses based in their homelands. We love learning about businesses from around the world!

Face-to-face interviews are preferred, but if a business person is not located in St. Louis, you may use Skype or a telephone interview. **DO NOT USE AN EMAIL INTERVIEW** because it places too much burden on the person to type their responses.

STEPS IN CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS:

1. Group develops a list of 5 to 8 potential people to interview
2. Group develops an interview guide with 10 good questions (see interview tips webinar)
3. Group drafts an email or phone introduction to explain the research & confidentiality policy to potential interviewees (see interview tips webinar)
4. If you are not confident that the targeted interviewees are appropriate, send proposed names, titles, and organizations of potential interviewees
5. Send a copy of your proposed interview guide to Professor Lacity for approval—I can help you get great data fast, so my feedback should be valuable to you.
6. Approach interviewees
7. Schedule the interviews for confirmed participants
8. Conduct and RECORD the interviews, hopefully at least **two group members** are present at each interview
9. Transcribe the interviews so everyone in the group becomes intimate with the interview data. Interviews are a shared and pooled group asset.
10. Integrate the interviews into the group presentation

Original Survey. Another potential source of primary data is an original survey. For example, past groups have surveyed people about the social networks they use related to businesses, how they dispose of e-waste, and whether they aspire to be entrepreneurs. Another group surveyed 35 lawyers to see if they would outsource any legal work.

STEPS IN CONDUCTING SURVEYS:

1. Develop one or two demographic questions related to age, gender, education level, indicate whether or not respondent is an UMSL student, add any other demographics relative to your topic.
2. Develop 8 to 10 simple multiple choice questions or [Likert scale questions](#) related to your topic. (see sample questions below).
3. Try to keep the scales the same across survey questions so the cognitive burden on respondents is low.
4. Develop instructions for survey respondents that includes a brief explanation of the purpose of the survey, the confidentiality of responses, and how data will be used (i.e., for class purposes only.) Something like, *“We are graduate students at the University of Missouri conducting an ANONYMOUS survey on people’s use of social media to connect with organizations. Individual responses will be aggregated and overall results will be presented to our classmates. Data will not be used for any other purpose.”*
5. Develop a plan to distribute the survey; Will the survey be online? By paper? You can use SurveyMonkey for free if you only ask 10 questions. You may ask Professor Lacity to distribute to her current students across her courses; You might also solicit respondents from your social media sites.
6. Send a copy of your proposed instructions, proposed questions, and proposed distribution/solicitation plans to Professor Lacity for approval.
7. Administer the survey
8. Analyze the survey responses
9. Integrate the interviews into the group presentation

SAMPLE GOOD QUESTIONS: Simple sentences, clear scales

1. How frequently do you click on advertisements presented to you by your social media sites like Facebook or LinkedIn?

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Rarely
- 3 – Sometimes
- 4 – Often
- 5 – Always

2. A digital divide is defined as “an economic and social inequality with regard to access or use of computers”. To what extent do you consider the digital divide to be a problem in your local school district?

- 1 – Not at all a problem
- 2 – Minor problem
- 3 – Moderate problem
- 4 – Serious problem

BAD QUESTION: Complex sentence:

5. To what extent do you recycle in your home and do you think you should recycle more?

BAD QUESTION: Complex sentence:

6. Do you like Facebook and Instagram?

BAD QUESTION: Poor scale –does not fit the question:

7. Do you like Facebook?

1 – Never

2 – Rarely

3 – Sometimes

4 – Often

5 – Always