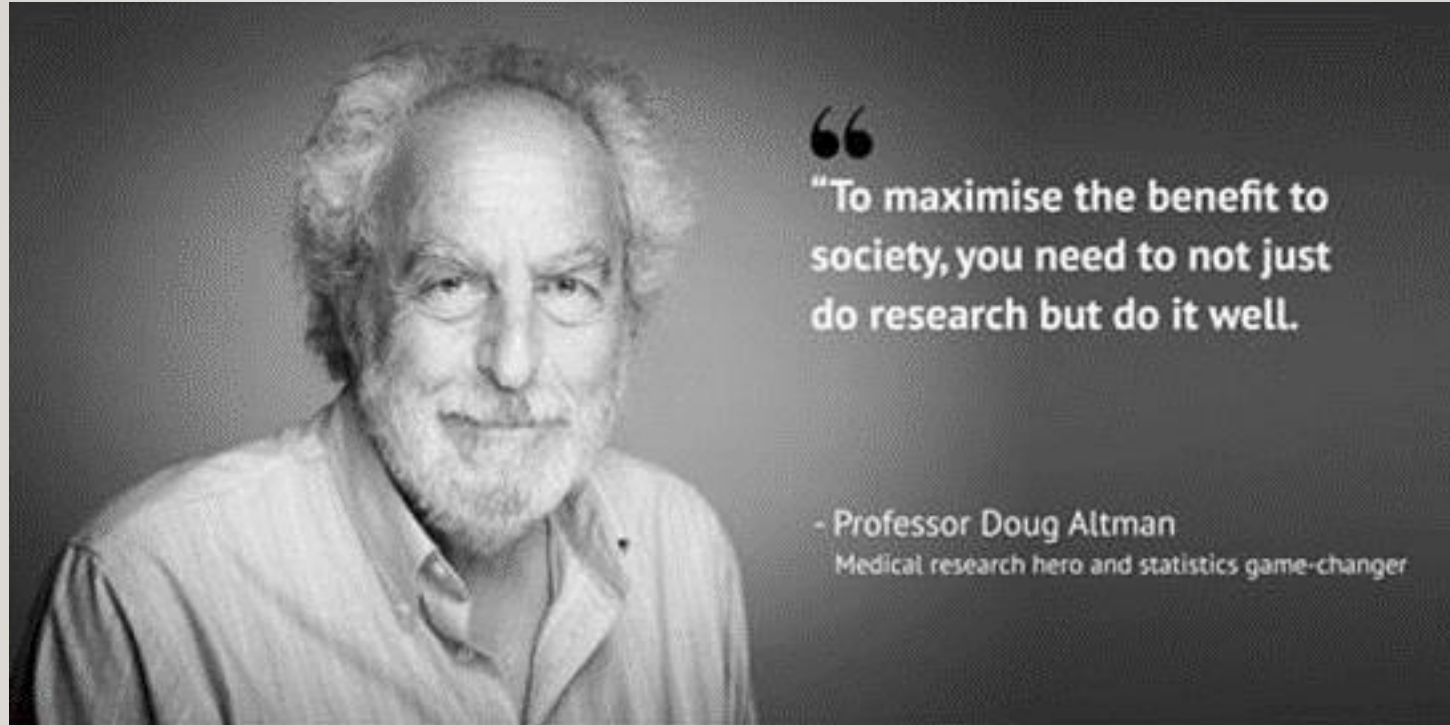


MSC APPLIED
PSYCHOLOGY:

PLANNING QUALITATIVE
RESEARCH:
INTERVIEW AND FOCUS
GROUPS



Reminder: Doing “good” research



IDENTIFY YOUR SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS PLAN

- Be aware of WHY you want to do qualitative research
 - What the best approach is...
 - How you will do this well...
- Read research methods books on qual research – cite them!

WHAT DOES QUALITATIVE RESEARCH INVOLVE?

- An understanding of which approach you are following
- Significant amount of time spent gathering data
- Time-consuming and complex data analysis – reducing large sets of data to a few themes or categories
- Long pieces of text/writing incorporating quotes

WHY CONDUCT A QUALITATIVE STUDY?

In-depth exploration of a topic: often “how” “what” or “why”

- How do people cope with.....?
- What do people understand about?
- Why are people reluctant to.....?

Research questions – not testable hypotheses!

Is there a lack of current theory/literature/evidence in the area?

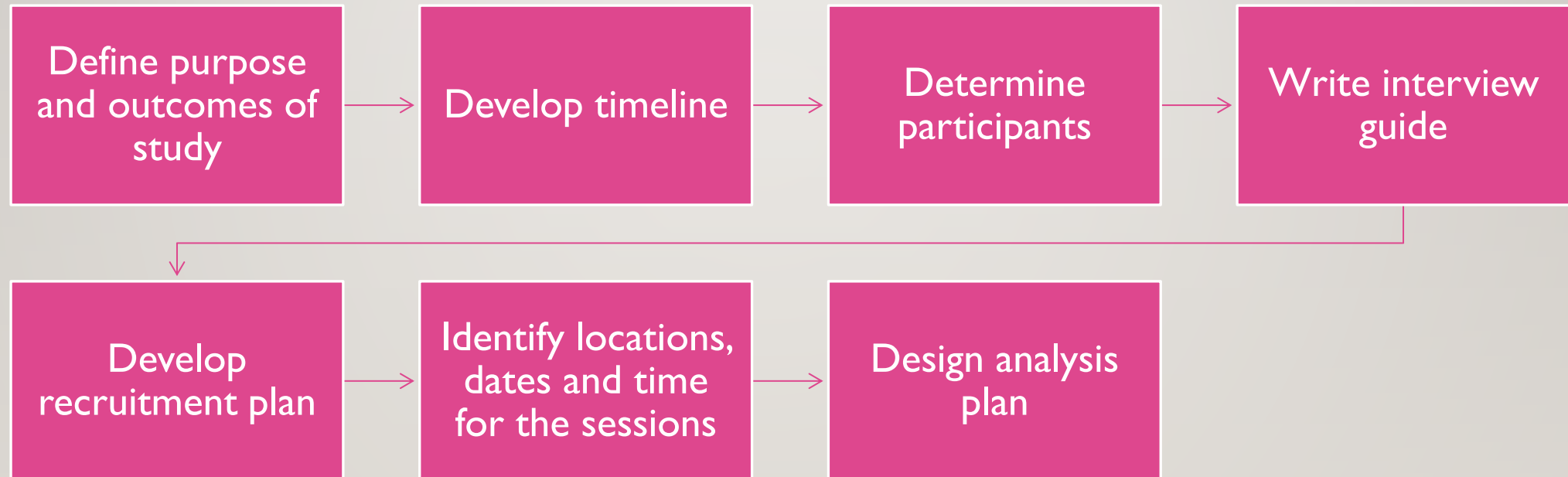
**WHAT IS THE
APPROACH/CONTEXT
OF YOUR PROPOSAL?**

What is your research question?

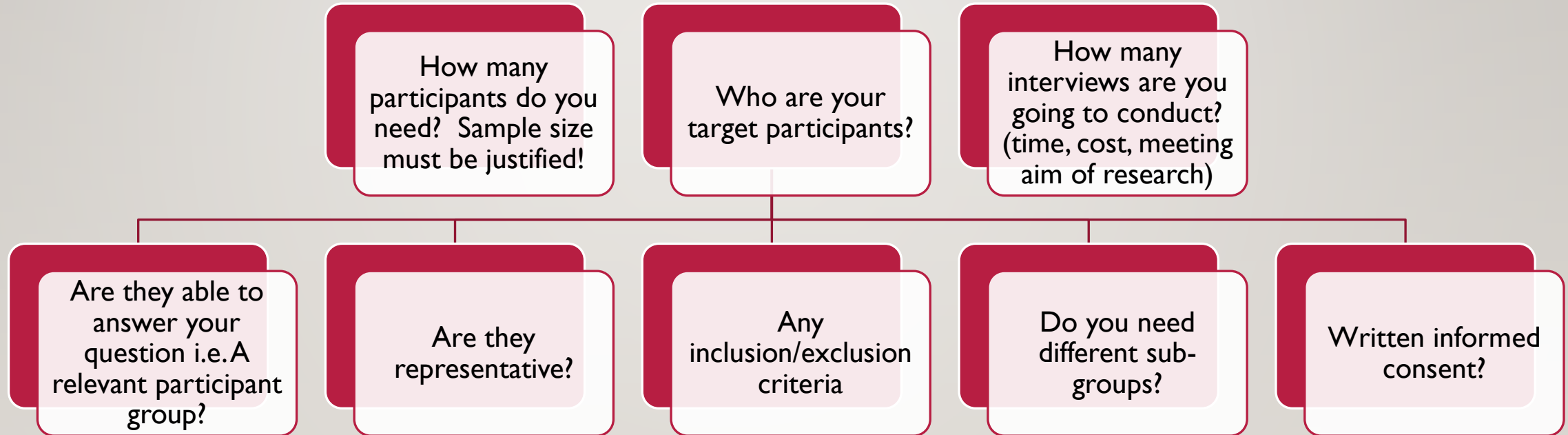
Why do you want to do it in the way you propose?

What is the wider context?

PLANNING QUALITATIVE STUDIES



PLANNING QUALITATIVE STUDIES



PLANNING QUALITATIVE STUDIES

If wanting to approach vulnerable populations



If wanting to ask sensitive questions...



Consider your experience and skill set!



You will need to convince ethics panel of your competence and professionalism – you may be turned down!

Your protection

Protection of
potential participants

PLANNING QUALITATIVE STUDIES

How are you going to collect data?

Face-to-face? By Phone? Online?

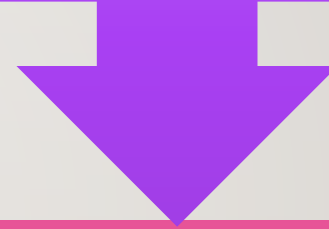
Where are you going to collect your data?

In participants' homes?

- (ensure your safety!)
- May be noisy/interruptions
- In a neutral location?

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD QUESTIONS

What information do you want
to get from your participants?



Develop an **interview** schedule/topic guide to guide your questions to ensure you cover all important areas. Include:

Introduction

Permission to
record
interview/anonymity

prompts and hints
for follow-up
questions

Wrap-up at end
(thank and summary
of research aim)

WHAT IS A GOOD INTERVIEW QUESTION?

- Open ended...
- Allows participant to respond in the way that he/she feels
- Not “yes” or “no” – may as well do quantitative!!
- E.g. How do you feel about undergoing genetic testing
- E.g. can you tell me how watching violent TV makes you feel?

WHAT IS A GOOD INTERVIEW QUESTION?

- Non-leading.....
 - Should not lead the participant to answer in a certain way
 - E.g. NOT:
 - Do you agree that genetic testing is a bad thing?
 - Does watching violence on TV make you really really angry?
 - Violence on TV is really terrible – do you agree?

WHAT IS A GOOD INTERVIEW QUESTION?

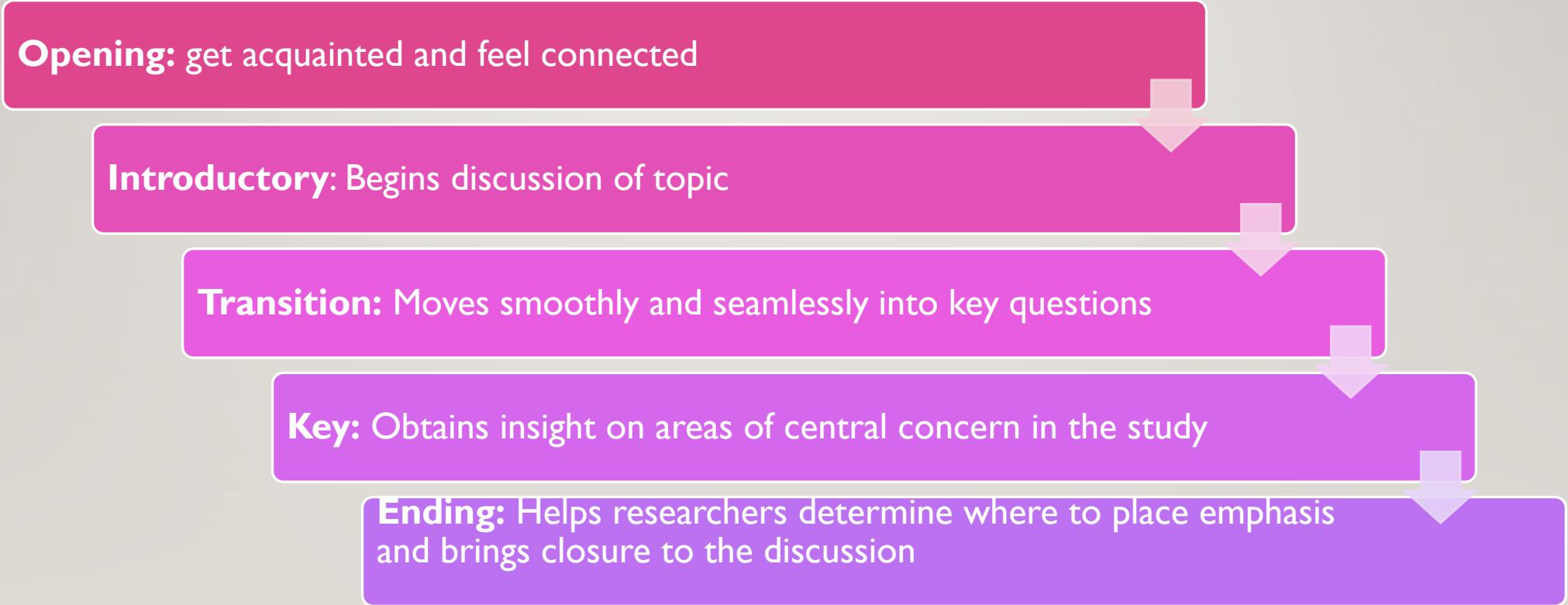
- Use of prompts and follow-up questions

- Can you tell me a little bit more about that...
- Can you explain what you meant when you said that.....
 - Why did you think that/say that/feel that way??
 - That's interesting...can you tell me more...
- Etc etc

CATEGORIES OF QUESTIONS

(KRUEGER, 1998)

Opening: get acquainted and feel connected



Introductory: Begins discussion of topic

Transition: Moves smoothly and seamlessly into key questions

Key: Obtains insight on areas of central concern in the study

Ending: Helps researchers determine where to place emphasis and brings closure to the discussion

CONDUCTING RESEARCH INTERVIEWS

- THE INTERVIEW:
- SHOULD BE TAPE RECORDED WITH CONSENT
 - Try to stick to the interview schedule as a guide - this will allow you to compare interviewees
 - Use prompts only when the participant is struggling for an answer
 - Always be aware of the effect of the questions – especially if a sensitive subject

CATEGORIES OF QUESTIONS



Opening: get acquainted and feel connected



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(Krueger, 1998)

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:



Ask questions in a conversational manner



Keep questions clear, brief, reasonable, uni-dimensional and avoid jargon.



Obtain feedback from others



Allow enough time to make revisions

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE RECRUITMENT CHALLENGE

**Convey a sense
that the research
will be interesting
and worthwhile**

**Make the contacts
personal (where
appropriate!)**

**Build on existing
relationships
whenever possible
(where
appropriate!)**

**Use appropriate
screening criteria**

**Make participation
as convenient as
possible**

Follow up

AND FINALLY... DON'T FORGET...

**Analysis must
be systematic**

**Analysis must
be verifiable**

**Analysis
requires time**

**Analysis is
jeopardised by
delay**

**Analysis should
entertain
alternative
explanations**

**Analysis is
improved by
feedback**

**Analysis is a
process of
comparison**

**Analysis is
situationally
responsive**

THE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT



Starting point for analysis



Requires detailed transcription



Reading and re-
reading/familiarisation with
transcript

QUALITY & VERIFICATION



QUALITY IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Research design/proposal should document specific research steps in same level of depth as quantitative research

Trustworthiness rather than generalisability – can you trust that the research is believable and reliable

Sustainability – what is going to come out of this study- the “so-what” factor is just as important!