THE MANAGEMENT RESEARCHER AS PRACTITIONER – ISSUES FROM THE INTERFACE

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Autobiographical note:
Mark NK Saunders is Professor in Business Research Methods at the University of Surrey School of Management. His research interests focus on two themes. The first, research methods, includes the development of tools to learn about, understand and improve organisational relationships within a process consultation framework, online research methods and methods for researching trust. The second, human resource aspects of the management of change, is concerned particularly with trust, justice and downsizing. Mark is author and co-author of six books, including Research Methods for Business Students (FT-Prentice Hall, 2009), now in its fifth edition, as well as book chapters and journal articles.
INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses upon the issues and associated opportunities and constraints faced by academic management researchers undertaking research that is immediately useful and relevant to practitioners. It takes as its starting point the emphasis given to the academic-practitioner interface by the relevance debates of the past decade and government policy initiatives to support knowledge transfer from academia to practice. As previous chapters have revealed, a substantial body of literature arguing the need for relevance in management research now exists (for example Huff and Huff, 2001; Starkey and Maddon, 2001; Rousseau, 2006; Van Aken, 2005). Although this highlights possible reasons for management academics deciding whether or not to undertake research at the interface and issues associated with such working (for example Bartunek, et al. 2006; Pollit, 2006; Macbeth, 2002), the actual realities have been discussed less widely. When discussions occur, they highlight differences between management researchers and practitioners in their orientations. Here the focus tends to be on potential tensions and constraints management researchers may face (for example, Buchanan et al., 1988; Learmonth, 2008; Macbeth, 2002), rather than also considering potential opportunities such interface research may offer along with issues that might need to be addressed (for example, Cornelissen, 2002; Maclean and Macintosh, 2002).

This chapter is written with the belief that, while not all management research can or should be of direct relevance to practitioners or have commercial value, management researchers can address the needs of practitioners, delivering practical, relevant and useful research grounded in practice. This adoption of a practitioner orientation in
research I refer to as ‘management researcher as practitioner’. I begin the chapter 
with a consideration of differences between management researchers and practitioners 
derived from the literature, which highlights possible tensions and the potential issues 
these create. This is followed by two case studies based on my own and colleagues’ 
experiences, offered as inside accounts of such research. These are used to explore 
and discuss the tensions and issues, highlighting associated opportunities and 
constraints. I conclude with a discussion of how the differences outlined can offer the 
management researcher as practitioner additional research opportunities at the 
interface, albeit constrained by practitioners’ requirements.

ACADEMIC AND PRACTITIONER ORIENTATIONS

The relevance literature emphasizes that management researchers and practitioners 
inhabit different worlds, are often engaged in different activities and consequently 
may have very different research orientations. These can be placed into four 
groupings, the first three reflecting the process of researching at the interface: the 
focus of interest, its methodological cynosure and its measured outcomes. The fourth 
is concerned with how each party views the other, providing an indication of the 
likelihood (or otherwise) of their being involved in such research. These differences 
are summarized in Table 1 principally as ends of a series of continuums, their 
consideration revealing a number of issues derived from possible tensions created.

[Insert table 1 about here]
Commentators on the relevance debate emphasize a fundamental separation between management researchers and practitioners with regard to their foci of interest (Van Aken, 2007). These have been presented as the gap between basic and applied research (Shapiro et al., 2007) or the differences between Mode 1 and Mode 2 knowledge creation (Tranfield, 2002). In emphasising these differences, management researchers are typified as undertaking basic (Mode 1) research focused upon describing, explaining why, adding to substantive theory and possibly predicting for general enlightenment. By contrast practitioners are presented as requiring applied (Mode 2) solution oriented ‘how to’ research that is more instrumental, focused upon developing and testing solutions to specific (practical) problems (Huff et al., 2006) and building local theories-in-use.

Consequently while both management researchers and practitioners may be interested in the same subject, the management researcher’s focus is stereotyped as extending the frontiers of knowledge (Macbeth, 2002), producing scientifically credible research output. In contrast the practitioner is typified as requiring knowledge that improves understanding of a particular business problem generating results oriented, practically useful guidance (Maclean and Macintosh, 2002). As we shall see later, implicit within both is the view that research by the other is of less value. Concurrent with the relevance debate, government policy statements have emphasised the importance of and need for greater business-university collaboration and business orientation in management research. Associated initiatives such as the UK’s Advanced Institute of Management Research (2009) and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (2009) have emphasized practical usefulness, providing financial incentives to support such
research. These differences in foci suggest our first issue: the extent to which the management researcher as practitioner can satisfy both foci of interest.

**Methodological cynosure**

Management research is expected to be both theoretically and methodologically rigorous (Hodgkinson et al., 2001), the importance of this being emphasized by many commentators (for example Bartunek et al., 2006; Huff et al., 2006). This fit between theoretical contribution and data collected is argued to be more difficult to achieve through field based research than using research designs involving experiments, simulations or secondary data (Edmondson and McManus, 2007). As practitioner oriented research is more likely to be fieldwork based, this may create tension regarding rigour and design. Even where action research strategies are used to support action and theory development (Brannick and Coghlan, 2006), ensuring rigour will invariably take time. Inevitably, where urgent solutions to pressing organizational problems are needed, pragmatic organizational pressures can compromise methodological rigour (Van De Ven and Johnson, 2006). This highlights our second issue: the extent to which the management researcher as practitioner can utilize theoretically and methodologically rigorous research designs without compromise.

**Measured outcomes**

For management research, the most widely discussed outcome is the high quality research publication. Academic careers (and tenure) are predicated on publishing,
business schools hiring and promoting academics on the basis of their research output (Huff 2000). This places pressure upon management researchers as practitioners to undertake research that, through its theoretical and methodological rigour enables such publications. Yet, practitioners rarely read (Hutt, 2008; Rynes, 2007) or contribute to such research publications. Rather, they are concerned with practice relevance and impact, their actions being more likely to be informed by web pages that offer relatively easily accessible, timely practice guides (Cohen, 2007, Guest 2007); their reading being concentrated on trade and professional publications (Guest, 2007) and management best sellers (Huff et al., 2006).

Such differences in outcomes highlight how rigour and impact are defined; theoretical and methodological rigour being certified by publication in high quality journals, and impact by the results informing practitioners’ actions. This highlights our third issue: the extent to which the management researcher as practitioner can meet both academic publication and practitioner impact outcomes. Discussion of research impact and in particular economic impact (Research Councils UK, 2007), alongside preparations for future research assessments such as the UK’s Research Excellence Framework, indicate a fourth issue, whether such practice impact can be measured.

**View of other**

Management researchers and practitioners’ views of each other will, inevitably, influence whether or not research at the interface is considered. Writing about the nature of relationships between management researchers and practitioners Bartunek (2007) highlights strong and differing opinions between academics regarding the
value of research at the interface. Like Kerr (2004) she notes that some management researchers voice disdain for those who seek to communicate with practitioners. Bartunek (2007) notes these opinions are even more problematic where practitioners’ views correspond; not seeing the value of collaboration. In such situations practitioners may deprecate or ignore even the most important conclusions from management research (Kerr, 2004).

By contrast other management researchers emphasize the potential role that management researchers can play in developing valid knowledge to support organizational problem solving emphasizing a desire to make a difference (Huff et al., 2006) and the importance of critical independence (Learmonth, 2008). Thus, while currently practitioners currently rarely turn to management researchers for fresh insights (Hutt, 2008), this need not be the case. Consequently our final issue questions the extent both communities can be convinced of the value of the management researcher as practitioner.

**Summary of issues**

The overview of management researchers’ and practitioners’ orientations has resulted in five issues being highlighted. These relate to the extent to which the management researcher as practitioner can:

1. satisfy both foci of interest;
2. utilize theoretically and methodologically rigorous research designs without compromise;
3. meet both academic publication and practitioner impact outcomes;
4. measure practice impact.

And finally:
5. the extent both communities can be convinced of the value of the management researcher as practitioner.

CASES

In this section two cases are offered to illustrate realities of the management researcher as practitioner and illuminate the issues raised. The first, ‘Working with Newcounty’, explores research with a single organization involving four projects over a 10 year period. The second, ‘Using process consultation to support research’, draws upon a series of 12 consultancies with a variety of organizations over a 15 year period.

Working with Newcounty

In the late 1990s Adrian Thornhill and I were developing research focusing upon employees’ reactions to how organizations managed human resource aspects of strategic change. As part of this we wished to explore how public sector organizations’ employees were responding to the changes brought about by the 1998 reorganization of local government in England and Wales. One of our postgraduate students, who worked for a county council created by this reorganization, offered to
broker an introduction to the Head of Human Resources and facilitate our request for access with this gatekeeper.

Our initial request was for access to deliver a questionnaire to a sample drawn from all employees, and undertake in-depth interviews, using the anonymised data to support academic publication. In exchange, we offered to provide the organization, which we call “Newcounty” to preserve anonymity, a summary of the findings. During initial negotiations Newcounty amended the sample to exclude school based employees (mainly teachers) who they felt were atypical. Although keen to emphasize our independence and objectivity as researchers, they requested a more collaborative relationship. Following discussion additional questions were incorporated and the work delayed for one year. The former increased the utility of the research outcomes to Newcounty, enabling exploration of organizationally important issues relating to staff attitudes; the latter allowed time for changes to become embedded. Newcounty provided reprographics facilities and covered costs associated with questionnaire delivery. Our time was, to Newcounty, free of charge.

Analysis of data from the questionnaire and in-depth interviews formed the basis of the findings summary. Based upon these, the gatekeeper requested additional presentations to employees and further work to identify those issues raised by the research which could be addressed easily. At the presentations employees’ questions were answered with care, ensuring both political sensitivity and that anonymity was preserved. The data subsequently formed the basis of academic (Saunders et al., 2002) and professional (Thornhill and Saunders, 2002) publications on the management of change. The former of these used organizational justice theory as a
framework to explore and understand employees’ reactions, whilst the latter offered practical advice regarding managing employees’ reactions.

Over the next three years we developed our relationship with the gatekeeper and other employees, principally in the Human Resources Department, and discussed the possibility of undertaking a follow-up staff survey. This would allow longitudinal research, providing comparative data for Newcounty. The 2002 questionnaire included additional questions, reflecting our growing focus on the area of trust and, at Newcounty’s request, measures employees’ commitment derived from the academic literature. The in-depth interviews were amended to reflect these changes. These data were used later in our theorizing about employees reactions to change over time (Thornhill and Saunders, 2003) and trust within organizations (Saunders and Thornhill, 2004).

Between 2002 and 2005 our relationship with Newcounty developed, facilitating access to data for other projects. Colleagues also successfully tendered to deliver training to Newcounty’s employees. During this period, the original gatekeeper changed employer, and a new Head of Human Resources was appointed. Due to our now established relationship he invited us to discuss the “collaboration” and begin planning the next (2005) staff survey. He established a Steering Group who agreed to cover all costs including our time as what they termed “university based consultants”.

A Newcounty priority was to develop a positive psychological contract with its employees, aspects of which the Steering Group wished to assess. This related closely to Eisenberger et al.’s (1986) research on perceived organizational support and
Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler’s (2002) research on perceived employer obligations. With a few additions, questions drawn from their scales were incorporated into the questionnaire, prompting discussion as to whether it was now too long. As existing questions were still relevant and there was a desire to undertake longitudinal comparisons, few questions were deleted. Fortunately the length did not impact negatively on the response rate. However it meant that, unlike in Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler’s research, questions to allow exploration of reciprocity issues associated with the psychological contract were not included in the design. This detracted from these data’s potential utility for management research.

For the 2008 staff survey the Steering Group felt that, although few changes needed to be made, web delivery of the questionnaire should be considered. There were now two distinct groupings of employees; those who had access to email at work and those who did not. We highlighted whilst previous studies indicated considerable variation in response rates, the majority reporting significantly lower response rates for web (Shih and Fan, 2008), few had considered employees in their workplace. This serendipitously provided a collaborative research opportunity (Saunders, 2009). In addition, cost savings associated with web delivery meant the questionnaire could be administered to the entire population with little increase in overall costs. Subsequently the Steering Group agreed to an experiment research design, allowing the impact of web delivery to be tested, the research being undertaken at full economic cost.

The consultancy report and presentation included an analysis of the impact of different media on responses. Following the presentation to the Senior Management
Team, one newly appointed director of a service requested further tabulations to inform his planning, the first time this had happened. More generally the relationship continues to develop, discussions having already been held about future joint research.

**Using process consultations to support research**

In 1994 Roy Staughton and Christine Williams published their paper on the Service Template Process to illustrate the fit between the capabilities of a service operation and the requirements of its market. Drawing upon service quality debates in the academic literature, the process acknowledged the uniqueness of each specific service relationship, allowing user identification and definition of those aspects they believed were important. At around this time I was invited to work with them, developing the process to reflect the dyadic nature of such relationships.

Over the subsequent 15 years a series of process consultations have been used to inform the iterative development and evaluation of a process to enable learning and support subsequent action. The resultant Extended Service Template Process (ESTP) is based upon the premise that those involved in a specified relationship are likely to know most about it. Development of the ESTP, a full account of which is given in Williams and Saunders (2006), has been informed by both theoretical debates and practitioners’ needs. Process consultations have involved working with practitioners in a range of organizations to help them understand and improve their service relationships. At the same time they have provided the research data to evaluate the process and assess amendments.
Access to organizations has come through a variety of channels, including competitive consultancy bids and unsolicited invitations for which past students have sometimes acted as brokers. Each process consultation has been in response to an organization’s need to address a particular relationship issue or problem. Invariably this means that organizations expect interventions to generate some form of practice impact outcome such as improvements in service or productivity or, alternatively cost savings.

Each process consultation has involved intense management researcher-practitioner interaction. This has given access to data often not available to management researchers such as detailed insights into conflicts between alliance partners in the IT sector, and sales agents’ understandings of what support is needed to enable them to gain competitive advantage. Not surprisingly some organizations, including that of the sales agents, have inserted a non disclosure clause in the contract of engagement, retaining the proprietary rights to any intellectual property (data) created and copyright of the final report. Others have required written permission to be obtained prior to academic publication. For the remainder, we have negotiated the use of suitably anonymised data for research purposes often without seeking further permission. Throughout the process consultations we have retained the ownership of the ESTP.

To help ensure rigour ethical issues such as participant confidentiality are discussed explicitly in the consultancy proposal along with associated implications for data quality. During each consultancy participants are informed that they are not obliged to take part and given the opportunity to withdraw at any time. On the one occasion
when an organization refused to allow this, we withdrew at the proposal stage. When an organization informed us of the precise findings the research would deliver and subsequent actions that we would recommend before the work commenced; we declined to submit a proposal.

Inevitably during process consultations dilemmas and tensions have arisen. Detailed discussions with each client during the development of their proposal have ensured that these are rarely concerned with the process, structure of the report, nature of the findings or their subsequent implementation within the organization. When a group who agreed initially to take part in the creation of a Template refused, data were collected by interview negating that data’s value for our ESTP research. More frequently, addressing the demands of other aspects of academic life, whilst still meeting the clients’ requirements, has resulted in tensions. This has been most apparent in relation to timetabled teaching requirements where, particularly for more specialist modules, there is a clash with the consultancy.

Subsequent publications have been made easier by having clear research objectives related to the development of the ESTP. Individual consultancies have highlighted new management research questions; for example work exploring the mismatch between stakeholders’ perceptions and expectations for automotive skills training raised the question of the implications for skills gaps of a voluntarist approach to UK vocational education and training (Saunders et al., 2005). They have also provided opportunities for research offering new insights into service relationships relating to, for example, the provision of social housing (Williams et al., 1999) as well as sector generalizations where a series of process consultations have been undertaken.
(Williams and Saunders, 2008). However, it has been galling where permission has not been granted to use the process consultation findings for research purposes, especially where this is likely to suggest new insights either into the ESTP or service relationships.

ISSUES, OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Focus of interest

Our first issue concerns the extent the management researcher as practitioner can satisfy both management researchers’ and practitioners’ foci of interest. The two cases both indicate this is feasible, illustrating differing ways of it being achieved. They highlight the importance of agreeing research aims and data requirements with the gatekeeper and other influencers (such as employee representatives). Inevitably this necessitates ensuring data collected will address both groups foci of interest.

In the Newcounty case management researcher and practitioner foci could, in the first staff survey, be addressed by the same data. Practitioners used the report produced from these data to identify organizational issues arising from change and develop practical solutions; management researchers used the same data to theorize about employee reactions to strategic change. Subsequent iterations of the staff survey and in-depth interviews allowed longitudinal comparisons to be made as ensuring emerging management researcher and practitioner foci could be met. However, as discussed later, methodological compromises reduced the ability of the data to fully
address management researchers’ foci. In contrast in the process consultation case, management researcher and practitioner foci were different. For the former the purpose was to develop and evaluate a process, whilst for the latter it was to improve a particular relationship. Different data were therefore collected.

In both cases, the need to gain access meant that the balance of power was, at least initially, held by the organization. Management researchers had, through negotiation, to ensure the research would meet both practitioners’ and their own foci. Within these negotiations it was essential that proprietary rights to intellectual property and, in particular, the subsequent use of data and collection tools were agreed. The cases illustrate how such agreements vary considerably and the implications of such agreements for management researchers.

For some interface research, agreement can be reached to use the data in suitably anonymised form for management research without seeking further permission. For others, particularly where the research results in commercial advantage, organizations may require a non disclosure contract clause and their retention of proprietary rights to intellectual property (data) created. This can reduce the likelihood of satisfying management researchers’ foci, as findings can not be used for publication, further emphasizing the importance of early negotiation of such agreements. Where these are not possible, although insights may still be gained, the inability to use data in other contexts reduces its utility.

For both cases the requirement to satisfy practitioner foci necessitated the generation of data upon which actions could be based. However, this did necessarily result in
management researchers’ foci being lost. The management researcher as practitioner can, as illustrated by the process consultation case, undertake research applying theory to the development of a process. Data collected can also lead to alternative theoretical explanations such as those relating to skills gaps or, where a series of consultations had been undertaken, being able to offer more general enlightenment about an area such as service quality in the new public sector.

Methodological cynosure

Both cases highlight how research designs may need to be amended, principally to meet practitioner needs; emphasizing the importance of our second issue: the extent to which theoretically and methodologically rigorous research designs can be utilized without compromise. Inevitably, where amendments resulted in a reduction in the amount or range of data collected from what was theoretically desirable to what was feasible, the reduction in rigour compromised the method for management research. Despite this, amendments need not always militate against rigour. For example, in the second triennial survey for Newcounty, additional data were collected to ensure both management research and practitioners’ needs were still met. For subsequent surveys potential new management research avenues were closed by the need to keep the questionnaire to a manageable length excluding certain theoretical developments. However, the same case also highlights how unforeseen research opportunities can arise, such as research on the impact on responses of administering questionnaires online.
Practitioners’ requirements for research findings were, as emphasized by our second issue more immediate than those of management researchers. This did not result in rigour being compromised in either of the cases. Reports were written and organizational presentations given before working on research publications. In a similar vein, albeit more prosaically, Newcounty’s request for additional work took precedence over research publications. It was also noted that, although management researchers’ availability was constrained in part by the academic calendar, particularly teaching commitments, this did not impact on the rigour of the research.

Researching ethically is a requirement for all researchers, specified in both universities’ and professional bodies’ codes of ethics, and can be considered an aspect of methodological rigour. Within the cases, this involved adhering to assurances given regarding anonymity and confidentiality and, as highlighted by the process consultation case, ensuring that practitioners commissioning work were made aware of ethical implications and the need to act ethically. Where it became apparent at an early stage that this was unlikely to be possible, the process consultation case offers one possible solution: decline to submit a proposal and withdraw.

**Measured outcomes**

Our discussion of measured outcomes focused upon the differences between practitioners’ need for actionable results with a practice impact and that of management researchers for academic publications in top level journals, the third issue being concerned with extent these could both be met. The two cases indicate that meeting these measured outcomes need not be mutually exclusive. Research at
the interface is often case-study based and so might be considered parochial by top level journals. Despite this, although the research outlined has not yet resulted in publications in top level journals, it has lead to publications in internationally recognized journals. The process consultation case also illustrates how charges of parochialism might be overcome by combining a series of case studies. Both cases show how findings can inform organizations’ actions; such as ensuring increased visibility of senior managers (Newcounty) and improving a service’s productivity (process consultancy). They also indicate how publishing in additional outlets, more likely to be read by practitioners, can be used to disseminate findings, thereby enabling the transfer of knowledge to a wider practitioner audience.

As inferred by our fourth issue, the extent to which management researchers as practitioners can measure the practice impact, a focus only on publications and actionable results may be too narrow. Both cases have generated (research) income, another measurable outcome. For the process consultations this covered the full economic cost of the work. In addition the relationships developed have, as illustrated by the Newcounty case, lead to further work.

View of other

Views of the other by management researchers and practitioners vary considerably highlighting our final issue: the extent management researcher and practitioner communities can be convinced of the value of the management researcher as practitioner. Whilst some practitioners deprecate or ignore management research this was inevitably not apparent in the cases. Indeed, if it had been, it is unlikely that the
research would have taken place! Rather the two cases highlight that there is an exchange relationship and (in the Newcounty case) that views on interface research can, through positive experiences, move towards greater understanding of benefits to be gained by collaboration.

For practitioners proactive negotiation of access by management researchers often represents the start of this process of recognition of the potential value of research at the interface. The cases highlight the importance of both a broker sympathetic to management research to make initial introductions and subsequently of discussions with a gatekeeper to ensure that the value of the interface research is maximized by both parties. In making initial introductions a broker can also begin to outline the benefits to the organization.

Both cases illustrate how management researchers bring knowledge of research designs and are likely to be perceived by employees as independent of the organization. Practitioners can provide fresh insights and understandings and enable access to otherwise inaccessible data, including secondary data held by the organization. Such benefits offer a basis for convincing both management researchers and practitioners of the value of such research. Interface research was lubricated financially, either through practitioners paying for all or part of the research or, indirectly through management researchers undertaking the research and less than full economic cost, or for no payment. Both practitioners and management researchers retained influence over the conduct research at the interface: illustrated by practitioners refusing management researchers access to data, and management researchers deciding not to undertake or to withdraw from the research.
CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Despite management researcher and practitioner orientations to research being intrinsically distinct, having different foci of interest, emphasizing different methodological cynosure and with different measurable outcomes these need not prevent research at the interface. Rather, the differences in orientation outlined can offer management researchers as practitioners additional opportunities at the interface, albeit constrained at least to some extent by practitioners’ requirements.

Research at the interface can be designed to address management researchers’ and practitioners different foci of interest, but is dependent upon time being devoted early in the process to clarify the foci for both. For some research, the same data can be used to satisfy both sets of interests. For other research, some data will only be relevant to practitioners, whilst other data will only be relevant to management researchers. This is most likely where there is little or no overlap in foci. How the data collected and associated research findings are used, along with ownership of any tools created, needs to be discussed and agreed at the start of the research to help ensure that both interests will be served. However, this is unlikely to always be possible due to other constraints placed upon the process.

Differences in methodological cynosure highlight some of these constraints. Management research requires theoretically and methodologically rigorous research designs to research whilst practitioners need timely results. Pragmatic changes to research designs to meet time requirements can reduce the likelihood of meeting
rigour requirements, whilst ensuring rigour in the research design can result in the findings no longer being timely. Yet pragmatic changes need not always militate against rigour, especially where potential negative impact is recognized and addressed. It is also important the research is undertaken ethically, those involved being fully aware of the ethical implications of the methods adopted and the potential uses of the findings. Where ethical stances are likely to be compromised, it is likely to be necessary to withdraw from the research.

Although management researchers and practitioners value differing outcomes concerned with publication in top level journals and actionable results respectively, these need not be mutually exclusive. Theoretically and methodologically rigorous research design required for publication in top level journals does not prevent the research supporting actionable results which can have a practice impact. Practitioners’ requirement for timely findings are likely to dictate the order in which work is undertaken, reports and presentations for organizations being completed prior to working on publications. Research from a series of case studies may be combined overcoming charges of parochialism. Interface research can offer further benefits including additional research income, opportunities to tender for other work and access to illustrative material for teaching purposes. Consequently, whilst earlier discussion might suggest that career needs predicate against working at the interface, this need not be the case.

Inevitably for research at the interface to be successful it is necessary for both management researchers and practitioners to recognize the value of such relationships and the needs of the other. Persuading the constituents of the added value the other
brings is a two-way process. Management researchers as practitioners offer knowledge of research designs, broader theoretical understanding to inform explanations and a critical independence from the organization. In return practitioners can provide access to otherwise inaccessible data, fresh rich insights and interpretations that can help explain otherwise perplexing or counter intuitive findings. Although these may not be relevant to all research questions, undertaking research at the management researcher-practitioner interface can allow these to be accessed.

REFERENCES


Table 1: Management researcher and practitioner orientations

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<th>Focus of interest</th>
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<td>• Basic understanding</td>
<td>• Useable knowledge</td>
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<td>• General enlightenment</td>
<td>• Instrumental</td>
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<td>• Theoretical explanations of problems</td>
<td>• Practical solutions to problems</td>
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<td>• ‘Why’ knowledge</td>
<td>• ‘How to’ knowledge</td>
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<td>• Substantive theory building</td>
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<td>• Scientifically credible output</td>
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