

C-23: Checklist for Use of Qualitative Methods and Approaches

This checklist parallels one for quantitative methods included as Handout 9-1. Basic characteristics such as relevance, validity, reliability, credibility and practicality apply equally to quantitative and qualitative methods.

1. Use Qualitative Methods when....

<input type="checkbox"/>	Descriptive or explanatory information is needed about topics where too little is known to accurately predict the range of possible/likely answers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed answers that may vary from respondent to respondent are more important than being able to count how frequently respondents chose specific answers from a list of options. (<i>relevant</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information about the range of possible answers to a particular question needs to be discovered so that a closed-ended question can be developed for use in a large survey
<input type="checkbox"/>	Subtle differences in responses by gender, location, or ethnic group might not be detected through closed-ended questions. (<i>credible, valid</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Information is needed about unintended effects which have not even been imagined.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The cost of obtaining data by this method is well matched to the value of the data it provides. (<i>practical</i>)

2. You have Good Qualitative Measures.....

<input type="checkbox"/>	The data developed using the instrument is both valuable and different from (complements) quantitative data that may have been collected (<i>relevant</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The data collection instruments and methods are sufficiently well developed and explained to allow another team to replicate the qualitative measure involved and produce comparable, if not identical, findings. (<i>reliable/replicable</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The data is collected from enough sources of information so it is properly "triangulated"
<input type="checkbox"/>	The data analysis instruments and methods are sufficiently well developed and explained to allow another team to replicate the qualitative measure involved and produce comparable, if not identical, findings. (<i>reliable/replicable</i>)

