# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figures, Tables, &amp; Exhibits</th>
<th>xi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>xv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Author</td>
<td>xxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO ACTION RESEARCH</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Is Action Research?</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action Research: Some Definitions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Engage in Action Research?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps in the Process</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phases of an Action Research Study</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Are Data?</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When Is Action Research the Appropriate Choice?</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Can the Process Effect Change?</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ethical Researcher</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Terms</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion Questions</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suggested Topics</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online Activities</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER TWO: THE PROCESS BEGINS</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Action Research Environment</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying Problems Suitable for Action Research</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources for Problems or Research Topics</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering the Value of a Problem or Topic</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrowing the Focus</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Reflective Journal Revisited</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept Mapping and Focus</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Contents

Reflecting on Relevancy 41
Inquiring, Questioning, Interviewing, and Gathering Information 43
The IRB—Friend or Foe? 45
Informed Consent Forms and Assent Forms 50
A Few More Words on the IRB 52
Summary 52
Key Terms 52
Discussion Questions 53
Suggested Topics 53
Online Activities 53

CHAPTER THREE: THE LITERATURE REVIEW 55
The Literature Review and Action Research 56
What Is a Literature Review? 56
Rationale for Reviewing Literature 57
Literature Review for Action Research 57
Conducting a General Literature Review: Processes and Steps 59
Identifying and Selecting Appropriate Sources 61
Relevancy, Accuracy, and Value of Online Sources 64
Online Literature Review 65
What Experts Have to Say 70
Organizing Sources and Themes in the Literature Review 71
Writing the Review 73
Summary 79
Key Terms 80
Discussion Questions 80
Suggested Topics 80
Online Activities 81

CHAPTER FOUR: DESIGNING RESEARCH QUESTIONS 83
What Drives a Study? 84
Starting Point for Generating Questions 84
Research Considerations 88
Research Design and Research Questions 89
Research Questions as a Blueprint or Framework 89
The Research Statement 93
Contents

Characteristics of Good Research Questions 93
Questions, Questions, Questions: Examples and Practice 96
Research Umbrella as a Source for Research Questions 96
Broad Themes, Subthemes, and Research Questions 99
Returning to the Literature Review 101
Blending Ideas to Achieve Refined Overarching Questions 101
Research Questions, Chronology, and Writing 103
Summary 104
Key Terms 104
Discussion Questions 104
Suggested Topics 105
Online Activities 105

CHAPTER FIVE: IDENTIFYING DATA SETS TO INFORM INQUIRY 107
Revisiting Questions 108
Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods 108
Data Versus Data Sets 114
Data Sets That Inform 116
Aligning Multiple Forms of Data with Overarching Questions 117
Triangulation and the Triangulation Matrix 121
Qualitative Data Instruments and Schedules 123
Research and Data Collection Schedules 130
Summary 132
Key Terms 135
Discussion Questions 135
Suggested Topics 135
Online Activities 136

CHAPTER SIX: THE ACTION RESEARCHER’S TOOLS 137
Tools for Conducting Research 138
Reflective Practice 145
Identifying and Collecting Artifacts 154
Making Use of Electronic Sources and Technology 154
Summary 157
Key Terms 158
Discussion Questions 158
Suggested Topics 159
Online Activities 159
CHAPTER SEVEN: ORGANIZING, CODING, AND ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA 163

Getting Started 164
Collecting and Analyzing Data 165
Organizing Data 169
Revisiting the Triangulation Matrix 171
Examining the Pieces 171
Examining Individual Data Sets and Subsets 173
Coding and Analyzing 189
Identifying Categories and Defining Attributes 191
The Big Picture 196
Summary 197
Key Terms 197
Discussion Questions 197
Suggested Topics 198
Online Activities 198

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE ACTION RESEARCH REPORT 201

Writing the Action Research Report 202
Rationale for Writing the Report 203
Components 203
Tips for Writing 204
Reporting and Presenting Findings 206
The Action Research Report Assignment 213
Summary 216
Key Term 216
Discussion Questions 216
Suggested Topics 217
Online Activities 217

CHAPTER NINE: DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION PLAN 219

The Action Plan 220
Rationale 221
Purpose 221
When Is an Action Plan Appropriate? 222