

80 QUESTIONS OF VIVA AND OFTEN ASKED AT THE PHD PROPOSAL DEFENSE

40 Questions often Ask during Viva

1. Can you start by summarizing your thesis?
2. Now, can you summarize it in one sentence?
3. What is the idea that binds your thesis together?
4. **What motivated and inspired you to carry out this research?**
5. **What are the main issues and debates in this subject area?**
6. **Which of these does your research address?**
7. Why is the problem you have tackled worth tackling?
8. Who has had the strongest influence on the development of your subject area in theory and practice?
9. **Which are the three most important papers that relate to your thesis?**
10. **What published work is closest to yours? How is your work different?**
11. What do you know about the history of [insert something relevant]?
12. How does your work relate to [insert something relevant]?
13. **What are the most recent major developments in your area?**
14. **How did your research questions emerge?**
15. What were the crucial research decisions you made?
16. Why did you use this research methodology? What did you gain from it?
17. What were the alternatives to this methodology?
18. What would you have gained by using another approach?
19. How did you deal with the ethical implications of your work?
20. How has your view of your research topic changed?
21. How have you evaluated your work?
22. **How do you know that your findings are correct?**
23. What are the strongest/weakest parts of your work?
24. What would have improved your work?
25. To what extent does your contributions generalize?
26. Who will be most interested in your work?
27. What is the relevance of your work to other researchers?
28. What is the relevance of your work to practitioners?
29. Which aspects of your work do you intend to publish – and where?
30. **Summarise your key findings**
31. **Which of these findings are the most interesting to you? Why?**
32. **How do your findings relate to literature in your field?**
33. **What are the contributions to knowledge of your thesis?**
34. How long-term are these contributions?
35. What are the main achievements of your research?
36. What have you learned from the process of doing your PhD?
37. **What advice would you give to a research student entering this area?**
38. You propose future research. How would you start this?
39. What would be the difficulties?
40. **And, finally... What have you done that merits a PhD?**

FORTY QUESTIONS OFTEN ASKED AT THE PHD PROPOSAL DEFENSE

1. What is the research problem? What phenomenon are you trying to explain/understand?
2. What is happening "out there" (in the business world) that makes your research worthwhile? What practical problems are you trying to solve?
3. What contribution do you expect to make from this research? What theoretical gaps are you trying to fill?
4. What are your research questions? Would the answers to these research questions provide answers to your research problem?
5. What are your research objectives? Have you stated them clearly?
6. Can you achieve the understanding of your research problem through these objectives?
7. Have you defined the important terms used in your proposal? Whose definitions are you using? Why?
8. Is this subject of current interest? Why?
9. Have you collected and reviewed enough literature? Have you been exhaustive in your literature search?
10. Is your literature current (up-to-date)?
11. Have you included the seminal works in this area?
12. Have you obtained the local literature on this topic?
13. Have you reviewed and not merely copied the literature?
14. Have you written the literature coherently?
15. Have you included in the literature the major theories, concepts, factors, and variables connected with your research?
16. Where did you get your research framework? Is it your own? Why this framework?
17. How do you justify this framework?
18. What's the governing theory/theories underlying your framework?
19. What are your dependent variables?
20. How do your dependent variables reflect the phenomenon under study?
21. How do you measure your dependent variable/s?
22. What are your independent variables?
23. How do you measure these independent variables? Whose measurements are you using? Why?
24. Are there moderating variables? Why these moderators?
25. Are there intervening variables? Why these intervening variables?
26. What are the expected relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variables? Why do you expect these relationships?
27. Do your hypothesis statements reflect the relationships shown in your research model/framework?
28. Are there any definite directions in the relationships between your dependent variable and independent variables, emerging from the literature/ previous writing?
29. What is the unit of your analysis? Individual? Organizational? Group? Transaction?
30. Are your measurements referring to the same unit of analysis?
31. What is the population of your sample? What list/directory you are using?
32. What sampling technique are you going to use? Why? How are you going to choose the sample from the population?
33. Are there alternative ways of measuring your variables? If there are, why choose this one?
34. Why use a five-point scale? Seven-point scale? Why not use objective data?
35. If you use interval values in your measurements, what is the significance of the intervals? (e.g. 1 - 50, 51 - 100)?
36. Are there duplicating measurements/variables? Why?
36. How are you going to code each variable?
37. Isn't your questionnaire too short! too long?
38. What statistical tool/s are you using to test each hypothesis?
39. Why do you think this tool is appropriate?

40. Who is your response? Is he/she the most appropriate? Why? Is he/she in a position to give

valid answers? Wouldn't he/she be bias