A practitioner perspective on the

Research Process

And use of digital technologies

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CDI Research Conference 24th Feb, 2022

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A bit about me and my journey so far…

2019 – The impact of online discussion forums

2021 – The value of email and telephone guidance (undertaken with two colleagues)

2021 - Journal article: The impact of career focused online discussion forums

2022…..

Journal article based on "You've got mail" research

The research process – the worst part is getting started

Insert motivational "first step is the hardest" quote here

Imposter syndrome – it can be hard feeling the odd one out…

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The biggest challenges – What would Bear say?

Am I ready?

How to decide what to research?

What does a good research plan/bid look like?

What methods should I use?

What digital tools will help me?

Where can I get support?

What if things go wrong (e.g. not enough data).

Do I have to learn as I go?

Beware of Imposter Pac-Man

So how did I approach these important questions?

Am I ready?

How to decide what to research?
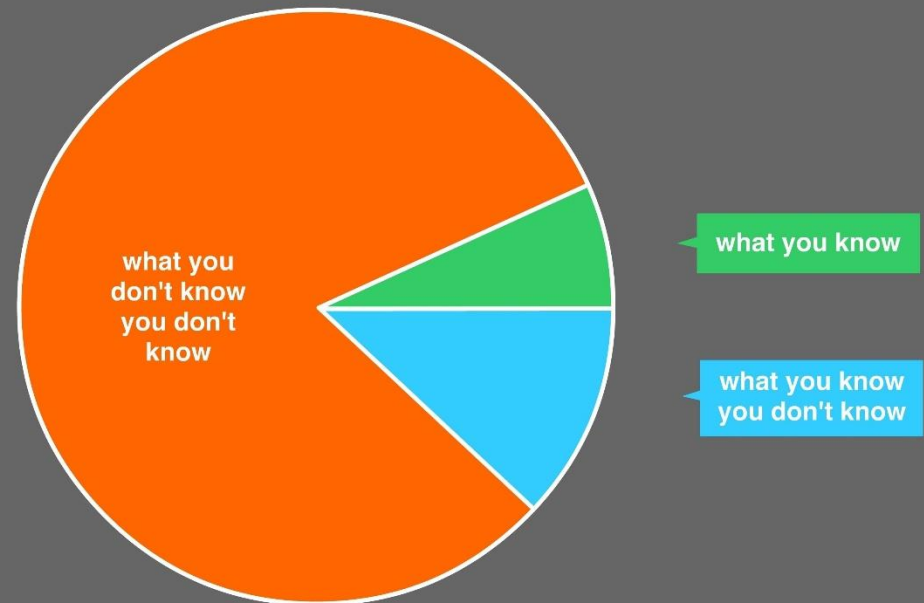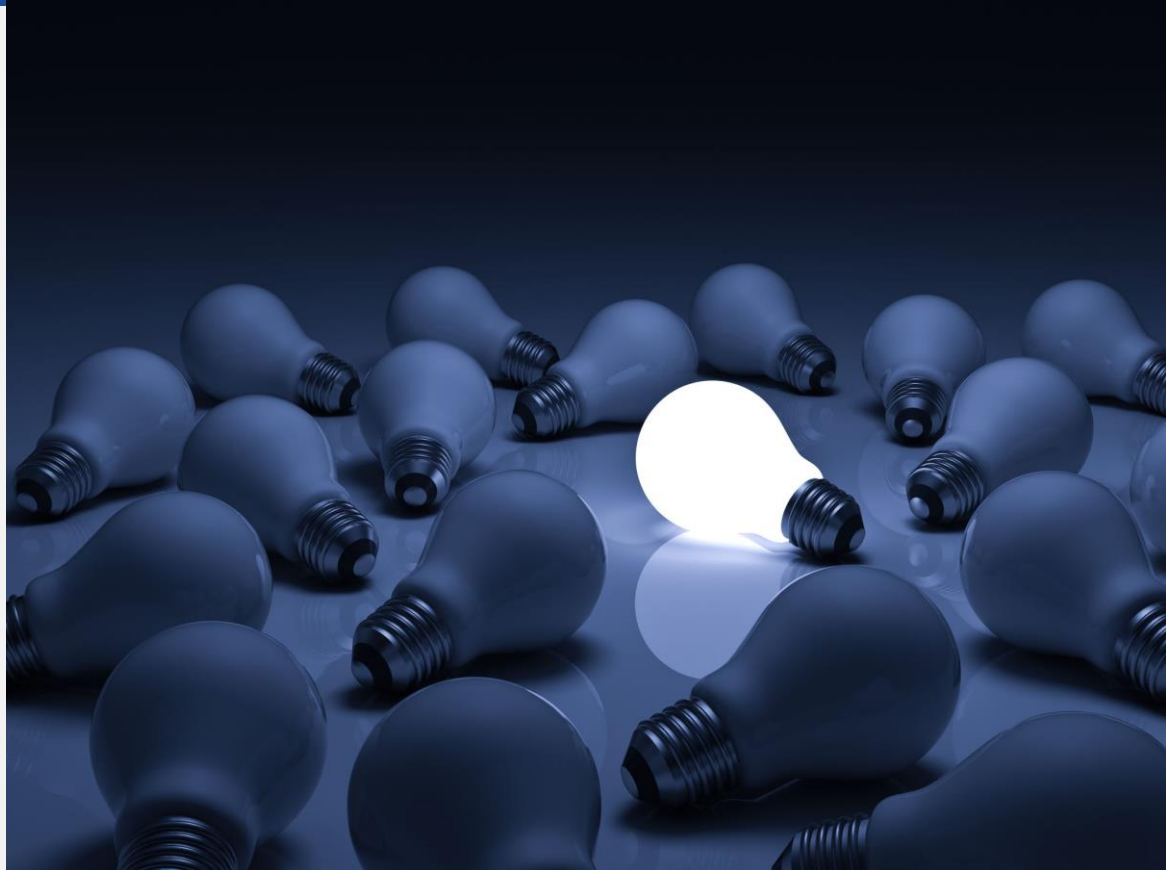
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Quick case study example: A reliance on digital technology

I used a self-completed structured **Jisc online questionnaire**. I needed to learn the package (online guides, videos, colleagues) and then user test questionnaires. I struggled to get the data.

I employed qualitative description inc coding framework of Open University student and career practitioner posts across six Careers & Employment Service hosted **online discussion forums** (ODFs). I didn't get permission from all forum participants.

Thematic analysis of **semi-structured interviews (online via Adobe Connect)** undertaken with a sample of OU Careers & Employability Consultants. I had too much data!

BUMPING ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUMS IN A SOCIAL MEDIA AGE ("IYKWIM")

Exploring the impact of career focused online discussion forums in supporting the career learning and development of Open University students

A HECSU funded research project
Leigh Fowkes | Careers & Employability Consultant | The Open University

Resources

AGCAS Phoenix (June 2020) The Research Issue

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