

Alternative approaches

■ Write a Story line

Think about the ‘*story*’ that you want to tell, and the plot of your story. According to John Zysman, professor of political economies at the University of Berkeley California, one cannot specify the problem and research arguments without careful reflection upon the intended outcome of the research project. At the start of any social science research project, one has to be aware that there are limits to the kind of evidence one can collect. In many research projects the links between arguments and evidence are unclear at the beginning of the project. In the initial phase of a project it is very useful to collect ‘stories’ from players who are directly involved, while considering the theories available, in order to unravel possible arguments for the next steps in the cycle (⊕A3). Zysman advises researchers to develop a ‘core story’ before beginning to write the final research report. This approach is often used by Anglo-Saxon researchers. It often makes their writing very persuasive. Try it!