I decided to write this book for several reasons. First, there are few textbooks that deal specifically with qualitative research in business and management. Often, professors and teachers of qualitative research in business schools use books that are written for a much wider audience, such as the social sciences more generally.

Second, of the few books that are available for students of business and management, most tend to be somewhat narrow in their treatment. They focus on just one or two research methods (such as action research and/or case study research) and often fail to appreciate the potential of different underlying research philosophies (e.g. interpretive research), or of different ways of analysing qualitative data.

Third, I have noticed a tendency for writers of qualitative books in business and management to be somewhat defensive about the use of qualitative research. The tone is one of lamenting the current lack of acceptance of qualitative research in business. Often there are complaints about how difficult it is to get qualitative research articles into the top journals.

The purposes of this book, therefore, are as follows:

- to provide a qualitative textbook that focuses specifically on business and management;
- to provide a broad, reasonably comprehensive discussion of the various qualitative research methods (and their philosophical underpinnings) that researchers can use;
- to provide a qualitative textbook that is enthusiastic and positive about the use of qualitative research in business and management.

With regard to the last point, this book provides examples of qualitative studies drawn from many business and management disciplines. Almost all of the examples have been drawn from the top journals in the disciplines concerned, e.g. *Academy of Management Journal* in management, *MIS Quarterly* in the field of information systems, or *Journal of Consumer Research* in marketing. This second edition contains over 60 examples of qualitative research articles from these top journals! This selection of examples from some of the top research journals shows that qualitative researchers in business no longer need to be apologetic or defensive about their research. It seems obvious to me that both qualitative and quantitative research methods are needed to study business phenomena.
In the remainder of this short chapter I will outline the structure of the book and highlight some of its significant features.

Part I provides an introduction to the book and an overview of qualitative research. A key theme is the contribution that qualitative research can make to research in business and management.

Part II provides an overview of some fundamental concepts in qualitative research. It looks at various approaches to research philosophy, research design, and research ethics. I believe it is important for research students to be aware of the different underlying assumptions and research designs that can inform qualitative research. All qualitative researchers should make their research designs and underlying philosophical assumptions explicit.

Part III deals with the most common research methods that are used in business and management today. I define a research method as a strategy of enquiry or a way of finding empirical data about the (social) world. Chapter 6 deals with action research, Chapter 7 case study research, Chapter 8 ethnographic research, and Chapter 9 grounded theory. A key feature of this part of the book is that it outlines the advantages and disadvantages of the various research methods.

In Part IV, I discuss the use of qualitative techniques for data collection. In business and management, the most important qualitative technique is the use of interviews (Chapter 10). However, participant observation and fieldwork are discussed in Chapter 11 and the use of documents in Chapter 12.

Part V focuses on analysing and interpreting qualitative data. The tremendous variety in approaches is reviewed in Chapter 13, whereas the following three chapters discuss three specific approaches in more detail. These are hermeneutics (Chapter 14), semiotics (Chapter 15), and narrative and metaphor (Chapter 16).

In Part VI, I look at writing up and publishing qualitative research. Chapter 17 focuses solely on the process of writing up (mostly for a thesis or dissertation), whereas Chapter 18 focuses on getting published. As journal articles tend to count much more than books in all the business and management disciplines, I provide some practical guidance with respect to getting qualitative research work published in peer-reviewed conferences and academic journals. This is one of the distinguishing features of the book.

Part VII is the concluding section. Chapter 19 looks at qualitative research in perspective. This is followed by a glossary of some of the most commonly used terms in qualitative research.