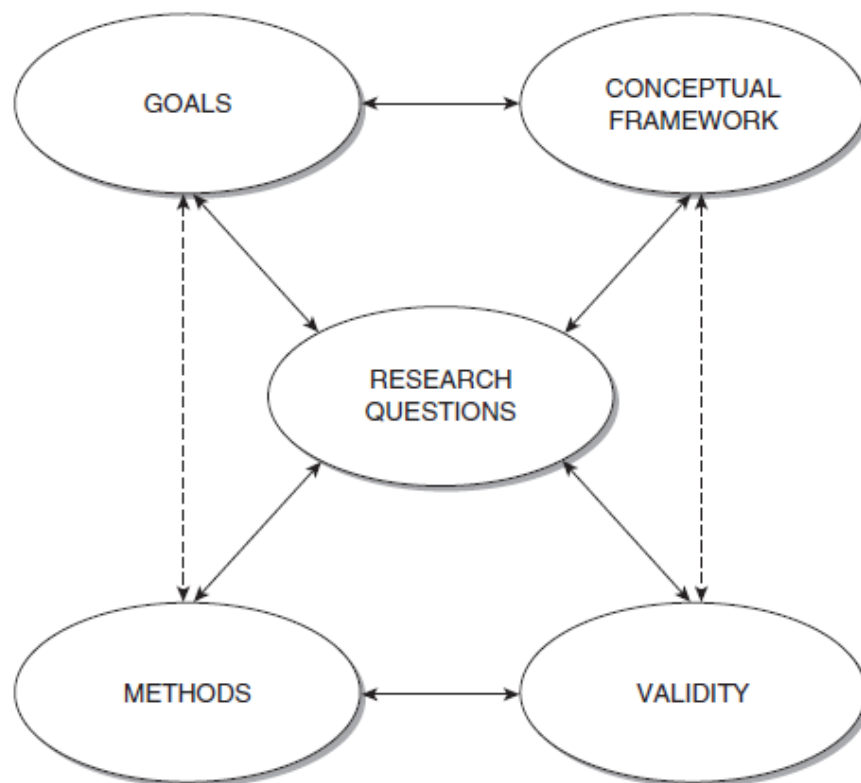


Qualitative Research Design: The Five Essential Components¹

1. Goals. Why is your study worth doing? Why do you want to conduct this study, and why should we care about the results?
2. Conceptual Framework. What do you think is going on with the issues, settings, or people you plan to study? What theories, beliefs, and prior research findings or personal experiences will guide or inform your research?
3. Research Questions. What, *specifically*, do you want to understand by doing this study? What do we *not* know about the phenomenon under consideration? What questions will your research attempt to answer, and how are they related to one another?
4. Methods. What will you actually do in this study? What methods will you use to collect and analyze your data?
5. Validity. How can you ensure that the data you collect will, a) address your research questions, b) yield correct and defensible answers to these questions, and c) apply to the larger population or process of interest?



¹ Taken from Joseph A. Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, 2nd edition. 2004. Sage Publications.