



Box 4.1 **CHOOSING THE TITLE**

It is important that the title should provide as accurate a description as possible of the content. While this does not have to be finally determined until the write-up process, it is none the less helpful to have a proposal title which helps the reader accurately gauge the intention of the researcher. Researchers will sometimes be attracted to some colourful imagery which they see as more evocative than literal language. For example, I once undertook some research on the way in which corporations sought to control the introduction of new technology-based products in order that sales of existing products should not be detrimentally affected. In the course of the research I read an article on this phenomenon from early in the twentieth century in which the writer remarked that the availability in the market of a particular new product was, from the point of view of some established companies, 'as welcome as a bomb thrower in the court of the Czar [of Russia]'. This historical imagery seemed to me to be so rich that I selected it for use in the title of a report on this research. Thus the title became 'As Welcome as a Bomb-thrower in the Court of the Czar: Tactics for Technology Suppression'. However, this was not a very good decision. Even though the part of the title after the colon was literal, the pre-colon part of the title caused confusion, as its significance was not clear. It was revealed only to those who persevered until two-thirds of the way through the report when the expression was cited and its origins revealed. I'm not trying to advocate the removal of all imagery from titles; indeed, the 'image: literal description of content' form can be rather attractive. But users of this form need to be careful not to fall into the trap that I did of selecting an image that is just a bit too obscure to be understood by the bulk of readers. Literary 'cleverness' has its place but can get in the way of clearly communicating one's intent. At the stage of a research proposal, I suggest you err on the side of a clear literal description of what it is that you intend to investigate.

identify whether the processes which produce innovation in the financial services sector are the same as those which produce innovation in the manufacturing sector.'

The rationale for the research should be provided

The rationale for the research is likely to be implicit in the discussion provided in the earlier stages of the proposal, but it should none the less be stated explicitly. Whereas the 'objectives' section of the proposal answers the 'what' question