

Book review: 'Doing Work Based Research Approaches to Enquiry for Insider – researchers' Carol Costley, Geoffrey Elliott and Paul Gibbs

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When I first saw the 'Doing Work Based Research Approaches to Enquiry for Insider – researchers' on the SAGE stand at a conference, I just had to investigate further. The cover, a clever representation of a battered spiral bound work journal invited investigation. I checked the list of contents and ordered the book.

Costley, Elliott and Gibbs have collaborated to produce a useful, practical guide to undertaking work - based research. Reality is close to the fore in this text. The position of the insider researcher in the workplace is not an armchair ride, it can be challenging, confronting and difficult. The politics, the context, and the power relations present challenges for the research and are addressed openly. The practicalities of planning and conducting the research are worked through, with attention to quantitative and qualitative methodologies and methods such as questionnaires, surveys and interviews are presented. The chapters address key aspects such as the ethics, methodology, working with others, conducting the research, evaluating the outcomes and moving beyond the research to recommendations and the steps after the research.

The text offers much to those engaged in researching their own professional practice, their own workplaces. Questions are posed which explore the role of the researcher more closely, for example on researchers' reluctance to produce case studies of reflective practices and the blurring of the researcher/practitioner roles. These questions are important to address and exemplify the experiences of the authors in the field. People undertaking professional doctorates, undertaking research into their own

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workplaces for example will find this text highly relevant as will those doing work based research projects. It is a well organised, clearly set out, realistic text and therefore to be recommended.