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## Break-even analysis revisited

- **Without Projecting Outcomes, There's Nothing to Trade Off**  
- **Simplify the Comparison Process**

### 7. Decide!

- **The Twenty-Dollar-Bill Test**

### 8. Tell Your Story

- **The New York Taxi Driver Test**
- **You, Your Client, and Your Audiences**
- **What Medium to Use?**
- **Your Story Should Have a Logical Narrative Flow**

### Some Common Pitfalls

- **Following the Eightfold Path**
- **Compulsive qualifying**
- **Showing your work**
- **Listing without explaining**
- **Style**

### Report Format

- **Table format**
- **References and sources**

### Memo Format

- **The Sound Bite and the Press Release**

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## Part II. Gathering Data for Policy Research

### In the Beginning

- **Locating Relevant Sources**
- **Documents and People**
  - People lead to people
  - People lead to documents
  - Documents lead to documents
  - Documents lead to people

### Secondhand Information

- **Multiple Sources of Firsthand Information**
- **The Search for Sources and the Search for Knowledge**

### Gaining Access and Engaging Assistance

- **Getting an Appointment**
- **Cultivating Access**
- **Exhausting Access**

### Acquiring and Using Leverage

- **Energy Plus Direction Equals Information**
- **The Defensive Informant**
Protecting Credibility

Policy Research Aims at Approximate Truths

The Risks of Premature Exposure

Strategic Dilemmas of Policy Research

Part III. "Smart (Best) Practices" Research:
Understanding and Making Use of What Look like Good Ideas from Somewhere Else

Have Realistic Expectations

"Smart Practices"

Free Lunches

Breaking Loose from Conventions and Assumptions

Characterizing and Observing the "Practice"

Characterizing the Elements of a Practice

Distinguish between elements that are "essential" and those that are "supportive"

Distinguish between "essential" and "optional" elements

Distinguish between the functions each of the elements performs and the methods used to perform them

Allowing for Variation and Complexity

Characterization should be generic and flexible, not prescriptive and overly precise

Characterization of the essential elements of a practice is not necessarily simple; it could be complex

Specimens of a smart practice in the real world look rather different from one another and require careful interpretation

Generic Vulnerabilities

But Will It Work Here?

The Target Context

The Source Contexts

Back to the Eightfold Path

Appendix A. Things Governments Do

I. Taxes

A. What You Might Do

B. Why You Might Do It

II. Regulation

A. What You Might Do

B. Why You Might Do It

III. Subsidies and Grants

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

Incentive effects
Wealth effects
Some design problems

IV. Provide a Service

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

V. Agency Budgets

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

VI. Information

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

VII. Modify Structure of Private Rights

A. What You Might Modify or Create
B. Why You Might Do It

VIII. Modify Framework of Economic Activity

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

Supporting more government intervention
Supporting less government intervention

IX. Education and Consultation

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

X. Financing and Contracting

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

XI. Bureaucratic and Political Reforms

A. What You Might Do
B. Why You Might Do It

Appendix B. Semantic Tips: A Summary

Defining the Problem
Assembling the Evidence
Constructing the Alternatives
Selecting Criteria
Projecting Outcomes
Confronting Trade-offs
Doing Smart Practices Research