

emphasis for inquiry and research broadly defined. Assistance in moving into a starting position is provided for through the series of questions which partly incorporate and partly lead to deriving criteria for precisely the kinds of decisions that commonly must be taken to get started. In either case, the questions provide guidelines or sufficient direction to formulate guidelines for such decisions. The discriminating reader will want to scan them all and use those that most help.

WHY FIRST STEPS CONFOUND

A relatively unexplored question is why first steps seem to confound so many. This seems highly important to explore before jumping to ideas on what remedial action might be taken in general and for individual investigators. Without meaning to provide crutch or alibi, establishing understanding first on this point might liberate relative newcomers who might too early think that there must be answers that they are missing and that all the shortcomings must be their own. That line of defensive thought plus any defensiveness on the part of mentors with high needs for structure and certainty themselves can inhibit precisely the kind of openness and candor most desired for learning the art and craft of research and completing successful projects.

Defining the Problem Area Is a Neglected Problem Area

The difficulties (problems), of course, for those engaged in first steps as well as for those who would undertake the presumption to write about them are several. That is, just looking at the state of the art in general without getting into highly individualized infirmities or the particular demands of particular projects.