

## AMPLIFY YOUR STORY: Analyzing Qualitative Data—Tips+Tools

**Purpose:** Qualitative data (stories, text, images and so forth) are so much more than numbers. It is an opportunity to capture some of life’s complexities and nuances and allows us to *make meaning* of our data. The data becomes richer this way, but the analysis can also be more challenging and time-consuming. Here are some of our favorite tips for getting started with your qualitative data analysis.

More emPower Tools  
+ learn more about each topic  
[thecapacitycollective.org/resources](http://thecapacitycollective.org/resources)

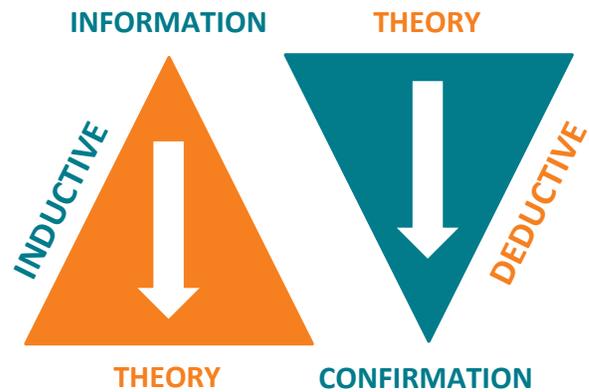
### What Is in Qualitative Data?

See the *Collect Meaningful Data: Beyond Numbers—Collecting Qualitative Data emPower Tool* for more ideas

-  **Text**  
Articles, blogs, books, poetry, stories, transcripts, polices
-  **Images**  
Photos, drawings, advertising, TV shows, movies, videos
-  **Audio**  
Stories, podcasts, oral histories, music, speeches, hearings
-  **More!**  
Don't be afraid to be creative!

### Pick an Approach: Deductive or Inductive?

Do you have a theory, and want to look for evidence (inductive)? Or do you want to comb through the data to see what patterns emerge (deductive)?



### Concept

What you have chosen to measure. To measure a concept well, break it down into components. Example: measuring a “healthy birth.” Break down what makes a birth “healthy” into concrete things to **code** (identify and track to find patterns): birth weight, birth method, etc.

### Operationalization

What you *really* mean for each concept you want to measure, so you can create a **codebook** (a “glossary” of the concepts you plan to track). For example, how will you know a healthy birth when you see it, or what counts as a healthy birth?

# C.O.R.E.

### Reflexivity

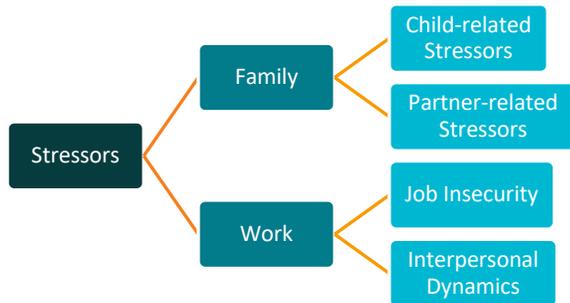
Consider your **subject position** (personal point of view) and what you consider “normal.” Are you making any assumptions that will impact the data? What might be left out if you see {concept} that way?

### Engagement

To whom does the data belong? If we believe in **data justice**, our clients should own their data. Engage clients in every stage and share the results with them regularly (see the **Amplify Your Story: Create Feedback Loops emPower Tool**).

## Analyzing Your Content

**DEDUCTIVE:** Start by organizing your **codebook**. What concepts will you code for, and how will you know them when you see them? For example, you want to understand the stressors your clients are facing, and how the codes will relate to one another.



**INDUCTIVE:** Start by coding the first few items (like the first few documents or songs). Get a feel for the data and start to create a codebook. Next, go line by line from the beginning. Code for what seems interesting, given your research goals (see pullout box for ideas →). Keep adding to your codebook, noting what you mean by the codes (what “counts” for that code). When done, **categorize** codes (grouping similar), then pull out **themes** that emerge. This is an iterative process; plan to read/watch items more than once and keep being **reflexive** (reflecting on how you and the data impact each other).

## Sample Codebook

**Stressors:** aspects of the client’s life that cause the person to feel stressed. Include words: “worry”... [list]

- **Family:** Expressions of stress related to family, direct or extended family, including parents... [list]
  - **Child-Related Stressors:** Expressions of stress related to child development... [list]
  - **Partner-Related Stressors:** Expression of stress related to partner, including IPV... [list]
- **Work:** Expressions of stress related to job, work, employment, job search, wages, coworkers... [list]
 

Example: **Job Insecurity:** Any reference to being unsure if their job will last, economic trends... [list]

**Coding: Where do I start?** *Questions to get you going:*  
*What?* - Identify the underlying issue and the phenomenon  
*Who?* - Identify the actors involved and the roles they play.  
*How?* - Identify the aspects of phenomenon  
*When? How long? Where?* - Time, course and location  
*How much? How long?* - Identify the intensity  
*Why?* - Identify the reasons attached to the phenomenon  
*What for?* - Identify the intention or purpose  
*By which?* - Strategies and tactics to achieve the goal

## Coding with a Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) Software

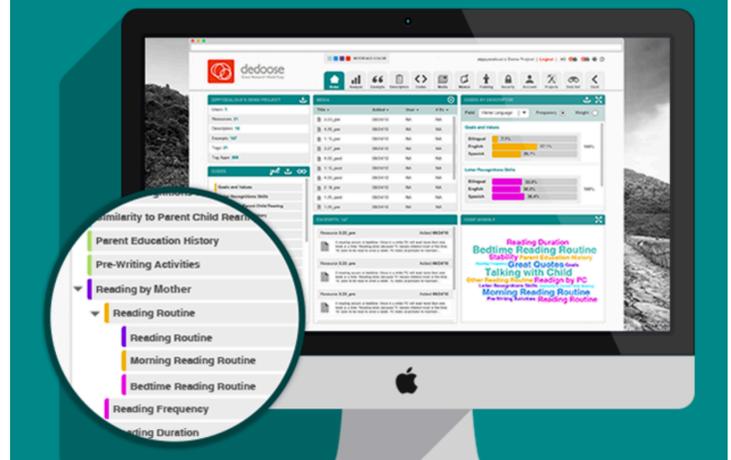
There are several QDA platforms on the market to help you analyze qualitative data, including R, Atlas.ti and NVivo. Dedoose is an affordable option, and is online, so you won’t have to invest in an expensive software package.



**Dedoose is an online qualitative analysis platform. With Dedoose, you can:**

- Organize the items you want to analyze (such as the documents or photos)
- Highlight and code text or aspects of images or videos
- Organize codes into categories (the parent and children codes)
- Count the incidences of codes to help you explore patterns in the data
- Support inductive (starting with codes) or deductive approaches (coding as you go through each item)

- Online platform ([www.dedoose.com](http://www.dedoose.com))
- 30-day free trial, then \$10.95/mo.
- Only charges for months you use



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