

What should be included in your one-page thesis proposal?

1. **Title:** a good thesis title should indicate a *causal* relation (I.V. vs. D.V.), a *construct/framework* (e.g., self-gifting, nostalgia, compromise effect, DuPont identity), or a “new” concept or *model* (neuro-marketing, conspicuous consumption, random walk on corporate failure). This immediately tells the readers about the (difficulty) *level* of your thesis.
2. **Management Issue(s):** we generally start with an industry (semiconductor, biomedical, FinTech, m-shopping), a market (iCar, online game, luxury goods), and/or a product (cosmetics, touch panel, machinery, Bike), and discuss the management issues the decision makers face. This not only highlights your understanding and knowledge about the industry (e.g., what is Freemium? Why Wal-Mart closes stores? Why Chinese P2P platform collapses? How serious is the privacy concerns on social media?), but also tell the readers about your *research design* (survey-, database-, or case- oriented) and possible *sampling plan* (i.e., sampling on channels, bloggers, credit card user, managers, or CXOs).
3. **Research Issues:** you then “translate” the management issue into the academic language, and identify the *20/80 rule of research issues* that you want to investigate, e.g., revenue-profit relations among cross-elasticity 、 substitute rate 、 halo effect 、 and organic growth, operational definition of “sustainability” 、 “resource configuration” 、 and VPC (value-price-cost) model. *Literature review* can be helpful at this point of time. In general, you need no more than three top-tier journal articles to explain the research issue. You don’t have to lay out SEM-type of research frame/flow, but need to clearly clarify the causal relations among the constructs, models, or hypotheses that you intend to investigate.
4. **Research objectives:** you then summarize/list the above discussions into numeral objectives (no more than five). Again, literature review might be helpful here. You can identify the ignored or biased research that past studies have conducted. Research objectives in general are the restatement of *hypotheses testing* of the causal relations (theoretical framework) you have identified above.
5. **Your Contribution:** possible contributions can be coming from your unique database, emerging management issues, larger sample size (compared to the past), theoretical framework, research methodology, new discoveries of the expected research results, or a good overview/summary of past complex debates and unresolved issues.