1) Start with a Research-Worthy Problem
   a) Problem =
      i) Something going wrong
         (1) Active, not passive
         (2) i.e. a missed opportunity is not a problem
      ii) Impacts people
         (1) “pain and suffering”
         (2) Identifiable, meaningful population
            (a) Not just a single person or specific company or organization
            (b) Generalizable
   b) No “adequate” solution currently available

2) Research = Original contribution to the body of knowledge
   a) Original =
      i) Individual work
      ii) Something new, however small, added to our understanding
         (1) Explore the unknown
         (2) If the answer is already known, not research
   b) Body of knowledge =
      i) Applicable to the domain of your discipline (i.e. computing technology in education, information systems, etc)
      ii) Anchored in previous research and/or theory

3) Research-Worthy =
   a) Theoretical basis for the problem’s
      i) Cause(s)
      ii) Impact – who it effects
      iii) Intensity – why it causes so much “pain and suffering”
   b) Implies an appropriate solution
      i) Within the domain of your discipline
      ii) For which you have adequate resources
      iii) For dissertation-level scholarship

4) The Problem Drives the Study
   a) Not all problem domains can support all types of study
   b) Domain breadth
      i) Very narrow domains have tightly prescribed study parameters
      ii) I.e. mathematics
   c) Domain maturity
      i) Existing body of research prescribes study parameters
      ii) I.e. can’t do an experiment if treatments have not yet been developed
5) Regardless of the Type of Study, You Need Research Question(s)
   a) How your solution can address the problem
      i) Answers to the questions make contribution to resolving the problem
   b) Nature of questions tied to type of study
      i) I.e. experimental study research questions quite different from developmental
   c) Outline for the study
      i) Methodology organized around how to answer the questions
      ii) Results organized around the answers derived