Apply

# Exercise 7.1

Drawing on what you know so far about different models of social research, consider whether the way you have framed your research problem is primarily positivist, naturalist or constructionist. Now consider what you might gain or lose by reframing it in terms of a different model.

# Exercise 7.2

Howard Becker reports that his colleague Bernard Beck responded to students seeking to theorize about their data by instructing them: ‘Tell me what you’ve found out, but without using any of the identifying characteristics of the actual case’ (1998: 126).

Becker gives the example of his own research on Chicago teachers which seemed to show that these teachers sought to improve their situation by moving to different schools rather than trying to get promoted in their present school. Using his data but forbidden to talk about ‘teachers’ or ‘schools’, how might Becker have generated an account of his research that would have satisfied Beck?

# Exercise 7.2 Model answer

Becker could have formulated his research as a student of career movements and talked about ‘sideways moves’. Alternatively, he could have described it as about ‘social mobility’ and distinguished between intra-organizational mobility and inter-organizational mobility.