

The Inspector General in Theory and Practice

John Carey

Inspectors General: Why?

"If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself."

James Madison, *Federalist* No. 51, February 8, 1788

Inspectors General: Why?

"A dominant feature of the American political culture is a distrust of government. A corollary is an unquenchable thirst for accountability that cuts across the political spectrum.... The OIGs symbolize a public value that has widespread public appeal: the interest in assuring taxpayers that their hard-earned money, grudgingly given for public purposes, is well spent."

Mark H. Moore and Margaret Jane Gates

Inspectors-General: Junkyard Dogs or Man's Best Friend?

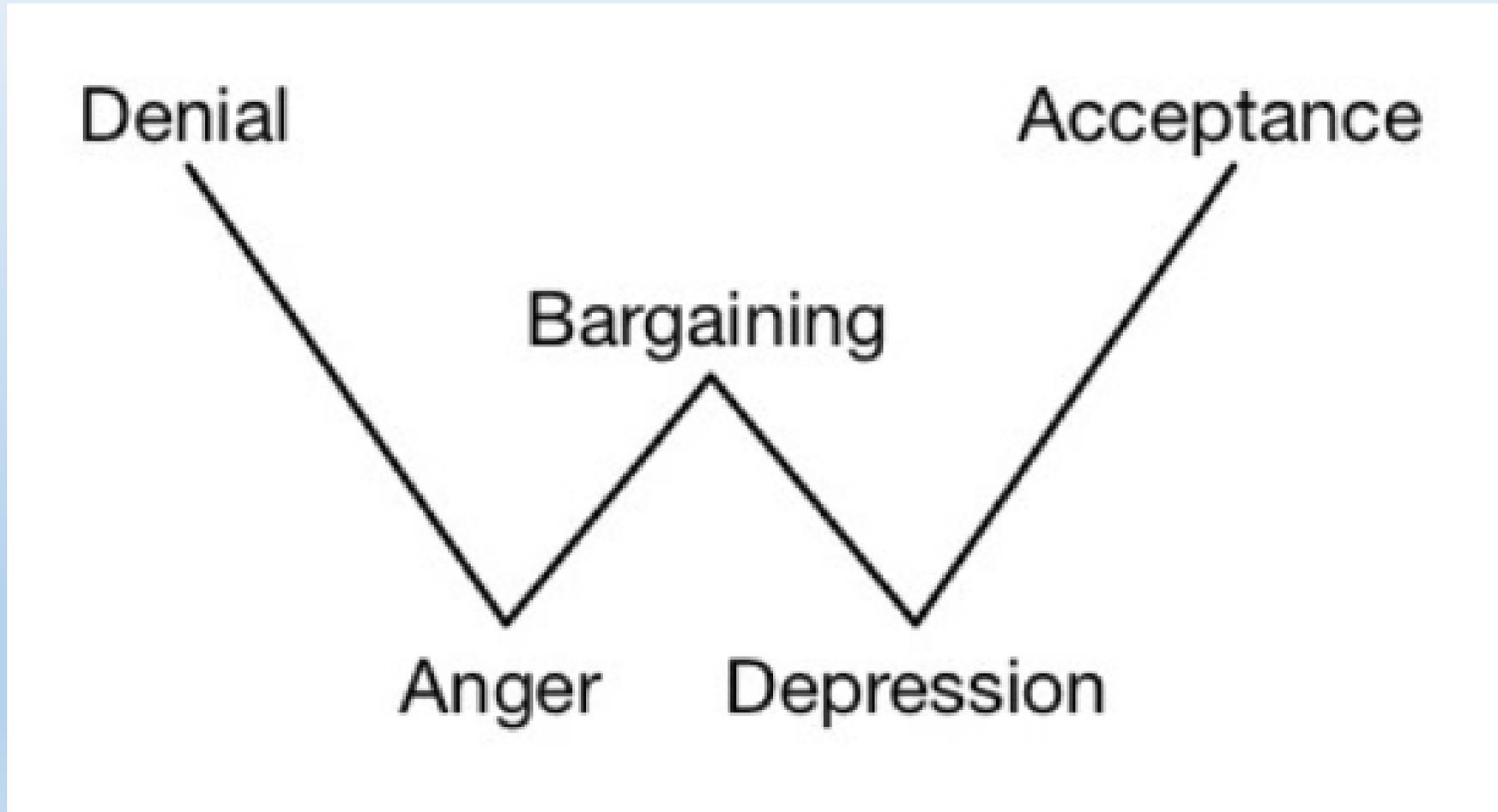
The American Inspector General concept is our contribution to democracy in creating a unique government entity as a check and balance over other government entities.

Inspectors General: Why?

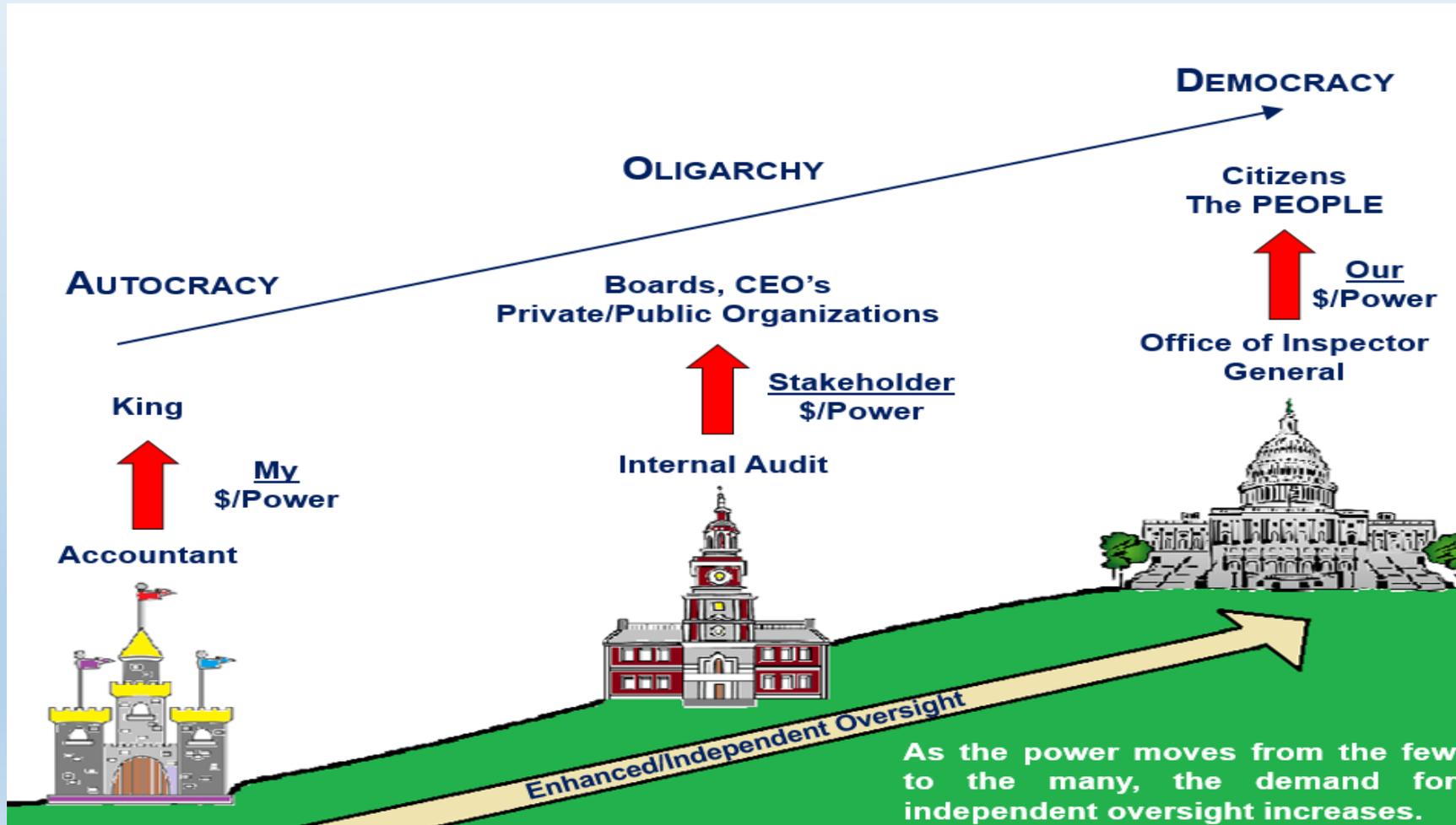
Not everyone loves the idea.

- “A typical IG is a man past middle age, spare, wrinkled, cold, passive, non-committal, with eyes of a codfish, polite in contact, but at the same time unresponsive, calm, and damnably composed as a concrete post or a plaster of paris cast, a human petrification with a heart of feldspar and without charm or friendly germ, minus bowels, passion, or a sense of humor. Happily, they never reproduce and all of them finally go to hell.” Gen George S. Patton, Jr.
- Elected official’s opining on the Inspector General ([link](#)) 

The Five Stages of Management Accepting the Inspector General



Inspectors General: The Evolution that Begat the Inspector General Concept?



But How Did This U.S. Inspector General Thing Come About?

Investigations



Audits/Reviews

[Hey You Got Peanut Butter in My Chocolate](#)
[High Quality VHS rip 1981 - YouTube](#)

What does the Inspector General do?

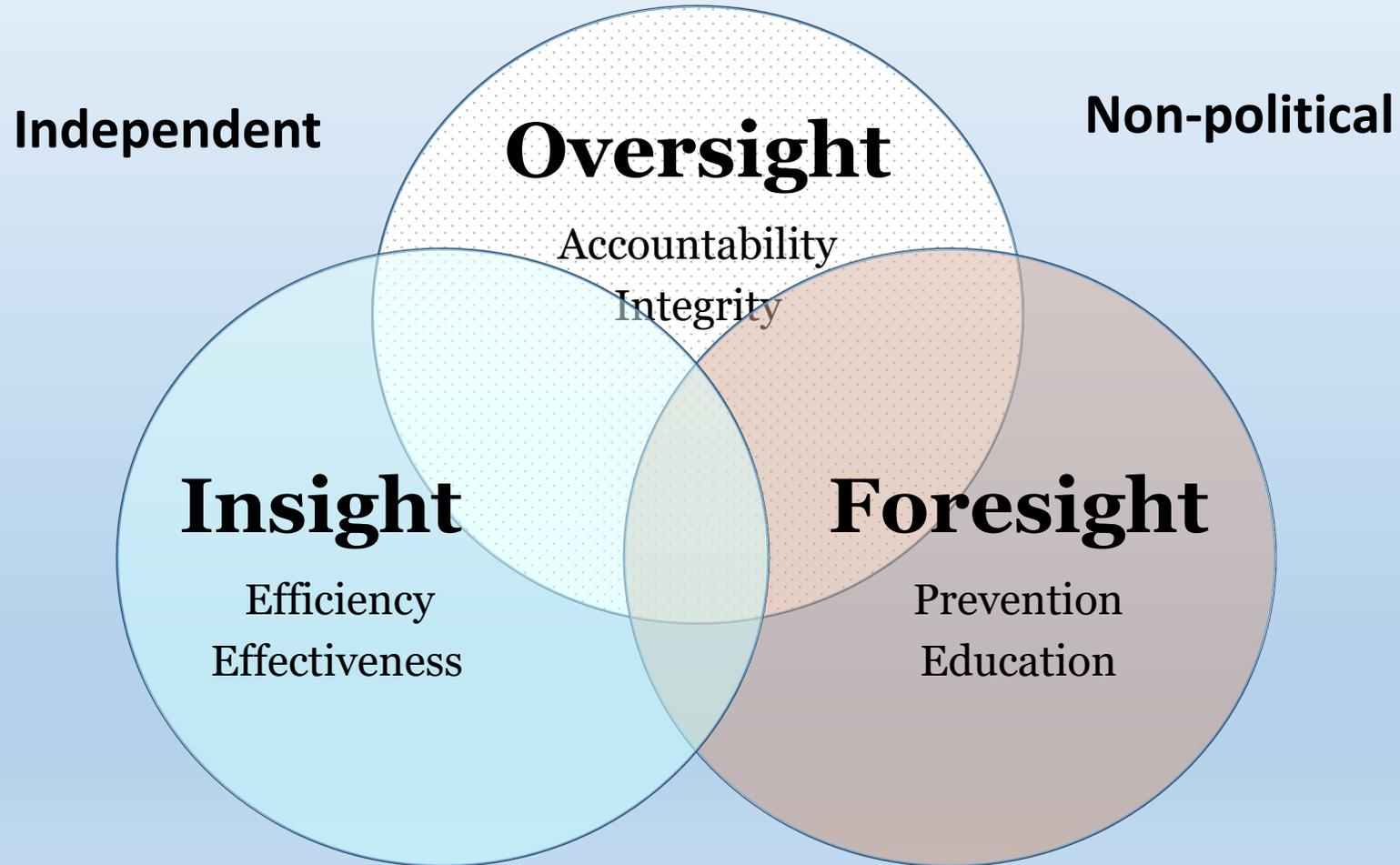
Provide *independent* and *objective* oversight in government to:

Prevent, detect and investigate fraud, waste and abuse.

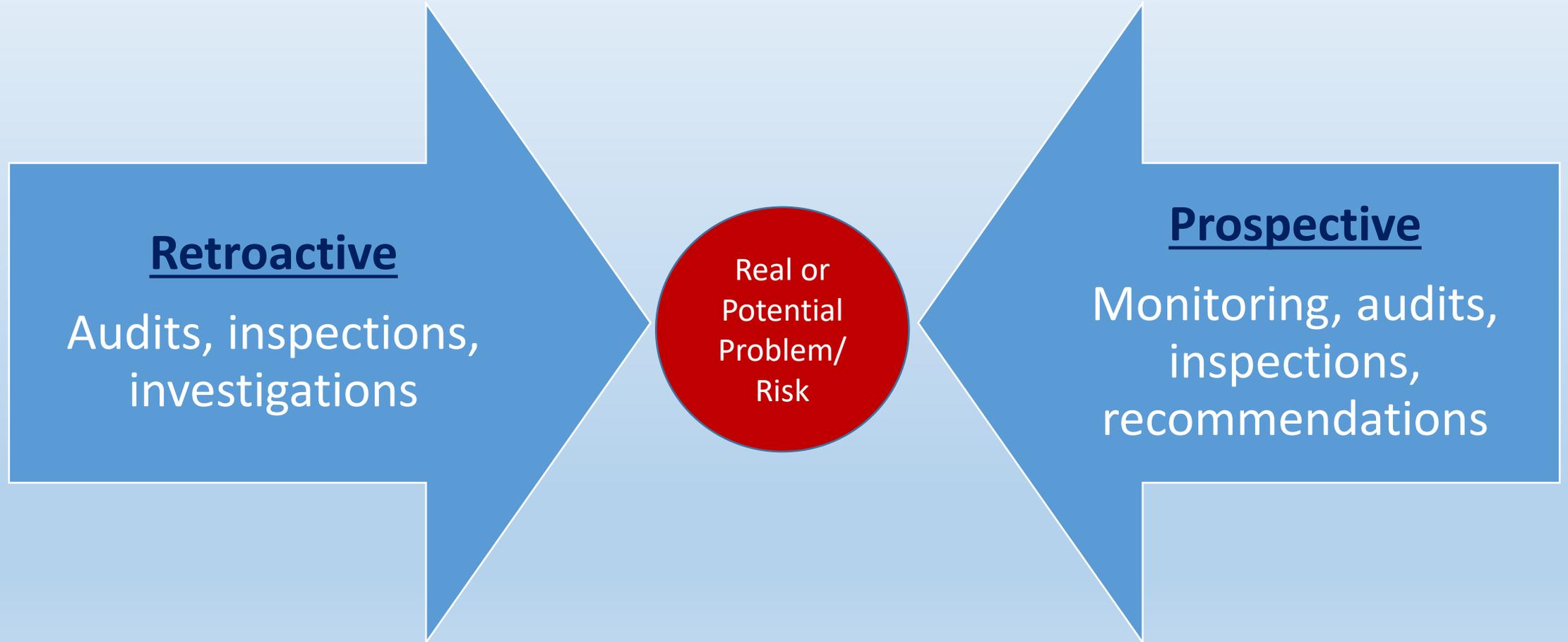


Promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and integrity.

The Inspector General Concept



Another way to look at OIG work.



The Spectrum of Inspector General work

Monitor
Teach/Train

Limited Review
“Quick Look”

Inspection
Review
Evaluation
Attestation

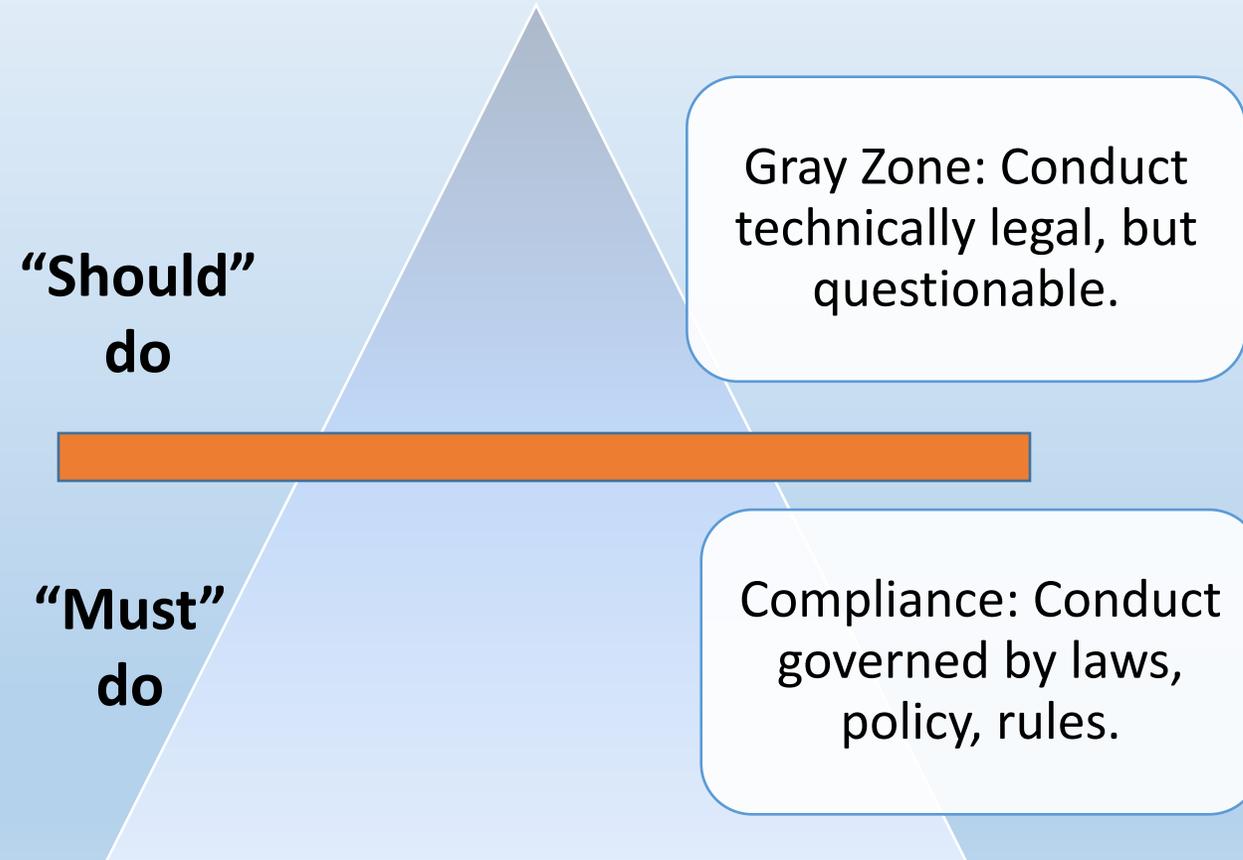
Audit
Investigation

General



Specific

IGs and the Ethics Hierarchy



What makes OIGs different from:

- Internal Auditors?
- Internal Affairs?
- Compliance Offices?
- Commissions on Ethics?
- Prosecutor Public Corruption Units?
- Non-OIG Inspection/Investigation Units?

Questions about Inspectors General

- Do you have to be titled “Office of Inspector General” to be one?
- Just because you are titled as “Office of Inspector General,” does that really mean you are one?
- Who should decide whether an organization is an “Office of Inspector General” or not?
- If so, what would the basic criteria be?

Working Together



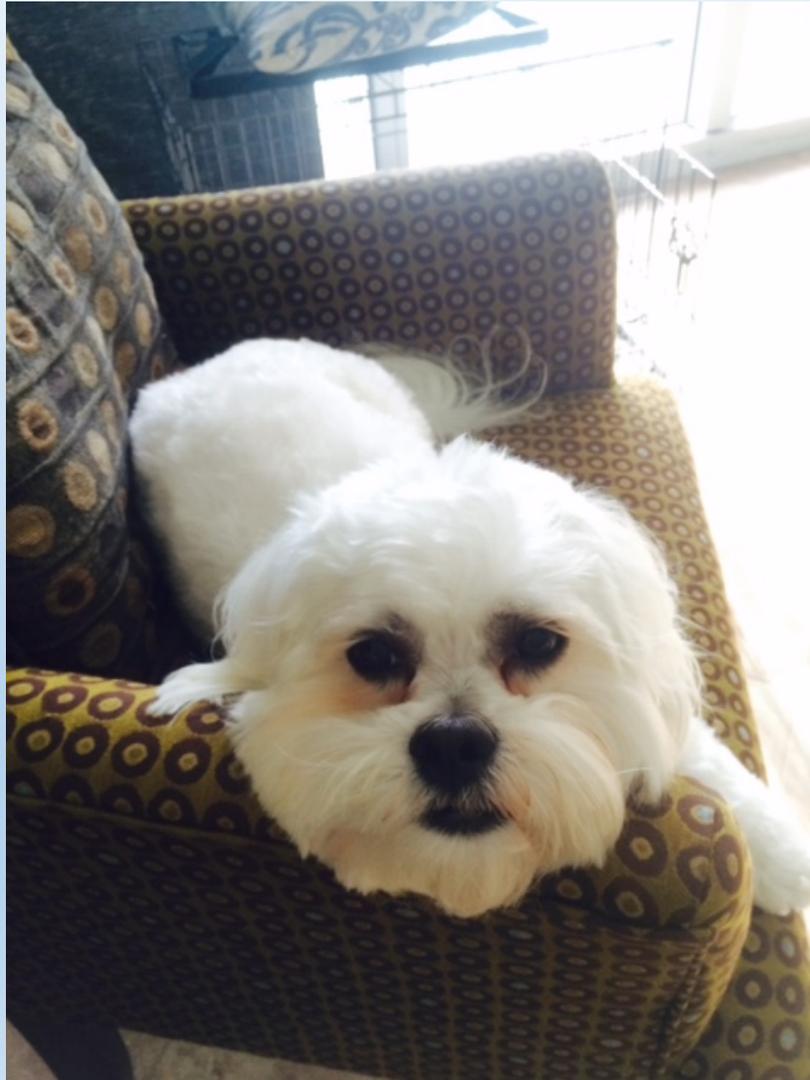
The Inspector General Approach

- How should the Office of Inspector General deal with:
 - Management?
 - Those we provide our oversight?
 - Those whom we investigate?

Attack Dog



Lap Dog



Watch Dog

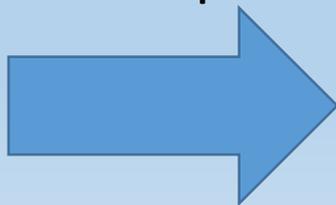


What is Inspector General “Independence?”

- Absolute or a spectrum?
- *“We cannot perform our constitutional mandate of oversight without [inspectors general].... Their work makes government more transparent, and more accountable, and that strengthens the public’s trust in our republic.... In this way, these watchdogs serve an indispensable function in our system of checks and balances.”*
Sen Charles Grassley
- Federal IG independence guidelines includes the responsibility to maintain independence *“both in fact and appearance.”* COUNCIL OF THE INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY, QUALITY STANDARDS FOR FEDERAL OFFICES OF INSPECTORS GENERAL 10 (2012)

What is Inspector General “Independence?”

- AIG independence guideline includes the responsibility to be *“free from personal and external impairments”* and *“maintain an independence attitude and appearance.”*
AIG Green Book
- The independence spectrum:
(Aspects of independence)

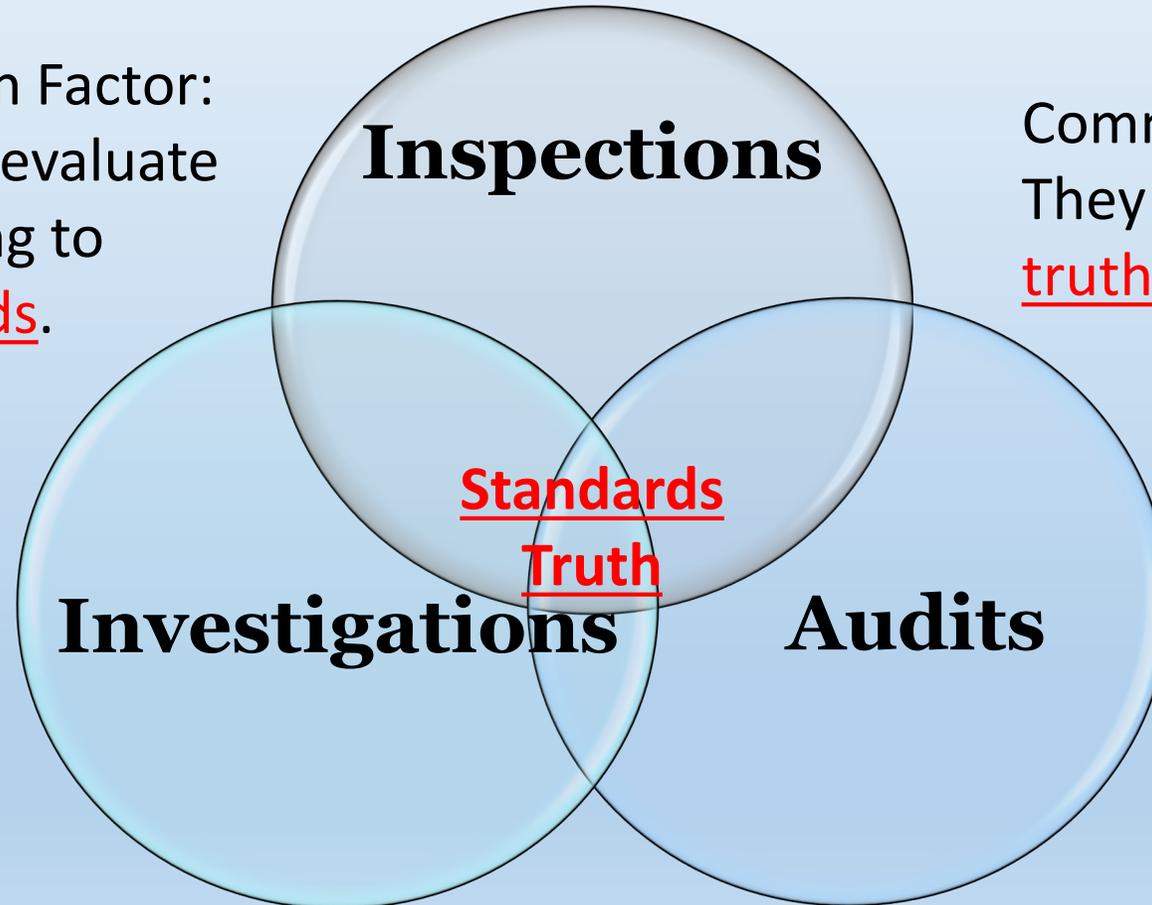


Standards	Are these “yes” or “no”; or weighted?
IG Selection/Dismissal?	
Who does the IG report to?	
Who decides what the IG will review/audit/investigation?	
Outside influences on operations/reports?	
Access to records?	
Budget?	
Personnel selection/control?	
Who is the IG’s GC?	

The Inspector General Value

Common Factor:
They all evaluate
according to
standards.

Common Factor:
They all seek the
truth.



Final IG thoughts to Ponder

- *“The world is full of obvious things which nobody by chance ever observes.”* Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
- *“Experience is not the best teach. Evaluated experience is.”*
Howard Hendricks
- *“Accountability helps achieve what you say you will do.”* Todd Mullins
- *“Inspectors Generals exist to improve agencies and get the most bang for every tax dollar.”* Sen. Charles Grassley

Final IG thoughts to Ponder

- 2012 IG Conference
 - *“The strength of a democracy is in the trust of its citizenry in its government.”* Sen Joseph Lieberman
 - *“Ultimately, what IGs provide is confidence in government.”* Ben Bernanke
- *“Ultimately, an IG is a truth seeker, a finder of facts who measures those facts against standards. We’re here to make government better.”* John Carey
- *“You (IGs) can afford to be controversial, but you cannot afford to be wrong.”* Stephen Street

Books on Inspector General Work

- *The Inspector General* (1836) Nicolay V. Gogol
- *Monitoring Government, Inspectors General and the Search for Accountability* (1993) Paul C. Light
- *Inspectors-General: Junkyard Dogs or Man's Best Friend?* (1986) Mark H. Moore and Margaret Jane Gates
- *The Inspector General Handbook: Fraud, Waste, Abuse and Other Constitutional "Enemies, Foreign and Domestic"* (2013) Joseph E. Schmitz
- *The Art of the Watchdog: Fighting Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Corruption in Government* (2014) Daniel L. Feldman and David R. Eichenath
- *U.S. Inspectors General: Truth Tellers in Turbulent Times* (2019) Charles A. Johnson and Kathryn E. Newcomer
- *The Power of Accountability: Offices of Inspector General at the State and Local Levels* (2020) Robin J. Kempf

Questions/Comments

“Whenever you inspectors general root out fraud, waste, or abuse, you increase the confidence of the American people in their government.” President George W. Bush