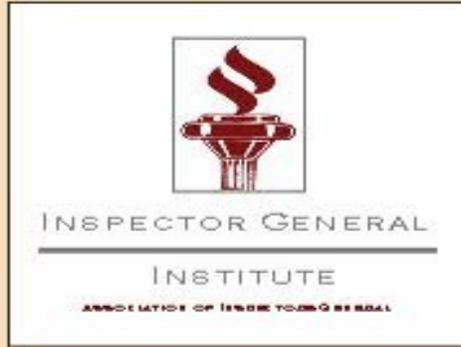


Certified Inspector General Inspector / Evaluator Course



INSPECTOR GENERAL INSTITUTE
TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION FOR INSPECTION
AND OVERSIGHT PROFESSIONALS

Interview Skills & Techniques



Presented by:
Leigh R. Anderson, PhD



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Jeff

Brian

Sasha

AMY



Course Objectives

Green Book Standards: Due Professional Care

Interviews as evidence

Differences between evaluation/inspection and investigative interviews

Planning and conducting effective interviews

Types of interview questions and how to use them

Due Professional Care

- ▶ Using good judgment in choosing inspection, evaluation, and review subjects and methodology; creating accurate and easily read working papers; and preparing reports.
- ▶ Presumes a working knowledge consistent with the objectives pertinent to the operations to be examined.
- ▶ Includes obtaining, to the extent possible, a mutual understanding of the inspection, evaluation or review scope, objectives, findings, and conclusions with the entity being reviewed.



A. Standards

OIGs and their staff should follow the Association's professional standards and comply with applicable standards of conduct. If issues of possible illegal behavior arise, OIG staff should promptly present such information to their supervisors for review and possible referral to the appropriate investigative office. In conducting an inspection, evaluation, or review, staff should employ the methods of inquiry most appropriate for the object of study. They may rely on the work of others to the extent feasible once they satisfy themselves of the quality of the work by appropriate tests or by other acceptable means.



B. Legal Requirements

Inspections, evaluations, and reviews should be initiated, conducted, and reported in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.



C. Appropriate Techniques

Methods and techniques used in each inspection, evaluation, and review should be appropriate for the circumstances and objectives.



D. Objectivity

Evidence should be gathered and reported in a fair, unbiased, and independent manner to convince the report user of the validity of the conclusions and recommendations made during the inspection, evaluation, or review.



E. Ethics

At all times the actions of OIG staff should conform with the high standards of conduct expected from OIG staff.



F. Timeliness

Work should be conducted and reported with due diligence and in a timely manner while recognizing the individual complexities of each case or project situation.



H. Accurate and Complete Documentation

Report findings, conclusions, and recommendations should be supported by adequate documentation.



I. Coordination

Appropriate OIG staff should coordinate the results of the inspections, evaluations, and reviews with appropriate officials.



Interview

- ▶ Data and fact gathering technique
- ▶ Question and answer session
- ▶ Steered by interviewer
- ▶ Aimed at obtaining quantitative and qualitative information



Orientation

Examination

Confirmation

Interview cont.

- ▶ Used to illicit facts and/or opinions of those involved in, or affected by, a particular program or project regarding its context, implementation, results, and/or impact
- ▶ Requires multi-tasking, appropriate social reactions, and split-second decision-making



Tests and Types of Evidence

Testimonial

Obtain through inquiries, interviews, or questionnaires.

Documentary

Consists of created information such as letters, contracts, accounting records, invoices, and management information on performance.

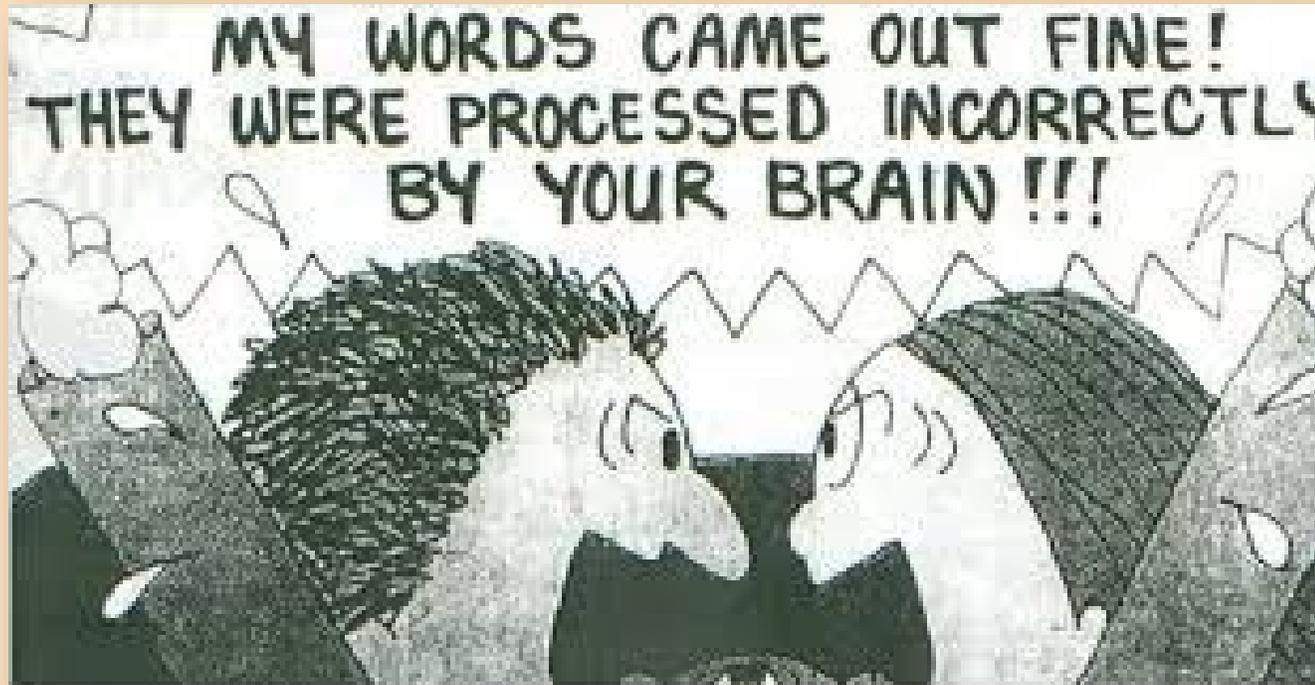
Physical

Obtained by direct inspection or observation of people, property or events.

Testimonial Evidence Pitfalls

Miscommunication: what you heard may not be what was said or meant to be said.

- Ask confirmation questions. Check with partner. Confirm later via e-mail.



Testimonial Evidence Pitfalls

Misleading: interviewee may intentionally omit information or lead you to a faulty conclusion.

- Use a mix of closed, open, and probing questions to reveal disconnects. Ask multiple people about the issue.



Testimonial Evidence Pitfalls

Mistaken: interviewee may honestly believe he is right when he is wrong.

- Ask multiple people about the issue. Check against documentary or physical evidence.



Strengthening Testimonial Evidence



- ▶ Ask multiple people about the same issue
 - Ask front-line staff, middle managers, and agency head about the same issue.
- ▶ Always have a partner
 - Confirm that you heard the same things and have the same understanding.
 - Document the interview. Have your partner review the write-up for accuracy.
- ▶ Get it in writing
 - On critical testimonial evidence or cause, confirm key information in writing (e-mail).

Evaluation/Inspection vs. Investigative Interviews

- Evaluation/inspection interviews are not forensic evidence — not to be used in cases with potential findings of wrongdoing by individuals that may result in discipline.



- Tip: It is critical to convey this difference to your interviewees!

Interview ≠ Interrogation!

Legal Considerations

Law enforcement agencies must relay certain warnings prior to any custodial interrogation (*Miranda v. Arizona* (1966))

- Protection against self-incrimination
- Right to the presence and advice of an attorney



Legal Considerations—Employee Interviews

U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Garrity v. New Jersey* (1967) enables public employers to compel their employees to make statements during investigative interviews of workplace misconduct.



- Employers can require statements from employees but only use them for employment purposes.
- Information obtained as a result of *Garrity* interviews cannot then be used in criminal prosecutions.
- There is no right to representation during an interview under *Garrity*, but state laws or union contracts may require one.

Reasons to Conduct Interviews

- ▶ **Organizational Risk Assessment (Annual Plan)**
 - Gather information, assess risk, solicit evaluation/inspection requests



- ▶ **Pre-Survey**
 - Gather baseline knowledge, assess risk



- ▶ **Entrance Conference**
 - Introductions, expectations, process, contact person



Reasons to Conduct Interviews, cont.

▶ Survey

- Gather more knowledge, test your understanding, assess risk, refine objectives, determine data available for potential methodology



▶ Fieldwork

- More detail on how things work, confirm your understanding
- Communicate testing results, determine causes



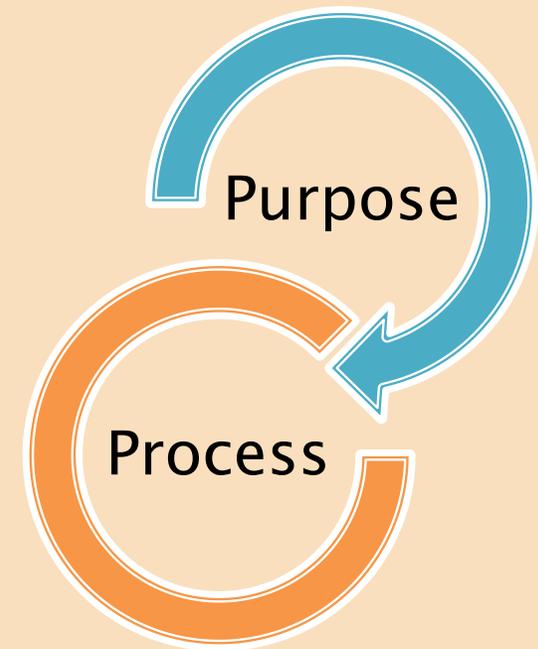
▶ Exit Conference

- Communicate findings and recommendations, resolve any disagreements on facts, set expectations for written response



Purpose and Process

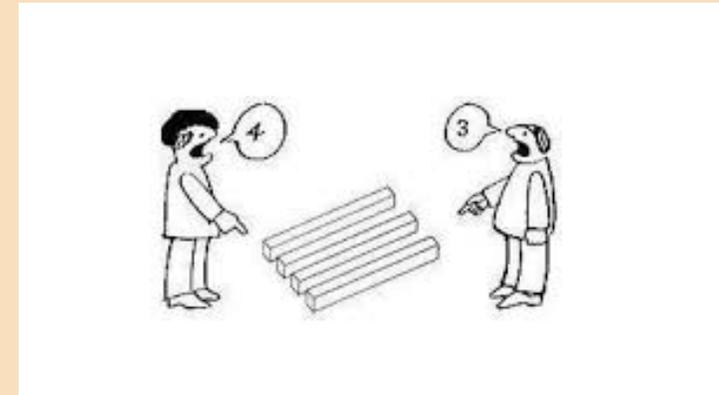
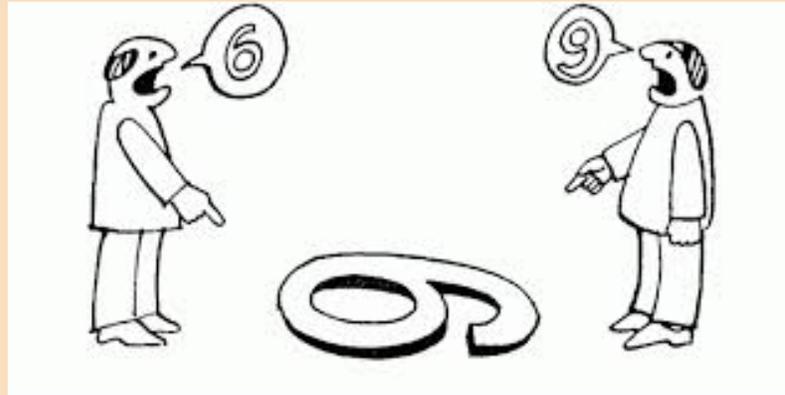
- Purpose determines process!
- Know the purpose of the interview before planning it
 - Is the purpose to orient, examine, confirm, provide information?
 - Is tone/rapport critical to build?
 - What supporting materials do I need/have I already been provided?
- Do not treat all interviews alike!



What is Conveyed?

- ▶ Everything you do and don't do communicates something about your OIG
 - You provide the interviewee with information even while you are asking the questions
- ▶ What do you want to convey about your OIG and yourself?
 - Objective, Approachable, Trustworthy, etc.
- ▶ How do you convey it?
 - Word choice, Clothing, Timing, etc.





Exercise: Perceptions



Major Steps in Interviewing

▶ Conclusion

- Ensure accomplished purpose, ask for any clarification, confirm next steps, farewell

▶ Debrief

- With partner, write up ASAP, debrief supervisor, evaluate interview, review next steps



Characteristics of an Effective Interview

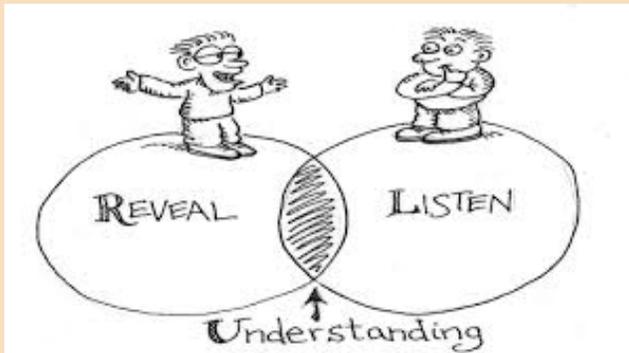
- ▶ Limited to 3–4 areas of inquiry
- ▶ Is about 45 minutes to 1–1.5 hours in duration
- ▶ Is a collaborative effort
- ▶ Has potential to obtain:
 - Verbal Information
 - Perspective
 - Facts
 - Referrals to
 - Documents
 - People



Aspects of Effective Interviewing

Understanding
the Interviewee

Using a Neutral
Tone



Perspectives & Facts

Perspectives



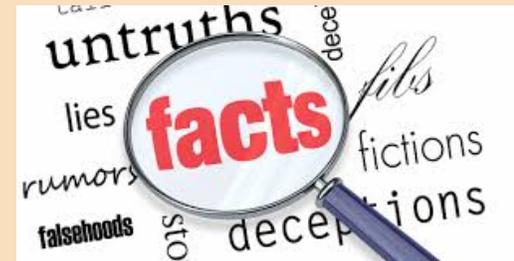
A belief, conclusion, or opinion held with confidence, but not substantiated by positive knowledge or proof.



Facts



That which is reality or actual truth. A thing that has actually happened. Something having demonstrable existence. Something that has been objectively verified.



Types of Interviews

Unstructured

- Interviewer is allowed maximum flexibility to explore themes that have not been previously considered and to follow-up on the responses that are given.

Structured

- Interview in which a standard set of pre-determined questions is established, which can be asked in the same order from one interview to another.

Orientat i on

Exami nat i on

Confir mat i on



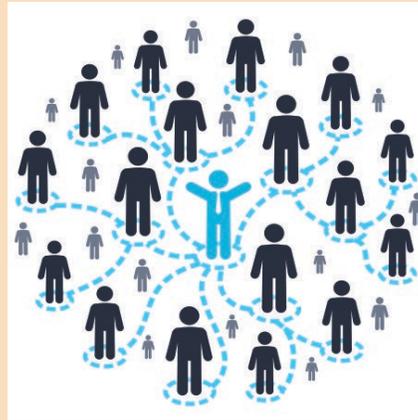
Unstructured vs. Structured: Strengths and Weaknesses

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Interviews in General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather data on various complex issues in an efficient way • Take into account situational and individual factors • Provides information that is not available from other sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitute the lowest form of evidence, which needs to be supplemented by evidence from other sources. • Can be difficult to draw general conclusions
Unstructured Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for theory building • Offers rich data • Well suited to complex subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time intensive • Additional effort involved in data analysis • Difficult to quantify data
Structured Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for hypothesis testing • Generates breadth of data • More easily quantified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited options can bias responses • Need very good advance knowledge • Difficult to reach deep understanding

Referrals to People

“Who else can provide information on...”

- (a) what was just covered in the interview, and
- (b) information the auditor identified in advance of the interview for which a source is needed



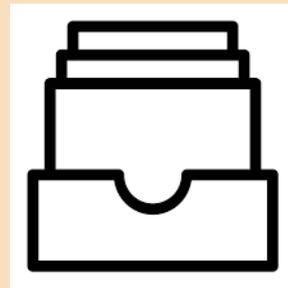
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Referrals to Documents

“Where can I find/obtain a copy of...”

- Requests for documents should be frequent
- Interviewee can identify the source of documents
- Documents support and clarify information in the interview
- Documents carry more weight than verbal evidence



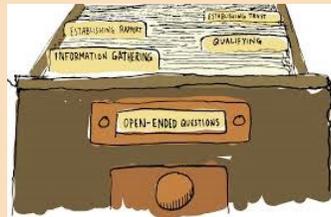
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Questioning Techniques

Closed Ended

Questions that can be answered with a “yes” or a “no” or another limited set of possible answers.



Open Ended

Questions that allow a respondent to give a freeform answer/”infinite response”.



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Open Question Examples

What are your biggest concerns about the billing process?

How does management measure results?

Would you please describe the procurement process?

What else do you think we should know about this topic?



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Closed Question Examples

Did the system upgrade take place in January?

Are there any written policies and procedures?

How many supervisors are in this section?

Have there been any prior evaluations/inspections related to this topic?



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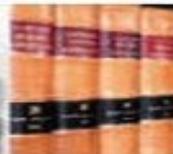


Styles of Questions

Style of Question	Example
Knowledge-Based Question	<i>When was the grant awarded?</i>
Time-Frame-Based Question	<i>How were these grants awarded last year?</i>
Opinion-Based Question	<i>Do you think the grant scheme is fair?</i>
Feeling-Based Question	<i>Do you feel comfortable about the administrative arrangements for the grant scheme?</i>



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Styles of Questions, cont.

Style of Question	Example
Sensory-Based Question	<i>What do you see when you visit the sites where grant money is used?</i>
Experience-Based Question	<i>How long have you been awarding grants? What is your background?</i>
Behavior-Based Questions	<i>Do the grant recipients treat the attached conditions seriously?</i>



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Questioning Techniques II

Leading



Questions that prompt or encourage a desired answer.

Probing

- (1) Questions that are intended to help the respondent think more deeply about the topic being discussed.
- (2) Follow-up questions when response is not fully understood, when answers are vague or ambiguous or when we want to obtain more specific or in-depth information.



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Probing Question Examples

Please tell me more about why you are concerned about the billing process.

You mentioned the WOL signs off on *each* arrest card, can you tell me why that is the case?

After the supervisor approves the invoice, what happens next?

You mentioned a software upgrade. Can you tell me how that has affected the ability to accomplish work?



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Leading Question Examples

Okay. So, he's outside the vehicle?

Okay, and your right hand is holding the gun and the gun is now being pointed into your left hip?

Okay. And then, what commands were you giving him in the car?

So, you're pointed into the [apartment] complex there?



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Major Types of Interview Questions

Direct/Closed

Obtain
specific
information

Confirm

Indirect/Open

Encourage
interviewee to
provide new
information

Probing

Clarification

Elaboration

Encouragement

Silence

Prompts
interviewee to
speak



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Approaches to Follow-Up Questions

Approaches	Examples
Clarify Important/Vague points	<i>Is this different from that...?</i>
Pursue Inconsistencies	<i>Didn't you say that...?</i>
Agree Understanding	<i>So, what you mean is...</i>
Contrast with Different Perspectives	<i>The Delegation thinks this...</i>
"What ifs"	<i>Would it be the same if...?</i>
Deconstruct Opinions	<i>Why do you say that? Could you clarify?</i>



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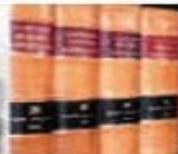


Approaches to Follow-Up Questions, cont.

Approaches	Examples
Get Examples	<i>On what occasion did this happen? Can you give an example of...?</i>
Don't Ignore the Signals	<i>Details, non-verbal, repetition</i>
Exploit Complaints	<i>How does the new system cause you problems?</i>
Make Assumptions Visible	<i>What is the basis for that...?</i>
"Unpack" Organizational Rhetoric	<i>What do you mean by "cascade"?</i>



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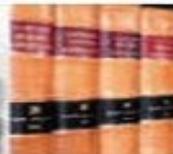


Elements of Confirmation

Area	Facts to be Confirmed
Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• applicable regulations• stable situation, i.e. no recent changes or changes expected
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• responsibilities• reporting hierarchy• stable situation, i.e. no recent changes or changes expected
Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• internal/external requirements• stable situation, i.e. no recent changes or changes expected
Other Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• no recent or upcoming evaluations or audits



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Active Listening

Definition

Occurs when the listener (receiver) provides feedback (verbal and/or non-verbal) to the speaker (sender) on the extent to which his/her message has been understood.

Purpose

To ensure that the message received by the listener is the same message that was sent by the speaker.



Listening as an Active Process

1. Hearing

Listening enough to catch what the speaker is saying.

2. Understanding

Taking the message heard and assigning it meaning through comprehension in one's own way.

3. Judging

Forming an opinion or conclusion about what was heard and/or understood.



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Active Listening Techniques

Verbal

Nonverbal



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Non-Verbal Communication

Definition

Behavior and elements of speech aside from the words themselves that transmit meaning.

Includes

Pitch, speed, tone and volume of voice, gestures and facial expressions, body posture, stance, and proximity to the listener, eye movements and contact, and dress and appearance.



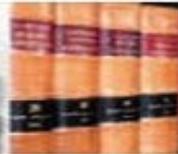
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Acknowledgement vs. Affirmation



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ac·knowl·edge

/əkˈnələj/ 

verb

1. accept or admit the existence or truth of.
"the plight of the refugees was acknowledged by the authorities"
synonyms: admit, accept, grant, allow, concede, confess, own, appreciate, recognize, realize, be aware of, be conscious of, [More](#)
2. (of a body of opinion) recognize the fact or importance or quality of.
"the art world has begun to acknowledge his genius"

acknowledge

af·firm·a·tion

/,afərˈmāSH(ə)n/ 

noun

1. the action or process of affirming something or being affirmed.
"he nodded in affirmation"
synonyms: assertion, declaration, statement, proclamation, pronouncement, attestation, assurance; [More](#)
2. emotional support or encouragement.
"the lack of one or both parents' affirmation leaves some children emotionally crippled"

affirmation

af·firm

/ə'fɜ:m/ 

verb

1. state as a fact; assert strongly and publicly.

"he affirmed the country's commitment to peace"

synonyms: declare, state, assert, aver, proclaim, pronounce, attest, swear, avow, vow, guarantee, promise, certify, pledge, give one's word, give an undertaking; *rare* asseverate

"he affirmed that they would lend military assistance"

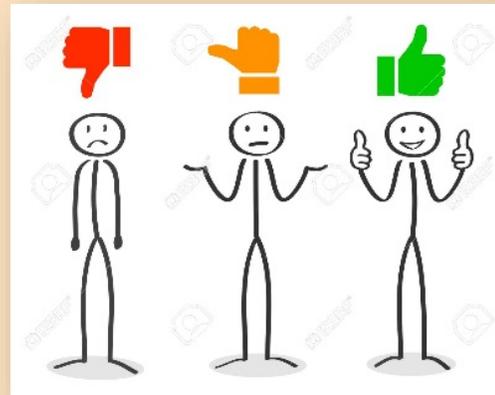
2. offer (someone) emotional support or encouragement.

"there are five common ways parents fail to affirm their children"



Non-Verbal Behaviors: Positive or Negative?

- ▶ Raising an Eyebrow
- ▶ Smiling
- ▶ Letting your head almost touch your shoulder
- ▶ Nodding your Head
- ▶ Remaining Silent
- ▶ Having Eye Contact
- ▶ Pulling Back the Corners of your Mouth
- ▶ Sighing
- ▶ Not Moving
- ▶ Looking Delighted



Paraphrasing

Verbatim

Repeating what was heard “word for word”.

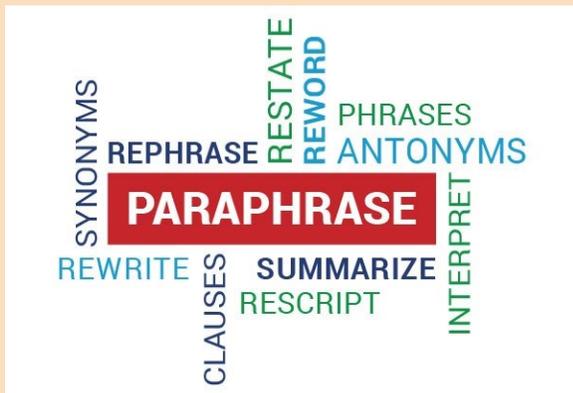
Gist

Restating the essence of what was said.

Inference

Analyst Note(s)
↓

Interpreting the meaning of what was said; can include some conclusion on the part of the interviewer.



Conducting Team Interviews

Questioner/Recorder
Approach

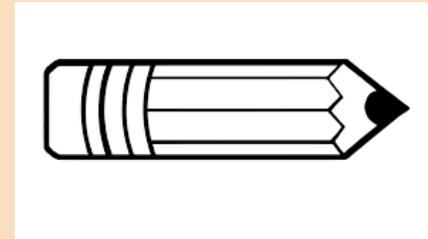
Alternating
Questions Approach

Facilitator Approach



Note-taking

- ▶ Narrative
- ▶ Word by Word
- ▶ Graphic
 - Use of pictures, lines, and diagrams to replace words
- ▶ Development of Style
 - Shorthand
 - Jottings
 - Analyst Notes



Field/Interview Notes

CITY OF CHICAGO
Office of Inspector General



Public Safety (PS) Section

Policies Manual

OIG File #IX-XXXX
[Project Title]

2XXX

REPORT OF INTERVIEW / MEETING

Meeting Date:	
Meeting Participants:	<i>[Include full names, titles, and roles if not obvious.]</i>
Meeting Location:	
Topic:	
Report Date:	
Report Author:	

[Summarize relevant factual information. Consider using bullet points or other means to organize text. It is not necessary to include questions asked or who asked them unless the question/answer exchange is critical to the information. If the meeting included causes for findings, record these carefully.]

After the entrance conference and all subsequent departmental meetings, the lead note-taker in consultation with other team staff who took notes, shall write meeting notes summarizing each meeting. Section staff shall complete meeting notes within three business days of each meeting and shall obtain input from other PS Section staff in attendance in order to ensure accuracy and completeness. The [Meeting Notes Template](#) is located in the [Templates Folder](#).

Review: Checklist for Interview Documentation

Terminating Interviews Early

- ▶ Be prepared to terminate an interview prematurely if:
 - The interviewee is called away to a work or personal emergency.
 - The interviewee is physically or mentally unable to continue.
 - There is a communication breakdown and the interview becomes hostile.
 - The interviewee provides incriminating information that needs to be turned over to Investigations.
- ▶ In any of these cases, terminate quickly and state that you will be in touch to reschedule.



Components of a Successful Interview

Preparation:

- Are you going to interview the right people for your purpose?
- Do you know enough to write relevant interview questions? (show you've done your homework and attempted to learn about the topic before the interview)
- Do you have all the relevant documents?
- Do you have a partner/notetaker and have you discussed your roles in advance?
- Directions, phone number
- Agenda, if appropriate



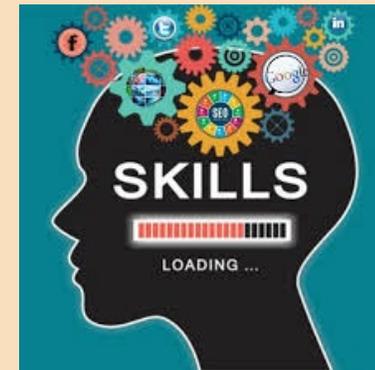
Components, cont.

Attitude:

- Openminded, unbiased, positive

Skills:

- Communication skill
 - Convey that interviewee is the expert and you want to learn from them, not find cracks in the armor or criticize what they do...
 - Tactful and professional
 - Engaged and interested
 - Appropriate level of eye contact
- Notetaking skill
- Audit skill to know what you need to know for your audit
 - Includes objectivity, reasonableness



Improving

Interviewing is a skill – like any skill, improvement requires a reinforcement cycle:





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