



The Trafficker Interview



This Training is brought to you by:

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)
Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)



AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program (AATTAP)
(877) 712-6237 | askamber@fvtc.edu | ncjtc.fvtc.edu/AMBER

Disclaimer

This project is supported by Grant #2020-MC-FX- K003 awarded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

Objectives

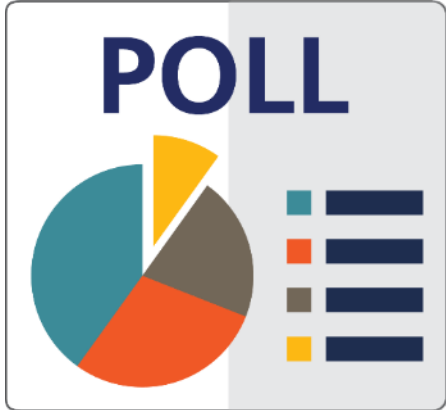
- 1 Examine **public perception** and its **impact** on your interviews.
- 2 Establish **positive and safe initial contact** with the trafficker.
- 3 Compare and contrast **behavioral-based interviews** with **evidence-based interviews**.

Objectives

- 4 Recognize how the **trafficker's** mindset, motivation, and **personality type** influences their reactions.
- 5 Identify **common admissions** by traffickers.
- 6 Discuss **common mistakes** made by law enforcement in suspect interviews.

Poll Question

- What is the single most important hurdle today which law enforcement must overcome in the suspect interview?
 - a) Miranda
 - b) Suspect perception of law enforcement
 - c) Jury watching video- their perception of law enforcement



What sounds better “suspect interview” or “suspect interrogation”?

WHY?

Terminology

- All interview contacts should be called “interviews”
- Because that is what we are doing!



Public Perception of Police

Public Perception of Police Today

Americans' Views of the Need for Changes in Policing

	Major Changes Needed	Minor Changes Needed	No Changes Needed
All Americans	58%	36%	6%
Black Americans	88%	10%	2%
Hispanic Americans	63%	33%	4%
White Americans	51%	42%	7%
Democrats	89%	10%	1%
Independents	60%	36%	4%
Republicans	14%	72%	14%
Ages 18-34	81%	16%	3%
Ages 35-49	61%	33%	7%
Ages 50-69	43%	50%	8%
Ages 65+	46%	47%	7%

Source: Gallup Survey of U.S. adults, aged 18 and older, June 23-July 6, 2020. Margin of error 1.4 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Question: Which of the following best describes your view about changes that may or may not need to be made to policing in the United States?

The New York Times

Confidence in Police Is at Record Low, Gallup Survey Finds

For the first time in its 27 years of measuring attitudes toward the police, Gallup found that a majority of American adults do not trust law enforcement.

[Give this article](#)



A protest in Chicago in July. Gallup began tracking public confidence in the police in 1993. Joshua Lott for The New York Times

What got us here? Is it our own fault?



CBS Philly NEWS SPORTS VIDEOS WEATHER CBS+ CONTESTS & MORE CBS News Philly WATCH NOW

Philadelphia Police Officer Tyree Burnett Charged After Allegedly Deleting Video From Man's Cellphone During Arrest

Body cams reveal U.S. police use less respectful language with black drivers

Footage from nearly 1000 traffic stops shows blacks are treated with less deference than whites

<https://www.science.org/content/article/body-cams-reveal-us-police-use-less-respectful-language-black-drivers>

Does not matter... we are here



Video Suspect Interviews

- Take this opportunity to show your professionalism
 - Dress professionally, no gun showing
 - Speak respectfully and professionally
 - Show empathy
 - Do not ignore exculpatory evidence

**Why are you talking to the
trafficker?**

Possible Contact Scenarios

- Suspect was detained during recovery of child-presently, no disclosure of trafficking from the child
 - Traffic Stop
 - Sting Op – Located in parking lot
 - Hospital visit

Possible Contact Scenarios

- Arrest warrant executed for suspect
- Suspect arrest after showing up post recorded call
- Child called police disclosed trafficking, suspect detained- Rare

First Impressions- Initial Contact

A person wearing a dark suit and a striped tie is holding a white rectangular sign in front of their chest. The sign has the text "MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION" written on it in bold, black and red capital letters. The background is a solid dark brown color.

**MAKE
A GOOD
FIRST
IMPRESSION**

Suspect Interview Basics

- Respectful tone and treatment
- Have as much evidence as possible
- Be thoroughly prepared
- Know your suspect
- Know your case

In the Room

- Unhandcuff if possible
- Monitor very closely at all times
- Ensure the suspect is re-searched in your presence (watch on video)
- Remember the camera (Jury) is watching, be respectful, offer food, water, bathroom. A little empathy goes a long way with a jury.



In the Room

- Let's hear some of your horror stories that have happened in the interrogation room
- Or, things that you don't like to see from investigators



No!

In the Room

- Horror stories
 - Left gun on suspect
 - Left phone on suspect
 - Suspect choked himself unconscious with necklace
 - Suspect got out by ceiling tile removal
 - Suspect cut his wrists with tab from coke can
 - Suspect tried to stab officer in neck with pen

Entering the Room

- Be courteous and introduce yourself
- Thank them for talking with you- establish conversational tone
- Remember the camera (Jury) is watching. A little empathy, respectfulness on tape goes a long way with a jury

Entering the Room

- Fulfill requests for bathroom immediately
- Fulfill requests for medical assistance immediately
- Fulfill requests for food or drink
 - Snack machine
 - Have a stash of snacks and drinks
 - Practice rule of “Thee”



Answering initial questions...

- Can I call somebody?
- Where's my phone?
- Can I go?



Answering initial questions....

- What am I charged with?



Behavioral-based Interviews vs. Evidence-based Interviews



Behavioral Interviews-

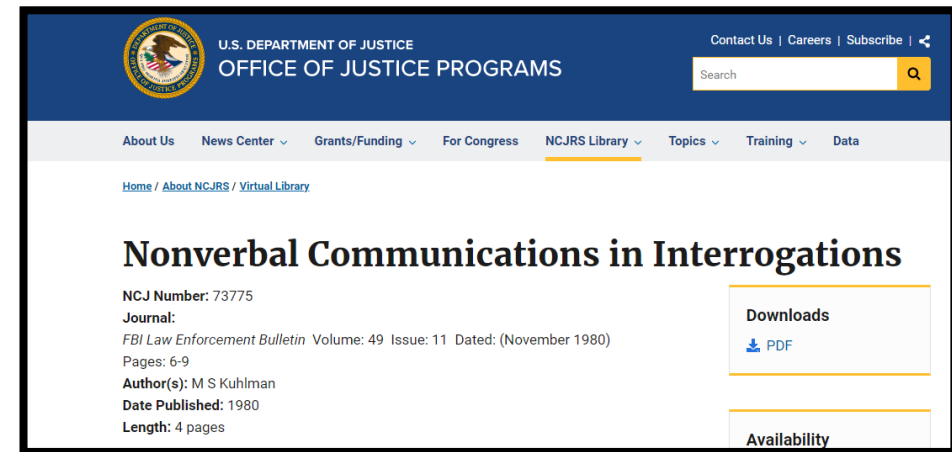
Reading body language, deceptive behaviors

- Relies on:
 - Our interpretation of body language and behaviors in the room
 - Our deception detection skill



Commonly Held Behavioral Beliefs

- Crossed legs, arms - closed off
- Running fingers through hair, lifting shirt, perspiring
- Darting eyes
- Swallowing
- Fumbling with objects



<https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/nonverbal-communications-interrogations>

How good are we?

- No better than a coin flip
- Traditionally focus on exhibition of stressors
 - EVERYONE is stressed when talking to the police!
 - You don't know this person or their baseline behaviors!

When can behavioral observations have value?

- When you don't know if a person is a witness or suspect
 - Possible false abduction reports
 - Child death, several possible suspects
 - Could help narrow down
 - Could also be dead wrong



When is behavioral valuable?

- Behavioral analysis is a tool best suited for determining
 - Why a crime is committed
 - Commonalities of certain crimes
 - Attempting to establish a profile for people who commit certain crimes

When should you rely on it?



Behavioral Strategies- if you must.....

- The more they talk the better
- Have them tell story several times, stop and ask to walk through prior parts of story
- Offer polygraph
 - Reaction is key

Most behavioral observations take aways in the room...

- Go in the “that’s very interesting and I can do nothing with it” file.



Most behavioral take aways...

- Provide little value in proving case
- In the end, gives you a hunch- which you had anyway





Preparation

Secure as much evidence as possible before interview.

Successful Suspect Interviews are Evidence-Based

- Start with victim interview
 - Asking right questions
 - Securing supporting evidence BEFORE the interview
- Rely on evidence to accompany confrontations
 - Otherwise, it's just a bluffing game

Know as much about
your suspect as possible
before your interview.

Background

- Open source data resources
- **What sources are you using?**
- **Is warrant required now for some data that used to be open?**



Background

- Social Media
- Criminal record / Warrant check
- Probation / Parole status
- CAD records
- Tickets

Interviewing the Trafficker

- Mindset, motivation, and personality type



Trafficker's Motivation

- Money
- In their mind it is an economic crime, not a victim crime



Trafficker's Motivations

- These are NOT preferential sex offenders
 - Not motivated by sexual gratification
 - Not emotionally or physically attracted to adolescents

Trafficker Profile

- Antisocial personality disorder
- Sociopath
- Psychopath
- No remorse, no regret-driven by logic, not emotion
- Master manipulators



Trafficker Profile- they enjoy manipulating!



Traffickers

- Are most comfortable when they feel in control
- Will not be intimidated
- Are not fearful of system

- **Who else does this sound like?**





Successful Suspect Interviews are Evidence-Based

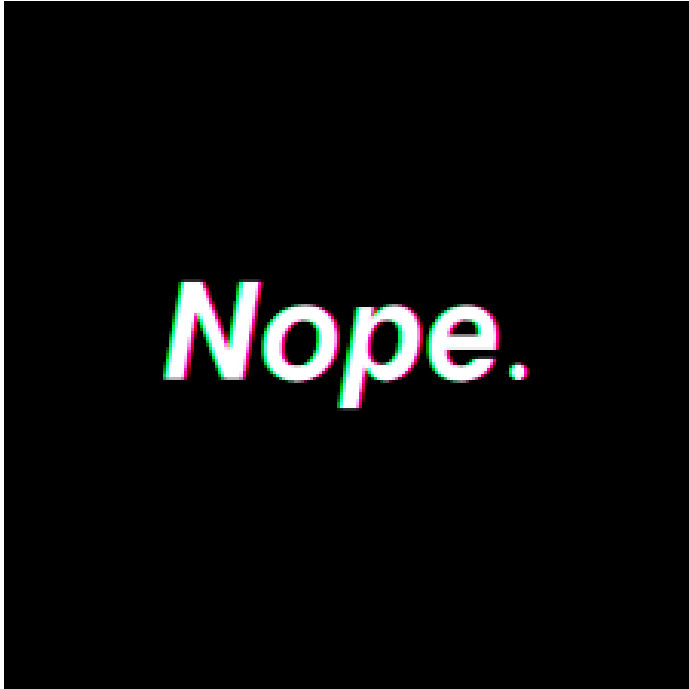
- Spotlight check
- Google phone numbers you have
- Google suspect

Element of Surprise

- Very valuable
- Have any search warrants ready with arrest warrant when you invite suspect down, if possible
- Stay in contact with those executing warrant for any valuable information to use in interview.

Example

- “I don’t even know her.”



Nope.

Your Best Weapons

- Let them talk, and they will
- Letting them feel in control



Your Best Weapons

- Calculated patience



Your Best Weapons

- Do NOT go head-to-head



Danger Zone

- Rights - They know their rights
- Rights - They have a lawyer
- Confrontation
- Questions about charge



They are only talking to you to fish for information



- Their weakness, your strength

Possible Style Approaches

It's not all you...

- Very friendly, unassuming, I don't think you are a bad guy, these girls like this money and you seem to be doing all the hard managing aspect
- Just need to get a couple things straightened out- not sure I am getting the whole story here



This train is leaving the station with or without you...

- Very respectful
 - Mountain of evidence the team here gathered and some of it does look bad and should be explained.
- I'll have to present this to some folks, and I would rather have your side of it when I do that.
- Unfortunately, it is moving forward either way.



Educate Me

- How can this be so bad, I'm not sure I understand it.
- Can you explain how this works?
- “oh, so you took the money from the girls because they often get robbed...ok”



I'm a cop and you're not...

- Not productive
- Don't try to intimidate an intimidator
- No ultimatums, they will shut it down



Admissions Vs. Full Confession

Common Trafficker Admissions

- Can be damaging- Lack of knowledge of the law
 - “She gave me her money to protect it.”
 - “She asked me to give her a ride to the track.”
 - “He asked me to meet him.”
 - “She told me she was 17.”
 - “The sex was consensual, he wanted to do it.”
 - “I rented her a room because she had nowhere to go.”

Provable Lie

- Is **NOT** as good as a confession
- Will be justified later
 - “I was scared”
 - “I felt they would pin it on me”
 - They threatened me

Provable Lie

- Better than nothing
- May possibly be valuable later when more evidence and facts are gathered and there are several provable lies.
- Casey Anthony told many provable lies- Not Guilty

Provable Lie

- Collect these
- Confrontation with evidence could shut them down
- Confront with them all at once
 - If they shut down, you have more than one

What are some
of the biggest
mistakes in the
room?



Biggest Mistakes in the Room

- Not preparing
- Not listening
- Writing
- 2 people in room
- Leaving the room
- Focusing on unimportant details
 - Who sits where
 - You can do this, can't do that

The BIGGEST

- Not searching
- **YOU** ensure a re-search
 - Every single time
 - On video



Bad Practices

- Let's make a deal
- Ignoring exculpatory evidence
- Deception
- Questionable reinitiations
- Not evaluating suspect's mental/physical state
- Subverting Miranda

Key Takeaways

- What is the single most important hurdle today which we must overcome as Law Enforcement Officers- with the public and with suspects?



Key Takeaways

- What are a few things you can do to set the stage for a successful interview?



Key Takeaways

- Name two things a trafficker will commonly admit to.



Key Takeaways

- What are some mistakes law enforcement makes in suspect interviews?





Questions and Comments

Thank you for your participation!

For assistance, please contact us:



AMBER Alert Training and Technical Assistance Program (AATTAP)
(877) 712-6237 | askamber@fvtc.edu | ncjtc.fvtc.edu/AMBER