



D19 Profiling as a Utility to Criminal Interrogations

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After attending this presentation, attendees will understand the significance of incorporating seven basic functions of profiling when conducting interrogations.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by informing investigators of seven profiling components that should be integrated into a criminal interrogation.

Criminal profiling consists of seven integrated components: (1) the investigator's knowledge and experience; (2) the crime scene; (3) victimology; (4) offender behavior before and after the crime; (5) analysis of direct evidence; (6) crime analysis of the *modus operandi*; and, (7) knowledge of the "case controls" used to validate information being provided by the suspect. This presentation will show how and why all seven of these profiling components should be thoroughly assessed prior to initiating an interrogation.

As a prelude to this discussion, it must be noted that interrogating a suspect is not the same as interviewing one. These two investigatory functions are distinctly different and defined by law as having two separate legal standards. As such, the terms cannot be used interchangeably. For this presentation, the focus is on interrogation and specifically, how criminal profiling is used during the interrogation process to manipulate a suspect into confessing and providing details of their participation in a crime.

A skilled interrogator must be experienced and have a good knowledge of human behavior. Additionally, the interrogator must be knowledgeable in a suspect's neurolinguistics and kinetics. Being able to recognize and interpret a suspect's body language during interrogation is crucial.

The interrogator must have a comprehensive knowledge of the four different types of crime scenes (organized, disorganized, confined and extended) and what each one contributes to revealing the personality of the offender. Frequently, the crime scene may exemplify the mental culpability of the suspect during the commission of a crime. Was there premeditation or did the offender supply his own instrumentalities for the commission of the crime? This alone might provide the offender with an alibi of self-defense versus premeditation.

A strong understanding of victimology is imperative for constructing questions to present to the suspect at the time of interrogation. Interpreting what happened to the victim is essential. Whether the victim is alive or deceased, the investigator must be able to decipher the interaction that transpired between the victim and the suspect. Examining and understanding whether the victim is associated with a high, medium, or low lifestyle risk category is very important.

It is vital for the interrogator to have a working knowledge of psychology and basic principles of psychiatry in order to determine the possible motivation for the crime. For example, understanding the motivation of the arsonist compared with that of the pedophile are entirely different and the interrogator must understand and deploy these distinctions against a suspect during the interrogation. These issues may lead to questions of insanity or mental incompetence by the defense.

The interrogator must have a strong knowledge of the direct or physical evidence in the case being investigated. Sometimes this is the most challenging of all seven components. Evidence collected from the victim, the crime scene, or the suspect requires time to have it analyzed in a forensic laboratory. Most frequently the more violent a crime, the more physical evidence is available. Being able to confront a suspect with forensic findings can frequently weaken an individual's alibi or denial.

Crime analysis of the *modus operandi* is a crucial analytical process that contributes significantly to assessing possible patterns of serial crimes. Patterned behaviors of the suspect before, during, and post-crime activities become very beneficial in assessing serial patterns. Knowing these patterns prior to the interrogation, an investigator can prepare questions that only the suspect is going to be able to validate. Any suspect's signature left at a series of crime scenes can eliminate "copy cat crimes" or crimes with a similar *modus operandi*.

The interrogator should have knowledge of existing "case controls," since those "case controls" are a means of validating information being disclosed by a suspect, and they can contribute to the various interrogation strategies. Only case investigators should have knowledge of this information. A skilled



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interrogator must have the ability to elicit specific information from a specific crime without disclosing the “case controls.”

By incorporating these seven components of profiling into an interrogation, the investigator can deploy the appropriate strategies and props for guiding the suspect into providing valid confession.

Criminal Profiling, Interrogation, Case Controls