

Virtual Certification Course

BEST-PRACTICE INTERVIEWING

Develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence to conduct effective, purposeful interviews.



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Her background combines educational program development with technical expertise in case management systems, open-source intelligence, online learning environments, and workflow design.



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Dr. Chris Taylor, a 30-year veteran of higher education, serves as the executive director of the International Association for Care and Threat Teams (InterACTT). He recently left his position as dean of students and chief student affairs officer at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, where he had responsibility for counseling and wellness, student advocacy, student union and programs, recreational sports, residence life, and student conduct. He also chaired the university CARE and threat team.

Chris's research interests include masculinities, ethical development in men, fraternities, student development, and violent extremism. Chris has a PhD from Miami University in Student Affairs in Higher Education and a Master's degree from Ball State University in Higher Education Administration.

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Brian is a frequent speaker and author of over 16 books on threat assessment, student mental health, gender expression and identity, DEI, counseling, campus violence, behavioral intervention, resiliency, and emotional intelligence.



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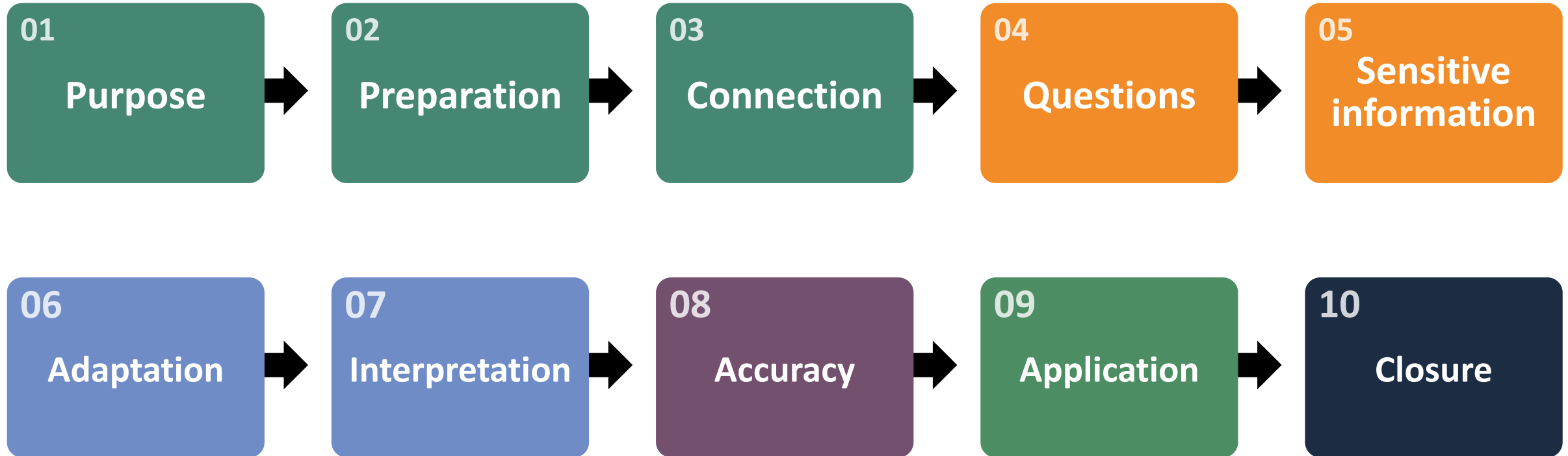


The Course Arc

Ten moves that keep the interview purposeful without making it mechanical.



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Learning Outcomes



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Clarify purpose

Define the decision the interview must inform.



Prepare intentionally

Separate known facts, interpretations, and hypotheses.



Ask better questions

Move deliberately between expansion, focus, and verification.



Adapt without drifting

Repair ruptures while preserving essential information goals.



Interpret carefully

Use observation to create questions, not conclusions.



Close accurately

Summarize, identify gaps, explain next steps, and document precisely.

MODULE ONE

Foundations and the Interviewing Process

Purpose, preparation, connection, questions, and sensitive information.

The structure stays. The tactics flex.



What Kind of Conversation

Different roles. Different purposes. Shared interviewing skills.



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An interview is defined by the decision it informs, not by the fact that one person is asking another questions.

Counseling, conduct, Title IX/VI, police, case management, AOD, suicide assessment, and threat assessment may look similar on the surface. Their information goals and outputs are not the same.

Intake vs. Interview vs. Assessment

Gathering information is not the same as making an assessment.



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INTAKE

Orients someone to a service, gathers initial information, and determines next steps.

Where do we begin?



INTERVIEW

Gathers relevant information to inform a decision, process, or intervention.

What do we need to understand?



ASSESSMENT

Adds a structured tool, rubric, evaluative question, or professional formulation.

How do we evaluate it?

Input to Processing to Output

What comes in, how you make sense of it, and what comes next.

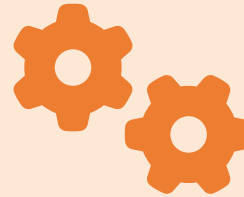


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INPUT

What information
are we trying to
obtain?



PROCESSING

How will we question,
listen, clarify,
corroborate, and
interpret?



OUTPUT

What decision,
formulation, report,
referral, intervention, or
next step follows?

**When the referral question is unclear, every
professional reaches for a familiar hammer.**

What Decision Are We Trying to Inform?



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A referral question should fit in one sentence.

I am interviewing this person to understand _____ so that _____ can be decided.



Title IX

I need to understand a report of unwanted sexual contact after a party so that we can decide what relevant facts are supported and what the college process should do to address these things.



Student Conduct

I need to understand an allegation that a student threatened a professor after failing a course so that we can decide whether the conduct process has sufficient information to move forward fairly.



Counseling

I need to understand panic, insomnia, and thoughts of self-harm so that we can decide what clinical formulation, safety response, referral, or treatment plan is appropriate.



Law Enforcement

I need to understand a residence-hall assault witnessed by another student so that we can decide what investigative or safety action is supported by the available evidence.



Case Management

I need to understand housing, food, and financial instability causing class absences so that we can decide what support plan is realistic and who will complete each next step.

Interviewing Intersectionality

Different person. Different decision. Different interview. Similar Skills.



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Counseling

Functioning & distress



Conduct

Behavior & chronology



Threat Assessment

Pathway & capability



Case Management

Needs & barriers



Title IX/VI

Neutral fact gathering



The Map is Not the Territory

The map keeps the interview purposeful.



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THE MAP



The referral question and
the required domains.

THE TERRITORY



The full human story,
including information that
may not be yours to decide.

MODULE TWO

Preparing With Intention

Know the route, not every turn.



Blank Slate vs. Prosecutor's Brief

The useful position lies between the extremes.



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The blank slate

- ✓ Avoids reviewing available information
- ✓ Repeats questions already answered elsewhere
- ✓ Mistakes ignorance for neutrality
- ✓ Misses foreseeable safety and access needs

Unprepared openness



The prosecutor's brief

- ✓ Reviews information as settled fact
- ✓ Seeks admissions rather than understanding
- ✓ Frames questions around one theory
- ✓ Treats surprise as resistance

Prepared certainty

The Six-Question Preparation Card

Keep it short enough to be practical.



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1 Why are we interviewing?

2 What do we already know, and from whom?

3 What do we still need to know?

4 What topics must be covered?

5 What might make participation difficult?

6 What happens with the information afterward?

Preparation is the opening hand, not the entire game.

What Layer Are We Hearing?

What are you hearing and what can be supported?



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FACT



Student sent 14 emails in three days.

Observable and attributable

INTERPRETATION



“The student is obsessed.”

A conclusion wearing a fact costume

HYPOTHESIS



Frequency may indicate increasing focus; ask what drove the contacts.

Testable through questions

2 Staff: Good Idea or Twice the Chaos



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Shared interviewing requires shared structure.

Without Coordination

- ✓ Rapid-fire topic switching
- ✓ Contradictory lines of inquiry
- ✓ Unclear lead and note roles
- ✓ Accidental good-cop/bad-cop dynamic

With Coordination

- ✓ One person leads each topic
- ✓ Clear handoffs and signals
- ✓ Shared understanding of required domains
- ✓ Second interviewer tracks gaps and patterns

Good team interviewing starts before the interview.

Online: The Room Still Matters

Shared interviewing requires shared structure.



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1

Confirm privacy, location, and who else may be present.

2

Clarify recording, note-taking, and technology expectations.

3

Plan for disconnection, accessibility, delay, and language needs.

4

Know what to do if safety concerns emerge across distance.

5

Use the screen intentionally without turning the interview into a form.

Prepare the room before entering the story.

MODULE THREE

Opening the Interview

Orient, clarify, and connect before asking the person to carry the full weight of the conversation.

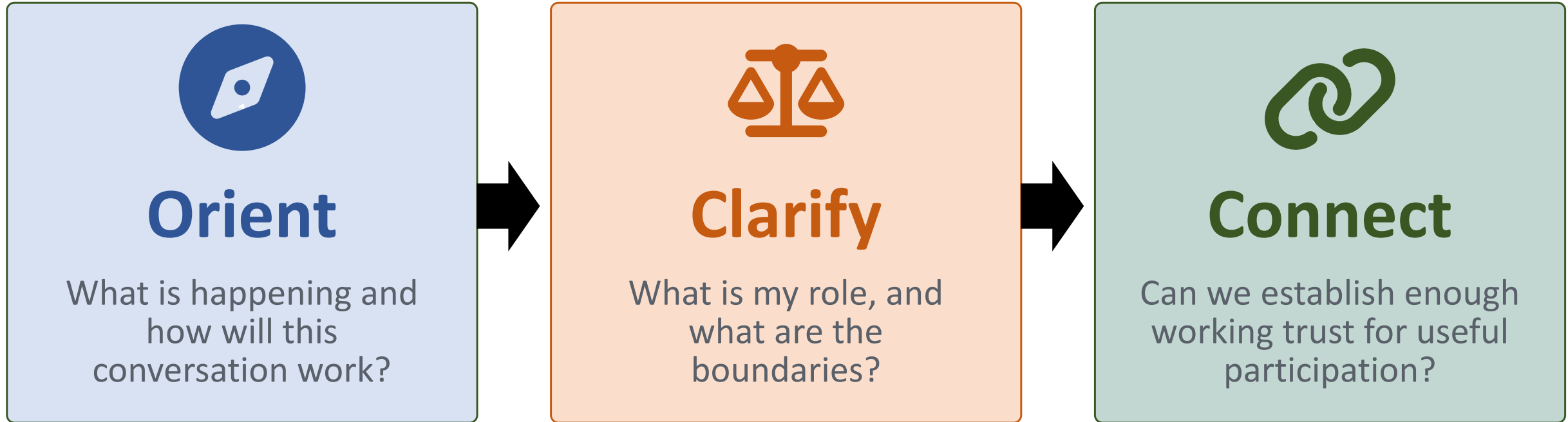


Orient. Clarify. Connect. Invite Story.

Before You Explore, Orient and Connect.



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A clear process is one of the fastest ways to reduce avoidable defensiveness.

Rapport Is Not Friendship

Ask when rapport becomes role confusion



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Rapport is a working alliance strong enough to support useful information.

The interviewer can be warm, respectful, and curious while maintaining role boundaries, neutrality, and the responsibility to ask difficult questions.

Clipboard vs. Curiosity

Domains should be explored with more natural, usable questions.



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Clipboard



Data points without a person

Curiosity



Context, strengths, and language

Building Rapport

Domains should be explored with more natural, usable questions.



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PEOPLE

Family, peers, dating,
mentors, conflict,
belonging.

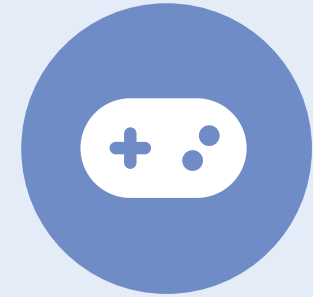
**Who is in the
person's world?**



PLACES & ROUTINES

Classes, work, residence,
online spaces, ordinary
weekly patterns.

**Where does life
happen?**



INTERESTS & REGULATION

Hobbies, clubs, sports,
media, coping, and
restorative activities.

**What steadies or
energizes them?**

Demo: Two Openings, Same Interview



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Our approach depends on where we are headed.



Administrative opening

- “You know why you are here.”
- Rapid review of rules
- Immediate move to disputed facts
- Unclear role and boundaries

Efficient-looking, participation-poor



Purposeful opening

- Explain role and purpose
- Describe the process
- Name note-taking and required topics
- Invite questions and correction

Clarity reduces avoidable defensiveness

MODULE FOUR

Asking Better Questions

The goal determines the question. The interview moves between expansion and focus.



The Goal Determines the Question

Choose the questions that bring us closer to the goal.



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Do not ask, “What is the right question?” Ask, “What am I trying to learn?”

Question types are tools. The useful tool depends on whether the interviewer needs narrative, clarification, chronology, source, intensity, perspective, or verification.

Funnel Wide → Narrow → Wide

Strong interviewing alternates between expansion and focus.



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OPEN

Tell the story

CLARIFY

Define the language

NARROW

Pin chronology and specifics

VERIFY

Check accuracy and source

RE-OPEN

Invite what comes next

Question Toolbox

Alternates among several types rather than relying on one style



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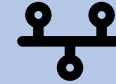
Open narrative

Tell me what happened from your perspective.



Clarifying

What did “threatening” look like?



Timeline

What happened immediately before the text?



Source

Did you see that, or did someone tell you?



Scaling

Why a six rather than a three?



Circular

What would your roommate say happened?



Sequencing

What happened next?



Gap closing

What have I not asked that you expected?

Open vs. Closed: Neither Is “Better”

Strong interviewing alternates between expansion and focus.



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Open questions

- Invite narrative and meaning
- Reveal unexpected information
- Allow the person to organize the story
- Can become broad or meandering

Expansion



Closed questions

- Clarify specifics and choices
- Pin chronology and source
- Verify discrete facts
- Can narrow too early or imply a preferred answer

Focus

Clarify; Don't Assume

Labels invite agreement or argument but rarely improve detail.



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Assumption

- “They were threatening you.”
- “You were obsessed with her.”
- “You were too intoxicated to remember.”
- “That statement was a threat.”

Labels compress uncertainty



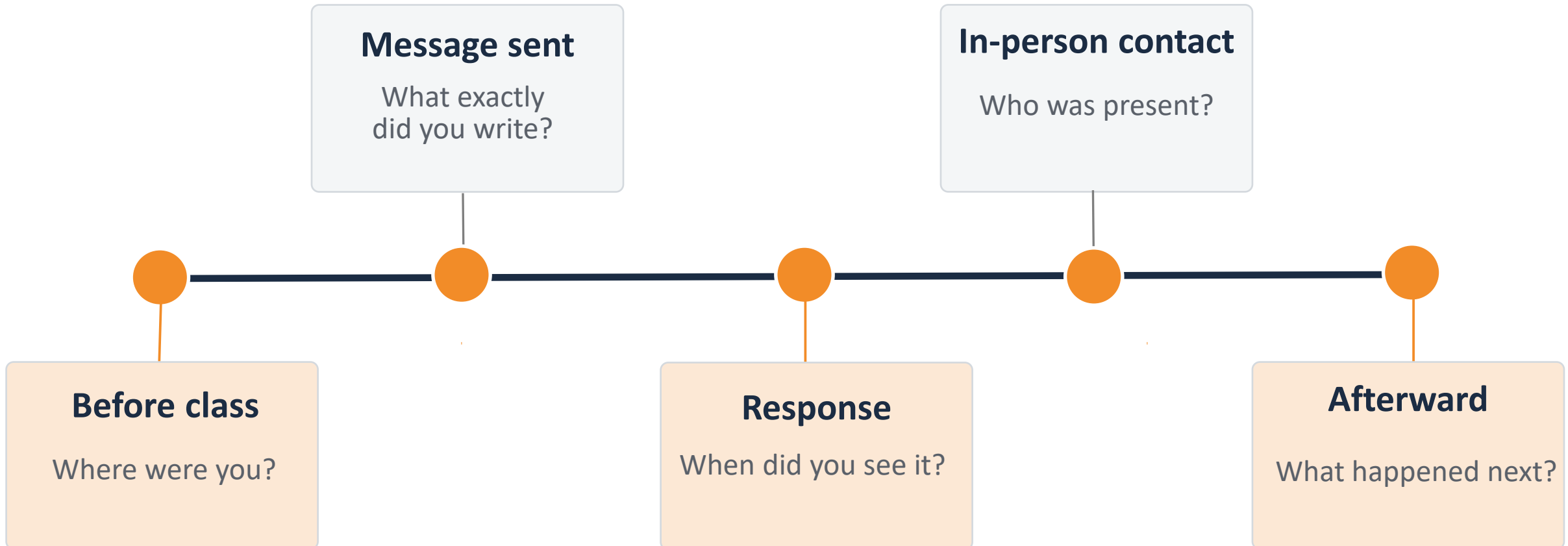
Clarification

- “What specifically did they say or do?”
- “How often are you checking the account?”
- “Walk me through what you remember.”
- “What did you mean by those words?”

Behavior expands accuracy

Timeline Pins/Milestones

Use anchors to organize a story without turning the person into a calendar.



Source-of-Knowledge

Who knows what and how do they know it?



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DIRECT

"I saw the message on the screen."



REPORTED

"My roommate told me what happened."



INFERRED

"I assumed the professor was afraid."

Precise attribution prevents summaries from turning secondhand impressions into apparent fact.

Scaling Questions



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A number is a doorway. The follow-up is where the information lives.

“On a 0–10 scale, how overwhelmed were you?”



“Why a six rather than a three?”

Explore what raises the number, lowers it, and changes it over time.

Circular Questions

Change the viewpoint to surface context, assumptions, and competing narratives.



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Roommate

What would
they say?

Friend

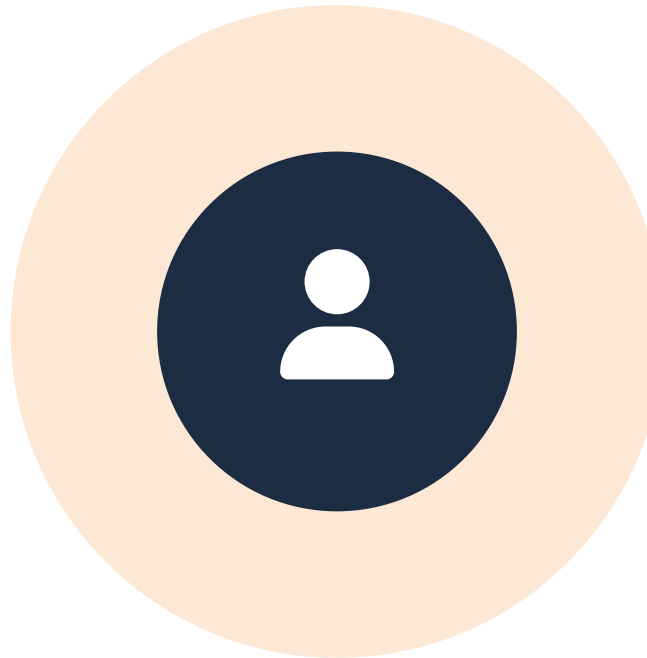
What would
surprise them?

Professor

What did they
observe?

Future self

How might you
describe this later?



Reflect-and-Check

Give reflective summaries more instructional attention than they usually receive.



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**“Let me make sure
I have this right...”**

You received the message
Tuesday, responded
Wednesday, and the in-person
argument happened Thursday.



Demonstrates attention

- Allows correction
- Slows a chaotic conversation
- Reveals missing links
- Improves documentation

Machine-Gun Questioning

Don't try to trip them up. Create the space for them to share.



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**Where
were you?**

What time?

**Who texted
first?**

**Who was
there?**

Drinking?

Then what?

What happened to your ability to think,
remember, and participate?

Pause. Follow the answer. Let the person finish the
cognitive task you just assigned.

Question Rewrite Lab

Poor questions create poor answers.



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Rewrite the question without losing the information goal.

1

Leading: “You were pretty angry when you sent that, weren’t you?”

2

Compound: “Were you drinking, angry, and upset about the breakup?”

3

Vague: “Do you have any issues with alcohol?”

4

Labeling: “Why are you obsessed with her?”

DEBRIEF

For each rewrite, name the information goal and the question type you chose.



MODULE FIVE

Sequencing and the Hard Questions

Direct does not have to mean abrupt



Trapdoor questions

Necessary questions asked without transition.



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Suicide

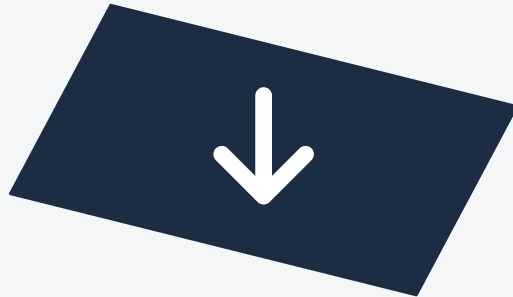
Firearms

Psychosis

**Sexual
behavior**

Substances

Violence



**The problem is often
not the question.**

It is the unannounced
change in depth, topic, and
emotional temperature.

**Prepare them for
the shift.**

Right Question/Wrong Transition

Consider timing and sequencing when it comes to question type/order.



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Abrupt Shift

- ✓ Normal conversation suddenly changes depth
- ✓ No explanation for the new topic
- ✓ Person must infer why the question is being asked
- ✓ Answer quality may collapse

**The question lands like a
trapdoor**

Prepared Shift

- ✓ Name the transition
- ✓ Explain the purpose when useful
- ✓ Ask directly and plainly
- ✓ Follow the answer before moving on

**The same question becomes
workable**

Prepare → Ask → Follow

Keep prepared statements brief and genuine, not long disclaimers.



Prepare

“I am going to shift into a few direct safety questions.”



Ask

“Have you had thoughts about killing yourself?”



Follow

Clarify meaning, timing, desire, intent, planning, access, and supports.

**Do not return automatically to the checklist.
Follow the answer you received.**

Checklist Robot vs. Endless Therapist



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Look for the middle ground between the two extremes.

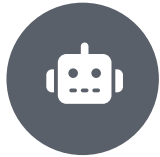
VS

Structure without relationship



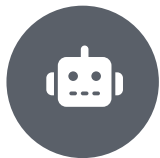
Asks every hard question immediately

Structure without relationship



Follows order regardless of response

Structure without relationship



Mistakes completion for quality

Relationship without structure



Avoids necessary safety questions

Relationship without structure



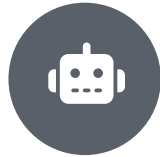
Let's time expire before required domains

Relationship without structure



Mistakes comfort for effectiveness

Structure without relationship



Produces answers with little context

Relationship without structure



Builds comfortable rapport indefinitely

Timing Changes the Answer

Look for the middle ground between the two extremes.

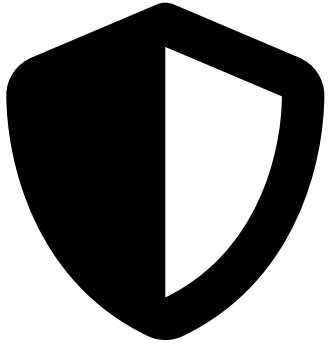


**The same direct question
can produce different
information depending on
when and how it is asked.**

Ask too early, and the person may lack context or trust. Ask too late, and the interview may end before you gather the necessary information. Purposeful sequencing balances both risks.

“Direct” Does Not Mean “Abrupt”

Language should be chosen carefully and be precise.



**I ask about access, not just ownership.
What firearms or other weapons are
available where you live or spend time?**

A direct question can still contain context,
precision, and respect.

Part I: Bringing it All Together

Name one habit to stop and one technique to try.

1

STOP: Identify an interviewing habit that reduces participation or accuracy.

2

START: Choose one question technique or transition to use in your next interview.

3

SHARE: Explain the information goal the change will support.

DEBRIEF

What will make the new technique realistic under time pressure?



ONE-HOUR BREAK

Pause, Reset, Return

Part II begins with adaptation, interpretation, accuracy, application, and closure.



MODULE SIX

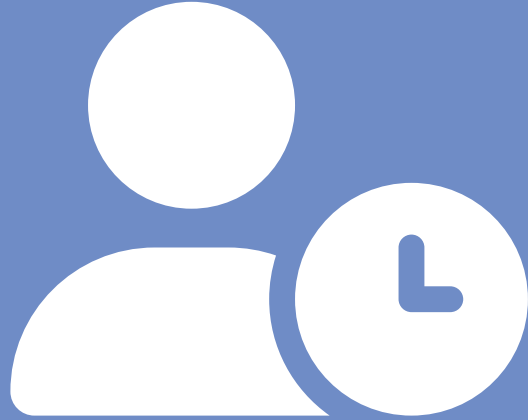
Adaptation, Accuracy, and Application

When the interview does not go according to plan... because another human being arrived.



Your Plan Met Another Human Being

Normalize adaptation as part of professional skill.

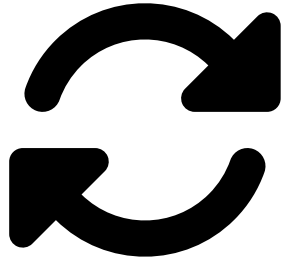


Defensiveness, silence, tears, irritation, tangents, confusion, and disorganization are not deviations from interviewing. They are part of interviewing.

The mistake is becoming rigid: “I have to finish my questions, or abandon the purpose entirely.”

Change Tactic, Not Goal

Distinguish the information goal from the exact role used to reach it



I still need to understand what happened there, but let's come at it differently.

Flexibility is justified when it improves usable information without compromising safety, fairness, boundaries, or essential domains.

Notice → Name → Repair → Reorient → Resume



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Use this pivot sequence to return to focus after a rupture.

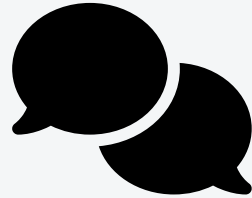
1



Notice

Monitor the interpersonal temperature.

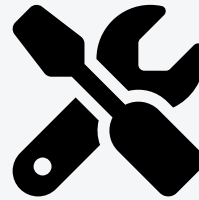
2



Name

Describe the shift without accusation.

3



Repair

Own process mistakes or change form.

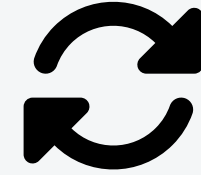
4



Reorient

Restate the information goal and boundary.

5



Resume

Return with a different tactic.

Repair is not surrender. It is a way to restore usable participation.

Rupture or Resistance?

Avoid labeling every difficult moment as resistance.



Rupture

- The interaction isn't working
- Question wording or pace created friction
- Expectations are unclear
- Repair may restore participation

Something happened between us



Resistance

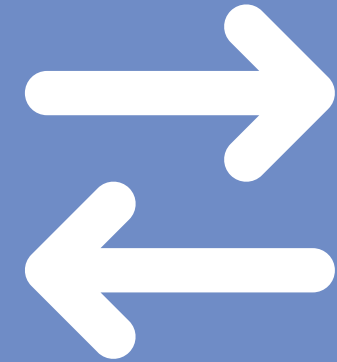
- They may not want to disclose
- The topic may carry cost or risk
- They disagree with the process
- The boundary still requires clarity

The information is difficult to give

When to Redirect

Set the stage for your process and where you are moving.

- 1 The narrative has moved away from the interview's purpose.
- 2 Important chronology or source distinctions are being lost.
- 3 Time constraints threaten required information domains.
- 4 The person is repeating rather than adding information.
- 5 A short summary can preserve the thread before shifting.



**Redirect without
erasing the
person's story.**

When to Stop

Stopping is not a failure. It's about the priority need.

- 1 Immediate safety or medical needs require a different response.
- 2 The person cannot meaningfully participate at this time.
- 3 Continuing would compromise fairness, accessibility, or consent requirements.
- 4 The interviewer's role or authority is unclear.
- 5 The conversation has become unsafe or operationally unmanageable.



MODULE SEVEN

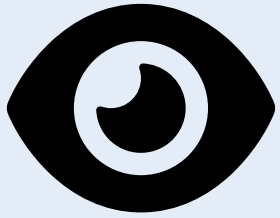
Listening Beyond the Literal Answer

Observations create questions,
not a conclusion



Observation ≠ Meaning

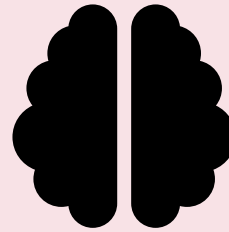
A shift may be meaningful, but it does not identify the cause.



OBSERVATION

“His voice became quieter after I mentioned the roommate.”

≠



CONCLUSION

“He was hiding something.”



QUESTION

“You got quieter just then. What was happening for you?”

Thinking About the Shifts

Emphasize the baseline within the interview rather than stereotypes.

Baseline

How does this person usually communicate in this interview?

Change

What shifted in voice, pace, posture, detail, or engagement?

Hypothesis

What are several plausible explanations?

Follow-up

Ask what was happening rather than decoding the behavior.

A change is information. Meaning still requires context.

No Demeanor Lie Detector

Reinforce multiple plausible hypotheses.



Looking away, pausing, fidgeting, flattening affect, or becoming emotional do not, by themselves, reveal deception.

Behavior may reflect shame, memory search, cultural norms, anxiety, fatigue, neurodivergence, trauma, avoidance, or something else entirely.

“Thought” Is Not One Thing

Break down the concepts behind what they “thought” about.

“Have you thought about killing him?”

Help me understand what ‘thought about it’ means for you.”

CONTENT

The idea occurred

DESIRE

Wanting it to happen

INTENT

Deciding to act

PLAN

How, when, where

CAPABILITY

Means and ability

“Thought” Is Not One Thing

Break down the concepts behind what they “thought” about.

CONTENT

The idea
occurred

DESIRE

Wanting it to
happen

INTENT

Deciding
to act

PLAN

How, when,
where

CAPABILITY

Means and
ability



Title IX

If a participant says, “I thought about confronting them,” clarify whether this was an intrusive idea, desire, intention, decision, or plan rather than assuming retaliatory intent.



Conduct

I thought about making the professor pay,” separate the phrase’s content from desire, intent, planning, capability, and actual steps.

“Thought” Is Not One Thing

Break down the concepts behind what they “thought” about.

CONTENT

The idea
occurred

DESIRE

Wanting it to
happen

INTENT

Deciding
to act

PLAN

How, when,
where

CAPABILITY

Means and
ability



Counseling

A yes to “Have you thought about dying?” requires clarification of frequency, desire, intent, plan, capability, deterrents, and supports.



LE/Threat

If a subject says, “I thought about using the knife,” clarify whether the thought was hypothetical, unwanted, desired, planned, rehearsed, or acted upon.

“Thought” Is Not One Thing

Break down the concepts behind what they “thought” about.

CONTENT

The idea
occurred

DESIRE

Wanting it to
happen

INTENT

Deciding
to act

PLAN

How, when,
where

CAPABILITY

Means and
ability



CASE MGM

If a student says, “I thought about dropping out,” clarify whether it was a passing idea, an active decision, or a plan already underway before designing support.

Clarifying “Thought”

Separate intrusive or literal thoughts from action

1 What does “thought about it” mean for you?

2 Is it something you want to happen?

3 Is the thought upsetting, appealing, neutral, or something else?

4 Have you imagined yourself acting on it?

5 Have you made any decisions or plans?



**Clarify the meaning
before evaluating
the risk.**

Follow the Metaphor Before Translating It

Unusual language should be explored



“I feel tied to the tracks and the train is already coming.”



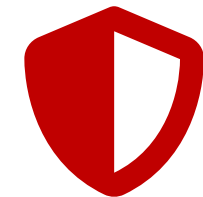
What is the train in that picture?



What happens when it reaches you?



Do you see any way off the tracks?



Then ask direct safety questions if warranted.

MODULE EIGHT

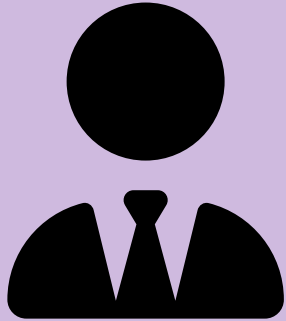
Credibility, Completeness, and Impression Management

Revisit, clarify, corroborate. Do not turn the interview into “catch a liar.”



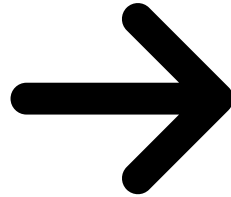
The Résumé Version

Impression management as ordinary self-presentation.



ABSTRACT SELF- PRESENTATION

“I do not care what
people think.”



BEHAVIORAL EXAMPLE

“When my supervisor left me
off the project email, I was
furious. I sent five messages.”

The second answer does not
automatically disprove the first.
It tells you where to ask next.

Revisit, Don't "Gotcha"

Use a gentle discrepancy script.



Gotcha

- ✓ Treats inconsistency as proof
- ✓ Uses surprise to gain advantage
- ✓ Invites defensiveness and face loss
- ✓ Closes inquiry too early

**The interviewer wins;
accuracy loses**

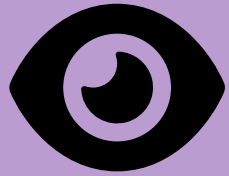
Revisit

- ✓ Names the two answers neutrally
- ✓ Recognizes general vs. specific context
- ✓ Invites explanation and correction
- ✓ Keeps alternative explanations open

**The discrepancy becomes
a question**

Inconsistency → Clarification

Don't erase discrepancy; explore before conclusion.



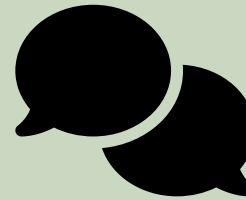
Notice

Identify the specific difference without exaggeration.



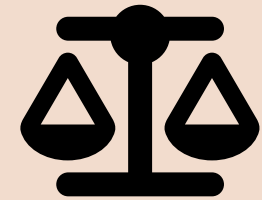
Attribute

State who said what and when.



Invite

Ask the person to explain the difference.



Evaluate

Consider evidence, context, and alternatives.

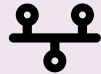
Inconsistency tells you where to ask next. It does not prove deception.

Credibility: Evidence, Not Vibes

Move away from intuition-only credibility judgments.



Specificity



Chronology



Source-of-knowledge



Internal consistency



Independent information



Corroboration



Plausibility



Omissions



Alternative explanations

“I do not believe them” is a verdict. “I have unresolved credibility questions” is a work plan.

Who Said What and How Do We Know?



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SAFETY DIVISION

Precise attribution should be visible in our process.



ATTRIBUTION

“The incident report states...”

Name the source



STATUS

Direct observation, secondhand report, interpretation, or hypothesis?

Name the evidence



LIMITS

What remains missing, disputed, or uncorroborated?

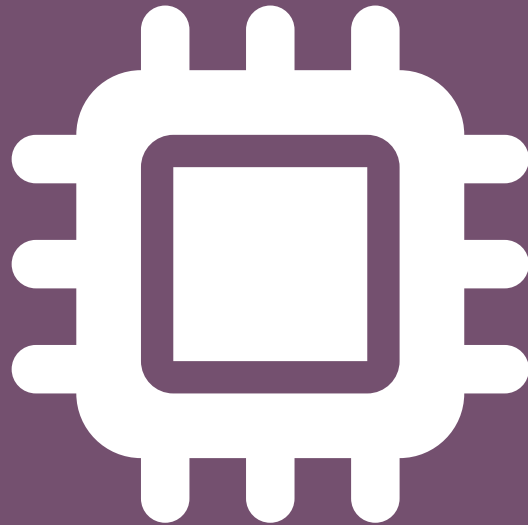
Name the uncertainty

AI: Organize Information, Don't Outsource Judgment



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SAFETY DIVISION

Institutional policy, confidentiality, data handling, human review



AI can help structure notes, identify missing domains, or draft neutral summaries. It should not decide credibility, risk, policy responsibility, or human meaning.

Protect privacy, verify every output, preserve source distinctions, and remain accountable for professional judgment.

Your Plan Met Another Human Being

Normalize adaptation as part of professional skill.



Defensiveness, silence, tears, irritation, tangents, confusion, and disorganization are not deviations from interviewing. They are part of interviewing.

The mistake is becoming rigid: “I have to finish my questions, or abandon the purpose entirely.”

MODULE NINE

Applying the Framework Across Campus Contexts

Transfer the interviewing skill. Do not transfer the entire assessment.



One Person, Six Interviews

Have a clear process on how best to transfer/share cases.

A student sends several angry messages to a faculty member after failing a course. One says: “You ruined everything. Eventually people get what they deserve.” The student has stopped attending class, and a roommate reports heavy drinking.



Counseling



**Alcohol &
Other Drugs**



**Conduct/
Police**



Title IX/VI



**Case
Management**

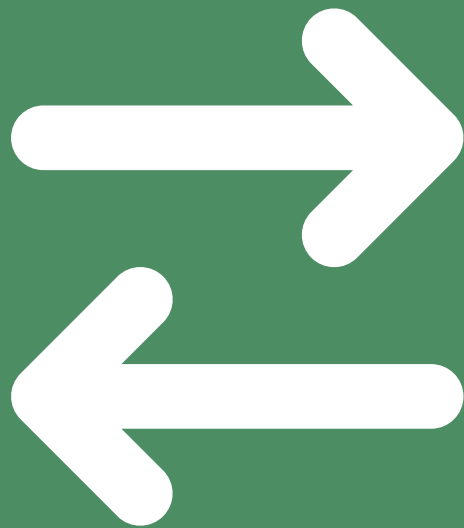


**Threat
Assessment**

How does the interview change when the purpose changes?

Same Skill/Different Purpose

The bridge from general interviewing skills to role-specific practice.



Clarification, chronology, source, summaries, and respectful directness transfer across roles.

The full content domains, legal authority, documentation standards, and outputs do not automatically transfer.

Counseling

The purpose is clinical formulation, not adjudication.



INFORMATION GOAL

Symptoms,
functioning, history,
strengths, risk, and
what may be useful
next.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 What has been happening since you learned you failed the course?
- 2 How has this affected sleep, mood, concentration, and daily functioning?
- 3 When things have felt worst, have you had thoughts about dying or hurting yourself?

Typical output: Formulation/referral/intervention
Do not turn treatment into a conduct investigation.

Alcohol and Other Drugs

AOD interviewing should be behaviorally specific.



INFORMATION GOAL

Pattern, quantity,
context, consequences,
motivation, and
change.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 Walk me through your drinking over the last seven days.
- 2 What changes when you have been drinking: mood, memory, arguments, decisions?
- 3 What concerns you, if anything, about the current pattern?

Typical output: Concern level/intervention/referral
Avoid vague labels and shame-based confrontation.

Conduct/Police

Require careful chronology, attribution, and source distinctions.



INFORMATION GOAL

Relevant behavior,
chronology, evidence,
attribution, and
source of knowledge.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 Walk me through the messages in the order you sent them.
- 2 When you wrote “people get what they deserve,” what did you mean?
- 3 Who else did you discuss this with?

Typical output: Investigative record/evidence
Do not substitute demeanor impressions for evidence.

Title IX/Title VI

Emphasize neutral language and precise source attribution.



INFORMATION GOAL

Neutral, relevant fact gathering, chronology, attribution, and the context of protected-class conduct.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 What did you hear directly?
- 2 What words do you remember?
- 3 Who else was present, and what happened immediately afterward?

Typical output: Investigative record/finding process
Do not convert the interview into counseling or demeanor-based credibility analysis.

Case Management

Focus on workable supports, barriers, and follow-through.



INFORMATION GOAL

Needs, barriers, resources, practical sequencing, and follow-through.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- 1 What is making it hardest to get through the week right now?
- 2 What needs to happen first?
- 3 What could get in the way of following through?

Typical output: Coordinated support plan
Do not import a full clinical or threat assessment without a reason and role.

Threat Assessment: The Risk Spine

Change wording and sequence, but cover required risk domains.



Wording and
sequence can flex.

Required domains still
need a deliberate pass.



Harm to others



Harm to self



Weapons/means



Fixation/grievance



Leakage/signals/containment



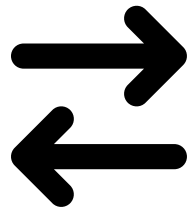
Stressors/supports/protective factors

Transfer the Skill, Not the Assessment

Use transferable skills to support your process.



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A useful question in threat assessment is not automatically a useful question in every case-management, conduct, or Title IX interview.

Move the skill across contexts. Keep the purpose, authority, required domains, and output specific to the role.

MODULE TEN

Bringing It Together

A live branching exercise, accuracy checks, and a deliberate close.



The Interview Is a Branching Tree

Hold the purpose and allow each answer to influence the next move.

Initial referral

Clarify purpose

Build participation

Gather context

Ask open

Narrow

Repair

Redirect

**Verify
source**

Every answer changes what becomes useful to ask next.

“What Did I Get Wrong?”

A powerful finishing question.



Before we finish, let me summarize what I understand so far. What did I get wrong or leave out?

Accuracy improves when correction is built into the process.



YOUR NEXT INTERVIEW

- Hold the purpose.
- Prepare the domains.
- Follow the person.
- Check the story.
- Close the loop.



What is one interviewing habit you will change first?