Sacramento Police Academy
Interview and Interrogation Court

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this course is to provide police recruits with strategies for rapport building and questioning with a goal of obtaining thorough and accurate statements from victims, witnesses, and suspects.

Introduction
a. Instructor introductions
b. Course objectives
c. Differences between interviews and interrogations (discussion)

Effective Communication
a. Rapport building
   i. Tone and phrasing
   ii. Body language
   iii. Proxemics
   iv. Allow individuals to vent
   v. Establish a foundation
b. Preparation and development of the right environment
   i. Preplanned questions/agenda
   ii. Recording equipment
   iii. Calm environment
   iv. Accommodations for comfort of the involved individuals
b. Ask the right questions
   i. Who, what, when, where, and how
   ii. Disclaimer on asking “why”
   iii. Clarification and follow up questions

Group Activity
a. Discuss a hypothetical report call dispatch
   i. Students develop questions they want to ask the involved individual

Strategic Questions
a. Types of questions
   i. Open ended
   ii. Closed
   iii. Clarification
   iv. Time and space
   v. Alternative
   vi. Negative alternative
   vii. Leading
   viii. Loaded
   ix. Bait
Considerations for thorough fact finding

a. Chronological order
   i. Clarify the sequence of events

b. Witnesses
   i. Identify sources

c. Corroborating Evidence
   i. Clarify the existence and location of evidence
   ii. Assure that evidence is safeguarded

d. Note taking
   i. Pay attention and develop shorthand method
   ii. Avoid the pitfall of relying on body worn cameras

Objectivity

a. Expressing a commitment to the truth
   i. Formal opening

b. Building rapport without being too familiar
   i. Providing equal attention, courtesy, and respect to all individuals

c. Avoiding promises and commitments
   i. Not bargaining or making deals that may impact the truth

d. Implicit bias
   i. Involved Individuals
   ii. Interviewing officer

e. Summarizing statements
   i. Having the individual co-sign the statement

Psychology of Deceit

a. Opening group activity (two truths and a lie)
   i. Discussion on folk wisdom surrounding lie detection

b. Why do people lie?
   i. Discussion on human nature, perceived benefits, and consequences

c. Progression of lies
   i. Types of lies

d. Why do people lie to the police?
   i. Discussion on perceived benefits and consequences

e. Why people confess?
   i. Anxiety caused by lying
   ii. The tell-tale heart paradox

f. Verbal Indicators of Deception
   i. Lack of self-reference
   ii. Verb tense
   iii. Answering questions with questions
   iv. Vague and noncommittal statements
   v. Oaths
vi. Euphemisms
vii. Alluding to actions
viii. Lack of detail
ix. Narrative Balance
x. Stalling

g. Physical Indicators of Deception
   i. Eye contact
   ii. Posture
   iii. Proxemics
   iv. Fidgeting
   v. Sweating
   vi. Respiration

h. Considerations of context
   i. Nervousness and emotions connected to the crime
   ii. Shock and trauma
   iii. Cultural differences
   iv. Recall and memory issues

i. How to illicit the truth
   i. Importance of rapport and establishing a baseline
   ii. Utilizing the suspect’s anxiety
   iii. Minimizing consequences and maximizing benefits of telling the truth
   iv. Avoiding coercion

Demonstrated Interviews and Interrogations
   a. Review videos of effective and ineffective interviews/interrogations
      i. Discuss pros and cons of the interview/interrogation strategy

Scenarios
   a. Students respond to report call scenarios with the following learning objectives:
      i. Rapport building and showing empathy
      ii. Organizing an interview with emotional/agitated individuals
      iii. Asking appropriate questions to obtain all necessary information
      iv. Detecting and addressing deception