



Get it right, first time and every time

October 2025

Welcome to our October edition of our newsletter. In this edition we have a five-minute read about the move from interrogation to investigative interviewing. Then a top tip for your investigative interviews, and how two words can change an open question to a closed question – which many of us can fall foul of. We hope you enjoy the read!

We would also love your feedback on the newsletter so please get in touch via the link at the bottom.

Understanding Why We Use Investigative Interviewing.

When I joined the police in 1997, I was lucky enough to be joining at a time when investigative interviewing was being rolled out to all new recruits in the police service and there was, evidently, a conscious move away from old fashioned police interviewing. It was an intensive course over a period of weeks focussing on how to get reliable and accurate information from the interviewees. Looking not only at question style, but rapport, active listening and other factors that lead to better investigative interviewing.

Known as the PEACE model, this was now the focus of police interviewing throughout England and Wales and had been developed in the early 1990's. PEACE was introduced to take police officers away from the prior accepted norms of coercive and accusatory techniques which had often led to miscarriages of justice and/or false confessions.



The move to the PEACE model saw the development of a new style of interviewer who now ditched the 70's jacket, the cigarettes and the interview plan written on the back of the cigarette packet, to a fresh structured interview which focussed on the evidence rather than coercion or the assumption of guilt.

The move from interrogation to investigative interviewing was now embedded in progressive policing.

The model has now been adopted around the world and is not only used by police forces but also many other agencies and workforces who have a requirement to conduct investigative interviews, from sports safeguarding teams to charity organisations and international war crime investigators.

What prompted the move?

Amongst other factors, the murder of a male called Maxwell Confait in 1972 and the following wrongful convictions of one adult and two children for his murder, prompted a public enquiry by Sir Henry Fisher (the Fisher Enquiry) which found that the 'false confessions' by the three suspects were based on poor police interviews and the young psychological vulnerabilities of Colin Lattimore, Ronnie Leighton and Amhet Salih. This enquiry began paving the way to investigative interviewing and hence the now renowned police interview model, PEACE - Planning and Preparation, Engagement, Account/Clarification, Closure and Evaluation.

On Monday 8th December 1700-1900hrs (UK,GMT) we will be presenting a two-hour webinar "From Interrogation to Investigative Interviewing" where we will discuss The Fisher Enquiry, the PEACE model and the Mendez Principles and the background to all.

Please join us for some great insights and discussions:

<https://www.iandrc.co.uk/index.php/events/event/6-from-interrogation-to-investigative-interviewing>

Two Words

As an investigator you will most likely know the difference between an open and closed question. Those that are designed to encourage free recall such as a TED question (Tell, Explain, Describe) or closed which are questions designed to elicit a "yes" or "no" response. What a lot of interviewers fall foul of, is thinking because they have the word tell or explain or describe in the question they have asked a good open question. However, what does happen much of the time is they put the word "Can" right at the beginning.

"Can you tell me where you were?" Those two words change a good open question to a closed question.

Yes, this is basic however, getting the basics right will improve your investigative interviewing.

Let's drop those two words where appropriate and improve your interview skills.

Top Tip - Investigative Interviewing

It is widely accepted that rapport in the investigative interview is one of the key ingredients in obtaining the conversational interview with your interview. However, much of the work around rapport suggests rapport building tends to be at the start of an interview – during engagement.

Our top tip – Rapport is built before the interview at every stage during the interview and following the interview. Do not limit yourself to only build rapport when the interview starts!

Thanks for reading and we hope you enjoyed it and if you want to sign up to more of these newsletters then do so at this link:

<https://www.iandrc.co.uk/index.php/register>

Please give us some feedback below and bye for now.

Laura and Keith

<https://www.iandrc.co.uk/index.php/get-in-touch>

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