



WICKLANDER-ZULAWSKI

Learn How to Use the Truth to Your Advantage

COURSE TITLE

Criminal Level I

Wicklander-Zulawski (WZ) Seminar on Non-Confrontational Investigative Interviewing

COURSE LENGTH

Three (3) Days – 8:00AM to 4:00PM

21 Hours CPE | CEU

PREREQUISITES

None

PASS/FAIL REQUIREMENTS

Must be present for 90% of the lecture to receive a certificate.

TYPE OF DELIVERY

Instructor-led classroom lecture supported by participant workbooks, handouts, videos, case examples and practice scenarios.

All Wicklander-Zulawski (WZ) instructors are Certified Forensic Interviewers (CFI®) who teach the same up-to-date skills and methods they themselves have used during their own investigations. To qualify for this distinction, a person must pass a standardized examination, which covers a series of topics regarding the interviewing and interrogation process. The CFI® demonstrates understanding of legal aspects of interviewing and proficiency in interview preparation, behavioral, analysis, accusatory and non-accusatory interviewing, documentation, and presentation of findings. The objective of this certification program is to create comprehensive, universally accepted professional standards combined with an objective measure of an interviewer's knowledge of those standards.

TARGET AUDIENCE/DISCIPLINE

This course applies specifically to agencies whose personnel may be called upon to interview or interrogate suspects, victims, informants, or witnesses of criminal activity. Investigators and associated law enforcement professionals conducting these inquiries will learn to apply interview and interrogation techniques that most often will uncover the truth and bring these cases to a successful conclusion.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The 3-day Criminal Level I - WZ Seminar on Non-Confrontational Investigative Interviewing is designed to teach and reinforce the sound fundamentals of the interview and interrogation process for the investigator, homicide detective, major crimes task force member, coroner, medical examiner, special agent, or other law enforcement professional. The participants will learn a broad range of research-based methods and proprietary tools to conduct more effective interviews and interrogations, resulting in identifying the truth more efficiently and with less resistance.

Seminar attendees will learn the importance of rapport in investigative interviews and how to apply these tools in difficult conversations. Principles of honesty, empathy, autonomy, and the ability for the interviewer



to react appropriately to resistance will all be discussed. The instructor will also highlight the risk of relying on non-verbal behavior as an indicator of deception, while focusing on other indicators including verifiable facts and increasing cognitive load. The instructor will train attendees on multiple methods including the Fact-Gathering Interview, Cognitive Interview, Participatory Method and the WZ Non-Confrontational Method while also introducing the P.E.A.C.E. Model.

Instruction includes a comprehensive overview of a variety of non-confrontational interview and interrogation techniques to obtain actionable information from witnesses, suspects, and victims. The student will learn to project empathy, manage resistance, and assess credibility. Videos of actual interviews and interrogations will be presented, analyzed, and discussed.

This program incorporates proven successful techniques in the field with academic research to provide attendees with practical, research-based concepts to tackle any investigation.

The multiple strategies taught offer the seminar participant a wide flexibility of approaches permitting them to alter strategies depending on the level of evidence, subject considerations and type of interview.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course of instruction, the participant will be able to:

- Describe the key legal and ethical considerations that must be applied when conducting investigative interviews.
- Describe and chart an overview of the Wicklander-Zulawski Non-Confrontational Interview methods.
- Explain the importance of rapport-building; demonstrate the ability to build rapport with an interview subject.
- List the key characteristics required of a professional interviewer.
- Understand and explain the key variables that contribute to proper room set-up for an effective interview.
- Explain the factors that contribute to false confessions; describe the best ways for interviewers to avoid obtaining false confessions.
- Explain the importance and limitations of behavior interpretations for the professional interviewer; understand why behavior is not an effective tool for evaluating truth and deception.
- Describe the key elements of the following interviewing methods; list the advantages/disadvantages of each; explain the circumstances in which each is best utilized.
 - a. Cognitive Interview
 - b. Participatory Method
 - c. WZ Method
 - d. Fact-Gathering Interview
 - e. P.E.A.C.E. Model
- Explain the importance of showing empathy; explain the ways that empathy can reduce resistance from an interview subject; discuss how empathy statements resonate with a subject while removing any implied minimization.



- Describe the key factors that cause resistance in investigative interviews; define the two primary types of denials; explain the process of understanding and managing resistance.
- Explain the importance of recognizing acceptance from the interview subject; describe the nature of manifestation of acceptance by the interview subject.
- Describe the best ways to obtain voluntary truthful statements through carefully structured questions.
- Demonstrate the ability to obtain and develop an admission of wrongdoing to substantiate any information obtained.
- Explain the process of obtaining a complete and accurate statement (orally and in writing).
- Describe the best practice for professionally concluding an interview; explain the importance of professional closure.

SEMINAR TOPICS

Legal Aspects • A discussion of the most common legal issues related to the interview and interrogation process. This section provides insights into the legal framework and recommended guidelines for interviewers to comply. Every interviewer must understand the legal restrictions that govern their efforts. WZ trained interviewers are thoroughly committed to treating everyone with dignity, respect, and fundamental fairness.

Methodology Overview • WZ recognizes the value of several distinct interviewing methods, each presenting the professional interviewer with options. This allows the interviewer to select the method best suited to the interview at hand. This flexibility provides interviewers the opportunity to consider the level of evidence, type of offense, and interviewee characteristics into consideration when preparing the conversation.

Rapport • Establishing rapport is crucial for effective interviewing because it creates an atmosphere of trust and understanding. This evidence-based approach to rapport building will focus on the ability of the interviewer to provide autonomy and show empathy to the subject while maintaining control of the conversation. Application and understanding of both adaptive and maladaptive behaviors.

False Confessions • Instructor will provide an overview of the types of false confessions as supported by case examples and academic research. This session will then further explore the common causes of false or involuntary confessions providing attendees guidance on how to eliminate or mitigate these tactics. Understanding the risks of confrontational, emotional approaches will be discussed to highlight the importance of non-confrontational techniques. This section will also provide participants with practical skills to evaluate their own interviews for these contributors.

Interpreting Behavior • The purpose of this section is to allow investigators to understand the cautions of interpreting behavior while providing them guidance on how to utilize behavioral cues in the interview process in managing the dialogue. Attendees will learn the importance of their own behavior and communication style to create a supportive environment for the conversation.

Elements of Investigative Interviewing • The investigative interview is a structured conversation in which the interviewer seeks to elicit accurate, truthful information from the interview subject. The professional interviewer thoughtfully prepares for all interviews by establishing clear goals, developing a strategy, and



selecting the interview method best suited for the work at hand. Instructor will discuss how and why question structuring and sequencing is critical to the success of the interview.

Environment • The environment of an interview can impact the comfort level, safety, and effectiveness of the conversation. This section will provide attendees information on electronic recording, room setup and environmental concerns that may impact the success of the conversation.

Cognitive Interviewing • The Cognitive Interviewing method consists of an evidence-based system of tools developed to enhance the recall of the interview subject while preventing contamination of their statements. The method is highly effective in the interview of any cooperative subject who might be having trouble in recalling key details. Additionally, this method provides instruction on increasing the cognitive load of a subject when they may be attempting to fabricate information.

The Participatory Method • The Participatory Method is an investigative interview that invites the subject to participate in a strategic conversational process that minimizes resistance and leads investigators to more reliable, verifiable information. It allows subjects an opportunity to define the boundaries of their actions or to present an alibi before any accusation is made or evidence is presented by the interviewer. This effectively increases the power of the evidence and commits the subject into an alibi, story or decision-making process limiting their ability to explain away any incriminating evidence.

Overview of WZ Method • This non-confrontational method is a rapport-based approach to the interview which includes a transparent Introductory Statement made by the interviewer. This WZ proprietary technique combines the importance of rapport development, the establishment of credibility and showing empathy into a structured conversation with the subject. The generalized and transferrable nature of this method allows interviewers to apply these techniques to a variety of conversations. Through the withholding of evidence, this method often results in disclosures of information that were previously unknown to the interviewer.

Topics included in this module include how to:

- Development of Rapport
- Introduce Who You Are and What You Do
- Discuss Types of Crimes Investigated
- Explain How Investigations are Conducted
- Summarize Possible Motives
- Provide Empathy Statements
- Change the Subject's Perspective
- Address Subject's Concerns
- Create Urgency, Protect Evidence
- Recognize Acceptance
- Obtain the Truth
- Development of Details & Substantiation
- Obtaining a Written or Recorded Statement



Establishing Credibility • Attendees will learn the importance of a non-confrontational approach to initiating an interview which may cause deceptive applicants to become more concerned with investigators tools.

Showing Empathy • Showing empathy and understanding has been proven as a necessary and effective tool in developing rapport. This concept is critical in non-confrontational interviewing, as it contributes to the goal of creating an atmosphere of trust, transparency, and mutual understanding. This dramatically reduces resistance and provides the subject with the opportunity to disclose the truth in a cooperative environment.

Understanding Resistance • A discussion on the reasons why subjects may be resistant to disclosing information to the interviewer. The causes of resistance, including categories of the environment, the interviewer, and the subject themselves will be discussed in detail. The types of denials, how to recognize them and proper responses will also be explored. This segment also covers backing out of an interview and how to manage uncooperative or hostile subjects.

Obtain the Truth • This section will detail a variety of question formats to utilize if a subject is willing to disclose information. Attendees will learn how to translate questions into multiple case types or scenarios, and they will understand the implications of asking poorly framed questions. The instructor will also discuss how to challenge subjects on contradictions in their story and/or the available evidence.

Developing the Admission • Developing the admission is the process of expanding the subject's acknowledgement of involvement into an actionable account of the events under investigation. The scope of development includes elements of the act, identification of co-conspirators and other details that are required in the pursuit of the investigative objectives. Attendees will learn how to apply fact-gathering techniques to extract details to substantiate any admissions made by the subject.

Obtain the Statement • This section covers the principles of obtaining a written or recorded statement from the subject at the conclusion of the interview. Common mishaps, logistics of the statement, and necessary elements will be discussed.



SEMINAR SCHEDULE

DAY ONE

8:00AM	Introduction/Legal Aspects
9:00AM	Methodology Overview
10:30AM	Rapport
11:45AM	Lunch
1:00PM	False Confessions
2:30PM	Interpreting Behavior
4:00PM	End of Day

DAY TWO

8:00AM	Elements of Investigative Interviewing
9:30AM	Environment
11:45AM	Lunch
1:00PM	Cognitive Interviewing
1:30PM	Participatory Method
3:30PM	Overview of WZ Method
4:00PM	End of Day

DAY THREE

8:00AM	Establishing Credibility
9:30AM	Showing Empathy
11:00AM	Understanding Resistance
11:45AM	Lunch
1:00PM	Obtain the Truth
2:30PM	Developing the Admission
3:30PM	Obtain the Statement
4:00PM	End of Day