

# HAMLET'S MIND

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## 2017 Course listings with open enrollments

**Note:** The training fee for the five-day courses offered through the NC Community Colleges is \$125.00 and for the two-day courses, \$70.00. *This partial list does not include the training I am doing for specific entities.*

Investigative Discourse Analysis, Jul. 24 – 28, Guilford Tech CC, Greensboro, - Open enrollment

Interviewing and Interrogation, Aug. 28 – Sep. 01. Stanly County CC, Albemarle, - Open Enroll

Interviewing and Interrogation, Sep. 11 – 15, Coastal Carolina CC, Jacksonville, - Open enrollment

**(ACFE) Professional Interviewing Techniques**, Sep. 18 – 19, Charlotte, - Open enrollment;

Interviewing and Interrogation, Sep. 25 – 29, Randolph County CC, Asheboro, – Open enrollment

**Online offering of Interviewing and Interrogation**, Oct. 08 – Nov 11, - Open enrollment

Interviewing and Interrogation, Oct. 23 – 27, Rowan/Cabarrus CC, Salisbury, - Open enrollment;

**Interviewing in the 21st Century**, Nov 2, Knoxville, TN ACFE Chapter, - Open enrollment;

Interviewing and Interrogation, Nov. 6 – 10, Davidson County CC, Lexington, – Open enrollment;

Interviewing and Interrogation, Nov. 27 – Dec 01, Guilford Tech CC, Greensboro, - Open enrollment.

**Note:** All of the above classes count toward the completion of the Interview Training Recognition Program. See the following page for more information.

## Interview Training Recognition Program (ITRP)

**120 hours Total**

**Core courses: 48 hours**

\*Interviewing and Interrogation – 40 hours

Interviewing Ethics – 8 hours

**Electives: 72 hours**

\*\*Body Language Interviewing – 16 hours      Contemporary Interviewing Dynamics – (up to 16 hours)

Interviewer communication profile – 8 hours

\*Background investigation - 16 hours

Interviewer personality profile – 8 hours

Investigative Discourse Analysis – 40 hours

Fraud Related Interviewing – 16 hours

Interviewing **THE** psychopath – 16 hours

Interviewing **LIKE** a psychopath – 16 hours      Surviving the first 3 minutes of your interview – 8 hours

Audit related interviewing – 8 hours

Elicitation and the interview process – 24 hours

Advanced Interviewing: the concept of persuasion – 16 hours      Contemporary Interviewing Dynamics

\*\*\*Related Legal Issues – (up to 16 hours)      *A wide variety of other approved courses as announced*

\*Conducted by Scott Hartley will also count

\*\*Conducted by Van Ritch

\*\*\* Conducted by Smith/Rodgers PLLC

This program is designed to recognize those professionals whose aspirations to enhance their interviewing capabilities are such that they are willing to invest their time and efforts in an endeavor to improve.

Courses will be offered in traditional, online and digital formats. **Note: There is no cost for enrollment into the program itself.**

Those completing a training program will be presented with matted and framed documentation. Please note: Only those courses approved and conducted by the ITRP instructors are counted for completion of the program.

Questions or to enroll: Contact me at [dwrabon@msn.com](mailto:dwrabon@msn.com)

**Note to those currently enrolled:** I will be contacting you directly with some additional, special course offerings I will be conducting, each counting toward completion of the program.

A note to those who have been in my classes previously, those classes **do** count toward the completion of the program.

## Mastering and Maintaining the Interviewing Fundamentals

In my classes, an issue that always arises is, “How can I practice these interviewing-related communication techniques in circumstances that are *not* critical in order to have them at peak level in situations that *are* critical?” This inquiry is spot on. These are perishable skills and “that which is neglected, withers away”.

In order to practice, the interviewer has to first be willing to break out of a warm, secure, comfort zone and put the smartphone down. Grasping a smartphone as if it were a lifeline and practicing interpersonal communication skills will never be on the playground at the same time. Secondly, the interviewer has to become comfortable engaging people they do not know in conversation. Once that is mastered, it is like Dorothy transitioning from black and white to the brilliant color of Munchkinland. The interviewer can now practice by engaging representatives from The Lullaby League and the Lollipop Guild.

Having the ability to take our eyes away from the phone, straightening our backs and necks and looking around, we will discover there are people all around! Where did they all come from? I practice all the time and have a great time as a result – in the line at the grocery store, car dealerships or waiting to board a plane (additionally, it helps to ease the angst) – just to name a few options.

Going shopping for a number of clothing items? Why not ask the clerk to knock some off of the price? If the clerk says they can't do that, ask who can. Ask to speak to that person then ask them. Be prepared to walk away if they don't. Hey! It's your money. If you do not ask, the answer is already “no”. The lack of opportunity to negotiate is only in your mind. In the Elicitation class that Van Ritch and I co-teach, we send the participants out in the world, in pairs, to do just that. They return later in the afternoon amazed at what they are able to accomplish with just a bit of communicative interaction. ***Remind me sometime and I will tell you how I purchased a building on a credit card for much, much less than the asking price.***

The next time a waiter or waitress comes up to the table, look up from the menu, smile and ask how *they* are doing. Let **them know**, that **you know**, they are a real person. Find out something about them. What is going on in *their* life? Really attend to what they say, watch the expressions on their face.

I'll share an amusing, albeit, somewhat earthy, interaction I had in a local grocery store recently:

As I was wandering around, I saw a frail, older lady with thick glasses in the prepackaged meat section. She looked as if she was having a hard time finding what she wanted. She was the epitome of a Norman Rockwell portrait of someone's sweet, great-grandmother placing a bowl of mashed potatoes on the Thanksgiving table all the while, smiling lovingly at her family. She wore a white top and a pair of blue pants she must have purchased when there was more of her to put in them. As she walked with teeny-tiny steps, the bottom of her shoes never leaving the floor, I could tell she was using the cart as much to remain upright as well as a container for the items she was purchasing. I walked over to her and said, “Ma'am can I help you?” (I *am* in the South; you understand).

Without a moment's hesitation, she looked at me and said, "People keep pushing the hell out of me to move on and I am going as fast as I can, damn it". Well, that retort caught me on my back foot, but, professional that I am, I hung in there. "Is there anything in particular you are looking for? I will be more than happy to help you find it." "I want some liver mush" (again, the South), she shot back. I looked and found a block that was well beyond her reach. As I placed it in her cart, I offered, "You know this is really bad for cholesterol, don't you?" Without a moment's hesitation, she locked her eyes on me and spewed, "I don't give a rat's ass". And with that she sped away, cart and all, at a full, open-throttled, snail's pace all the while muttering something to herself, I was sure wasn't "Thank you".

That encounter made my day and provided me with the opportunity to practice keeping my countenance from showing surprise. Give me people over a plastic screen any day. Keep in mind, someone pays you and me to interview people for a specific purpose. If we are going to take their money to do so, we need to be on top of our game. That level of professional skill requires practice and honing. There is a whole world of fascinating people out there just waiting for you to get to know them – liver mush and all.

### **It's all a matter of how you frame it**

One of the most important skills an interviewer, tasked with gaining-compliance, can possess is the ability to frame the context of a compliance-gaining theme. Interviewers, as persuaders, who can assess the mindset of the persuadee and "package" their presentation accordingly, certainly have a leg up on those who are simply *net-throwing* themes into the waters, trusting that something will take hold.

Let's look at a definition of framing. Again, it is "a" definition, not the world's only definition. But, it will do for now:

*The **framing effect** is an example of cognitive bias, in which people react to a particular choice in different ways depending on how it is presented.*

*[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing\\_effect\\_\(psychology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framing_effect_(psychology))*

Simply stated, a cognitive frame is a way of looking at (perceiving) something. Consequently, how we perceive something determines how we act or re-act to it. The interviewer that frames the compliance-gaining theme in a manner that accommodates the persuadee's subjective norm and/or attitudinal component has found the "password" towards a successful interviewing outcome.

For example, in a debriefing with a fraudster, he noted to me, "That's when I began to funnel money to myself". "Funnel" is the frame he utilized, not "steal". Think about what the difference between these two terms (frames) brings to mind. Admitting to "funneling" is less adversative than admitting to "stealing".

As an interviewer tasked with compliance-gaining, keep in mind that how the persuadee "looks at things" determines, in no small way, how he reacts. The consummate interviewer/persuader, takes the time to engage the persuadee in order to gain insight into his mindset, well before,

employing a compliance-gaining theme. The interviewer must be capable of:

- eliciting a response;
- attending to what the persuadee is communicating and;
- subsequently linking that communication to the compliance-gaining theme.

This compliance-gaining triune is indicative of an interviewer who can create a compliance-gaining window of opportunity as opposed to the interviewer that is hoping there is one there somewhere.

### **Wires from the Bunkers – For Which, I am always appreciative:**

*Don: I attended your presentation at the March 30, 2017 IIA and ACFE Conference in St. Louis. I am very interested in getting any information that you are willing to share regarding an interview policy. I work in the internal audit department and we currently do not have any interviewing policy and do not have any training material regarding interview questions. Any material you would be willing to share would be greatly appreciated.*

**Rabon:** In response to your request, I have attached two documents: a flow chart for the policy developmental process and an example of the headings that might be found in a policy. Be sure and journal and document the developmental process from the very beginning to include, meeting dates, those in attendance, points provided, decisions made and subsequent action-steps. In the event there is an issue with regard to the conduct of an interview, you want to be able to document the effort made by the organization to develop a policy that would ensure guidance for those conducting the interviews and fairness for those being interviewed. Feel free to contact me at any time. All the best, Don

*Don: I was thinking about trying to experience something new and unique in the world of interview and interrogation. I want to attend a training at a unique school or location that most would not get too. I have taken many classes and several of yours as you know. I continue to conduct multiple interviews in my present capacity as a detective. I have read several books and continue to do so. I really want to push myself and look for a unique opportunity. I take the process of interview and interrogation seriously and in a second career at some point really want to be involved with it. I realize I would likely have to pay for something like this as well. I was wondering if you knew of anything that would help me in that way. Thank you.*

**Rabon:** Here is what I have done over the years. I read extensively - not just books on interviewing - but, psychology books on persuasion, detecting deception, questioning, crime etc. If I were you I would take ancillary classes - online or in the seat - such as deviant behavior, social interactions. Spread you study out into areas that most do not link with interviewing but are, in actuality, connected with interpersonal communication. Interviewing is "the theater of life". All that is going on out there shows up dramatically in the interviewing room. The more you study life, the more prepared you are to interface it within the conduct of the interview. Get off of the beaten path. Don't walk where everyone else is walking. Keep looking at the interviewing process through new lens. I have been doing so for over forty years and what I have yet to see is so much greater than what I have seen.

## Persuasion – The Danger of Conformation Bias

For the interviewer, there is a fine line between having a theory and having a fixation. Without a doubt, the need to plan for an interview is most critical. Additionally, having an idea as to what “might be the case” is foundational. However, falling in love with a notion can be fatal. With confirmation bias, the theory becomes enmeshed with ego. When this phenomenon develops, the interviewer filters out verbal, vocal and non-verbal indices contrary to the prevailing thought. It is what I refer to as **The Nancy Pelosi Concept of Compliance-Gaining**: “We have to get them to confess so we can find out if they did it”.

I have conducted more than one interview wherein all of those outside the room were convinced the interviewee was guilty. Not only that, but, once I told them the interviewee did not do it, they were profoundly disappointed. Here’s a tip: *Determining that someone is innocent should never be a disappointment. Clearing the innocent is right up there with finding the guilty.*

In one case, I told the interviewee, “Fellow, there are two people in this world that don’t think you killed that girl. One of them is you and the other one is me. And if I did not believe it, I would not tell you that. Everyone outside that door is convinced you did it. Would you be willing to give a DNA sample and take a polygraph test so that they can know what we know?”

You see, once we come up with a theory, we can become emotionally attached to it. At that point, we don’t have to think anymore. Thinking is hard. Not having to think is a lot easier. Remember, it is just a theory, not an absolute. The interviewer has to be capable of being open to a wide range of possibilities to include yes, no, something-in-between and possess the ability to adjust accordingly. The capacity to remain open-minded requires self-discipline. We all have to continue to strengthen the faculty to maintain objectivity.

Now, here is some interview-related food for thought, both now, and expansively, as we go into the future: here in the U.S., as our colleges turn out legions of non-thinking, perpetual, juveniles incapable of listening to a perspective other than their own (think Berkeley), the ability to have, much less maintain an open mind, is diminishing exponentially. Wonder what it will be like when a closed-minded interviewer endeavors to interview a single-minded interviewee?

### **My five texts -and no one should ever be without them all:**

*Interviewing and Interrogation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition;

*Fraud Related Interviewing*;

*Persuasive Interviewing* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition; (released April, 2016 - power-point slides are available upon request)

*Investigative Discourse Analysis* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition;

These can be ordered directly from Carolina Academic Press - (919) 489-7486, online at <http://www.cap-press.com> or [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

My newest text, “*An Endless Stream of Lies: A Young Man’s Voyage into Fraud*” – is available in electronic and print formats from Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

See you all in the September issue and remember, as my dad, often told me, “Son, if we all thought alike, everyone would be in love with your mother”. It is not necessary that we think alike, only that we think.

Don Rabon, CFE  
Successful Interviewing Techniques