

# HAMLET'S MIND

ISSUE 53

MAY 2017

## Partial 2017 Course listing

**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, webinars or online classes.*

Interviewing and Interrogation, May 8 – 12, Davidson County CC, Lexington, – Open enrollment;

Interviewer Personality Dynamics, June 1 – Blue Ridge CC, Hendersonville, - Open enrollment;

Investigative Discourse Analysis, Jun. 5 – 9, NC Justice Academy (sworn only);

**ACFE Annual Global Fraud Conference**, Jun. 18 - 21, Nashville, TN. – Open enrollment;

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

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

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;

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

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

Investigative Discourse Analysis, Nov 13 – 17, NC Justice Academy (sworn only);

Surviving the first three minutes of your interview: Dec. 4, NC Justice Academy (sworn only);

Advanced Interviewing: The Concept of Persuasion: Dec 5-6, NC Justice Academy (sworn only);

**\*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.

Interested in obtaining an online Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice from Lindsey Wilson College? Contact Dennis M. Souther, MPA at 270-384-8292

## Mastering and Maintaining the Interviewing Fundamentals

### Control the Frame – Control the Narrative. Control the Narrative – Control the Outcome

At the time of this writing, I am in the third week of the online offering of: Advanced Interviewing: The Concept of Persuasion. An area on which emphasis is placed is the concept of framing. We learn how to identify the frame that the interviewee is utilizing to conceptualize the circumstance and the subsequent frame that the interviewer, as a persuader, utilizes to gain compliance. So, I thought what I would do is, include herein, some of the general and participant question-driven responses I gave to this particular element of the persuasion process.

*The effective utilization of frames can be a vital element within the persuasion process. A frame can also be referred to as "an attitudinal component" or a "theme". Simply stated, a frame is "the way something is perceived". Here is a contemporary example: the same person could be viewed as: "alien, illegal alien, migrant, undocumented worker or guest". How an individual "frames" the narrative tells much about the individual's perspective. For the persuader, seeking to frame the situation in such a way that is acceptable to the persuadee is critical. In a debriefing of a fraudster, he told me, ". . . that's when I began to 'funnel' the money to myself". The term "funnel" was indicative of his "frame". He did not steal, he diverted. It was as if it were water. It was not taken - stolen - it was diverted. This week, listen carefully to those talking to you directly – man, woman, boy, girl or to one of the many talking heads on television. Ask and answer, "What frames are they utilizing"?*

*I have never advocated persuasion approaches that are contentious, acrimonious or destructively confrontational. My thought has always been, "rather than raise your voice, raise your competency level". With regard to frames: The key is to listen acutely to the verbs and pronouns that the interviewee is using. Verbs show action or state of being. Pronouns reveal relationship status. Additionally, do not filter out the interviewee's use of modifiers – sort of, kind of, basically, normally, usually – as examples.*

*You are right on the money with regard to the elements of fraud triangle being the perfect vehicle for the identification and utilization of "frames".*

*We will be examining a number of techniques in the coming weeks. But don't try to separate the idea of technique from frames. Think of the technique as the car and the frame as the road upon which it travels.*

## Interviewing those Devoid of Personal Accountability

Interviewing truly is the “*Theater of Life*”. The interview and the conduct thereof is a microcosmic episode, reflective of the state of affairs of society as a whole. Over the forty plus years that I have been in the arena, it has been as if, I were watching a captivating, transformational, tale unfold, one layer at a time. Each layer has, and continues to be, linked inexorably to the next. Mr. Charles Dicken, who referred to himself as, “The Inimitable”, would be proud.

And, while, for me professionally, the story began in the seventies, I can see the ever flowing, downstream consequences of that decade in the environment that we experience today. To put an even finer point, the sixties served as the preface. But, nevertheless, the seventies were labeled as the “Me Generation” and the moniker has proven to be increasingly accurate with each succeeding decade. Situational ethics, the abdication of responsibility and moral ambiguity have all set the stage for this current state of affairs. In this issue, we will explore the abdication of responsibility and its subsequent impact upon the interview process.

We have now, collectively, absolved ourselves of any personal responsibility. Just a few of the many societal examples: If a student doesn’t get a good grade, it is now the teacher’s fault. Not getting enough playing time? That is the coach’s fault. We justify wrongful acts because someone’s upbringing was in an environment that was too affluent, deprived, rural, urban, structured or unstructured. There is rampant, student debt for a degree in gender studies with the debtors believing they will never (nor should) have to pay it back. There are multiple sources of responsibility-liberating angst. That cornucopia can be ethnicity, age, financial status, profession, gender and/or political affiliation just to name a few. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders grows more quickly and thicker than kudzu.

Recently, Babs Streisand complained that President Trump was making her fat. Apparently, his election had resulted in an unquenchable desire for pancakes on her part. So, therefore it was President Trump and not her beefy arm going up and down like a toll gate bar, all the while shoveling fork loads of butter and syrup-covered pancakes to her eager mouth that was responsible for the continual growth of her excessive girth. Apparently, she has been excused from responsibility for her own eating habits.

Today, as I develop this examination, there is an article titled, “Amy Schumer Blames ‘Alt-Right Trolls’ for Negative Reviews of Netflix Special”. It is always, someone or something else that is at fault – not ourselves, individually. Could it be that she just wasn’t funny?

Now, for the interviewer, this population of those having been “inoculated against personal responsibility” has provided the golden goose. Additionally, it is not necessary to climb the beanstalk and confront the giant to obtain the golden eggs. The key is to become adept at two compliance-gaining themes: rationalization and shifting the blame. This is not to say that discounting other themes is called for, but, that these two themes merit pride of place.

Here’s an effective way to practice the application of rationalization and shifting the blame with

mental experiments. Review the news outlets – printed, televised or on-line – and look for examples of the relinquishment of responsibility. Pundits in the economy area are easy targets. They have an excuse for everything. Now, imagine that you were going to interview the source. What related theme might you employ to play upon the assertion of the article? It might feel a bit awkward at first, but after a bit of practice you'll be saying, "Wow, the more I look at what is really being said, the easier this practice becomes".

Whether it is an audit-related interview, a criminal inquiry, a hiring interview or otherwise, more and more, the interviewee's chair will be taken by an individual for whom, the thought that "maybe it is my responsibility", has never traveled a neural pathway in their brain. Don't try to use the interview to provide instruction on personal responsibility. Embrace the mindset and operationalize it. Enter into the interviewee's world and "accept" the reality of that world. Become The Knight of the White Moon (I'll let you figure that one out for yourself). With practice, it will become as easy as eating a plateful of buttery, syrupy pancakes. Just not as caloric.

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

*Don. Thank you for your input while I attended your Surviving the First Three Minutes in an Interview. I have already begun to see a change in my interviewing interactions.*

*I also wanted to inquire as to the CFE. Recently I joined as a student and would like to know your opinion as to how you would combine patrol experience with the CFE to increase experience and prepare oneself for an investigative role.*

**Rabon:** *First off, you did a wise thing by joining the ACFE. Be sure and attend the chapter meetings and meet everyone you can. Now, as to your inquiry: answering a call as a patrol officer IS an investigation. Whether, plain clothes, uniforms or a suit - we are all investigators. You have the opportunity to interview the complainant and the related personnel and find out exactly what happened. Don't just take a report. Use the opportunity to practice paying attention to what the individual is really saying - what are their verbal, vocal and non-verbal behaviors? Practice and train yourself to see and hear what the vast majority of people miss because they are on "automatic". If the call involves finance, whether it is larceny, theft or whatever, this call will really afford you the opportunity to engage. Make sure your reports are well written and complete. Someday, someone will be doing a background on you and one of the best indicators of your professionalism are the reports you have written. When you are at court, (most especially superior court) look and see who's who. Notice the type of crime they have committed. Watch other officers as they testify - what are they doing well or where are they coming up short. Rather than waiting out in the hall shooting the breeze use your time wisely sitting in court and taking it all in. Jim Ratley who is head of the ACFE started out in patrol and worked hard to make it happen. He will have an autobiography coming out soon. I suggest you read it. It is all there for you, laid out on the table. Use it. Learn from it. Never be satisfied with your current level of knowledge, skill or ability. In this manner, you **can** make it happen. But above all remember - officer safety - first and foremost.*

*Don. What is the importance of and utilization of frames within the conduct of an interview?*

**Rabon:**

*A "frame" is nothing more than a way of looking at something. For example, the same person could be referred to as:*

*an alien, an illegal alien; an immigrant; an undocumented worker; a guest.*

*How the person above is identified is the "frame". See, the frame that an interviewee uses, tells the interviewer a great deal of information. In persuasion, we are looking for a frame that the persuadee can "buy into". For example, if the interviewee states, "I fell into temptation", the verb **fell** is the frame. It was not (in their mind), an intentional, negative act on their part. They "fell". Hey, anybody can fall, right? Consequently, the attentive interviewer, noting the interviewee's frame, can enter that frame and operate accordingly.*

## **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Concept of Persuasion**

My recent focus has been (and will continue to be) on the persuasion aspect of the interviewing process. Consequently, I decided to allocate several Hamlet's Mind issues to the examination of Maslow's hierarchy of needs to the persuasion process. We have examined, in turn, each stage of the needs' hierarchy and related the stage to the persuasion process. In this, our last examination of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, we'll take a look at "self-actualization" and the concept of persuasion.

When we consider the power/control levels of the interviewing process, the highest level is "Effecting Control" (see *Interviewing and Interrogation*, 2nd ed., Rabon/Chapman, page 7). At this level, the interviewer has the best of both worlds. The persuasion-related goal of the interview has been attained and the persuadee is accepting of the way and manner by which the inducement to comply was administered. **For the vast majority of readership of this newsletter, there are two compelling persuasion-related criteria: we do not want to take away the voluntary aspect of compliance and we do not want to act in a manner that would cause someone to make an admission to something they did not do.** That being said, come along and hang with me as we place this interviewing power level alongside self-actualization as described by Maslow and August others, to perhaps, gain an additional perspective.

Maslow saw self-actualization as the fulfillment of the highest needs. Carl Rogers described it as amalgamation of the "real self" and the "ideal self". With "props" to both Maslow and Rogers, I believe my main man, Milton Erikson, has the best summation from an interviewer's perspective. He postulated "psychological oppositions" – "trust verses distrust" and "autonomy verses shame and doubt".

Persuasion necessitates a changing of the persuadee's mindset – from *no* to *yes* from *unwilling* to *willing*. That being the case, compliance is a psychological surrender. The persuadee has, metaphorically speaking, taken their hands from the steering wheel of their own "life's ship of state" and allowed the persuader to take control. They are going to act in a manner that was first formulated in the mind of the persuader, not their own. Never lose sight of or appreciation for that which we are asking of the persuadee.

The persuader who is operating at this, highest level of capability, understands the need to establish Milton's *trust* and concurrently, abate *shame and doubt* in the mind of the persuadee. Additionally, conducting the compliance-gaining phase of the interviewee in a manner that, in the persuadee's mind, the decision to comply was his own, minimizes the possibility of post-compliance "buyer's remorse" coming into being. Should this happen, the persuadee might recant their admission or challenge the way and manner in which compliance was obtained.

Now here is the rub: in order to be able to consistently, operate at this level, the interviewer, as a persuader, has to self-actualize. Separate and apart from the critical cognitive and skill-set requisites, the interviewer has to become self-aware. Ask yourself, "What are my strengths and weaknesses in stressful situations? What biases might I have to leave outside the door before I enter the room? Am I susceptible to judgement prior to inquiry?"

For the consummate interviewer, gaining proficiency in the compliance-gaining phase of the interview is an on-going quest. And that, for me, continues to be what is so enticing about the interviewing process. I will not live long enough to learn it all. I will never become as good of a persuader as I am capable of becoming. But, I am certainly going to keep trying. I look at the interviewer's continual striving for this level of compliance-gaining as discovered in Poe's Eldorado:

*"Over the Mountains  
Of the Moon,  
Down the Valley of the Shadow,  
Ride, boldly ride,"  
The shade replied—  
"If you seek for Eldorado!"*

My heartfelt thanks to those of you who are still riding with me.

**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 July issue.

Don Rabon, CFE  
Successful Interviewing Techniques