

HAMLET'S MIND

*ISSUE 59**MAY 2018*

Special Announcement: Is interpersonal communication a critical element of your organizational KSAs? Would you like to make that next meeting something special? If so, then let's collaborate to include a specifically designed webinar, included within your meeting. The session will address an interpersonal communication dynamic that you determine to be important. A focused session does not have to be lengthy to be effective. Interested? Call me at 828-606-9167 or email: dwrabon@msn.com

2018 Course Listing: Note: The five-day courses offered through the NC Community Colleges are tuition free for NC sworn personnel and \$125.00 for all others. The two-day courses are \$70.00 for those other than NC sworn personnel. *This partial list does not include the training I will be adding to the schedule as the year progresses.*

Interviewer Attribute: Maintaining Objectivity, Webinar, 1 hour, May 15, - Closed session.

ACFE Annual Global Fraud Conference, June 21 - 22, Las Vegas - Open enrollment

Investigative Discourse Analysis, Jun 25 – 29, Guilford Tech, Greensboro, - Open enrollment

Interviewing for Quality Information, July 12 - 13, Houston, - Closed session

ACFE Professional Interviewing, July 24 - 25, Philadelphia, Open enrollment

Interviewing for Quality Information, July 31, Raleigh, - Closed session

Detecting Deception, Aug 1, - Atlantic Beach, NC, - Closed session

Online Interviewer Personality Dynamics Blue Ridge CC, Sep 3 - Sep 30 - Open enrollment

Interviewing and Interrogation, Sep 24 – 28, Randolph, CC, Asheboro, - Open enrollment

Online How to Interview like a Psychopath, Blue Ridge CC, Oct 1- 28, Open enrollment

Interviewing and Interrogation, Oct 22 – 26, Davidson County CC, Lexington, - Open enrollment

NC CPA Association, Oct 29, Greensboro, Closed session

Interviewing and Interrogation, Nov 5 – 9, Guilford Tech, Greensboro, - Open enrollment

Interviewing and Interrogation, Nov 26 - 30, Stanly County CC, Albemarle, - Open enrollment

The Interview: A Societal Microcosm

This examination is the fourth in a six-part series addressing the societal, shifting paradigms impacting the conduct of the interviewing process. Interviewing is “the theatre of life”. Consequently, that which is on-going within society will be reflected accordingly within the interviewing operation. Our focus will be on the interviewer as well as the interviewee.

My attention is entirely on the issues as they manifest here in the United States. For those readers in other countries, I would never presume to opine on the societal circumstances, causality or ramifications outside of my own borders. It is a Southern thing that is just not done in polite society. Hopefully, you'll follow suit.

I am looking forward to the feedback from the readership – some may agree with my assessments and others find issues. In either case, it is all designed to make for stimulating, mutually informative discussion. As my dad always told me, “*Son if we all thought alike, everyone would be in love with your mother*”. For me, it is not necessary that we think alike, but, more importantly, that we think!

Additionally, our explorations do not serve as a pulpit for ascribing blame - there's more than enough to go around - but, rather, to become aware of the condition, its impact upon the interviewing process and, as interviewers, adjust accordingly.

This, our next examination is: **Interviewing in the rising age of individualism.**

In the ensuing years since the 1970's, we, here in the United States, have indeed, as a society, been labeled "The Me Generation". But, I think the term limits our conception of and appreciation for the impact regarding what is behind the phrase. The use of the word "generation" gives the impression that we are dealing with an age demographic and we're not. The disorder is much more ubiquitous, generalized and systemic. Like a virus, having infected our obligatory hand-held devices, we do not have to ask for whom the bell tolls. It is ringing loud and clear for us all.

Businessdictionary.com defines **individualism** as, "*Dominant feature of the Western societies that encourages individual freedom at the cost of traditional family ties and social cohesion, and stresses individual initiative. Concept that all values, rights, and duties originate in individuals and, therefore, the interests of the individuals are (or ought to be) ethically paramount as opposed to those of an abstract entity such as society.*"

One of the foundational elements we learn in Investigative Discourse Analysis is "me" is the most intimate of all the personal pronouns. There are no small number of phrases that can serve as cases in point: "What's in it for me? Hurray for me and screw you". I'm thinking of Toby Keith's great song, "I Wanna Talk About Me" pretty well sums it up, so, we'll move on.

First, let's look at the "all about me" ramifications on the macro-level. On the national level, we see those, who have taken an oath to uphold the law, unilaterally (think ME) decide to flaunt the law or even endeavor to pass laws making it illegal to enforce the law. Whether it is border protection or drug enforcement, someone, somewhere decides, "I don't want to enforce this law or hold these individuals accountable". This is DEFCON Alice in Wonderland, tea party level, including the Red Queen. Herein, we can include no small number of governors, mayors, representatives in the house and the senate. The commonality is, as found in the Business dictionary definition above, "the interest of the individuals are (or ought to be) ethically paramount".

Closer to home, yet just as dangerous, we see those drivers, who *own* the road, upon which you just happen to be travelling. Everywhere you look, in our society, it is all about me. However, in the interest of my not going on a tirade, let's take it to the micro-level - the interview.

Respect for the law (one another) is the glue that holds a society together. It is a most codified, overt form of politeness and common courtesy. *I will drive on my side of the road at a safe speed to ensure your safety and you, in turn, will do the same.* (Not happening) When training in the DC area - where "ME" is taken to a whole new level - when pulling out onto the highway, I feel like one of those wildebeests having to cross the river teeming with crocodiles.

Anyway, lack of respect for the law percolates. If those leaders (and I use the term loosely) sworn to **enforce** the law, view doing so as an individual determinate, then on the micro-level, why would one chose to **obey** the law? As Duck Dynasty's Uncle Si said kiddingly regarding the posted speed limit, "It's a suggestion".

This, ***my interests are ethically paramount*** mindset throws a wide net: humongous student loans that no one ever intends to repay (or feels they should), subprime home and car loans, opening up false bank accounts to show false sales activities and I could go on. This mindset plays no small role in the pandemic that is fraud.

So, here's the thing. More and more you're (I'm gonna be on my Harley) going to be interviewing, "my interests are ethically paramount" minded individuals who are functioning accordingly. Four points:

- One: Maintaining objectivity will be more and more of a challenge - work on it now;
- Two: Rationalization and shifting the blame - two compliance-gaining vehicles - will serve you well - master them;
- Three: Developing rapport will take on even more challenges and criticality - make sure you can do it consistently;
- Four: Most importantly, tell everyone you meet to stay on their side of the road. Rabon's out there on his motorcycle and we certainly don't want anything to happen to him.

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

Dear Don, I recently purchased your Investigative Discourse Analysis text and I would just like to say how much I am enjoying the learning. Hope you are doing well. Best regards. PS: do you offer online training? I am based in Abu Dhabi - so a little difficult to get over to the States for one of your training programs.

Rabon: First off, thank you for the kind words. You made my day and I am just on my first cup of coffee. In response to your inquiry, I do conduct online classes and webinars. Online Investigative Discourse Analysis will be one of them. If you would like, I will be glad to place you on the notification list so that you can see what will be offered and when. Again, thank you. All the best, Don

Don: Thank you for teaching the class. I had been wanting to take your class ever since I got in law enforcement eight years ago. Thank you for sharing your knowledge, experience, and wisdom I have not had a more enjoyable class! Thank you again looking forward to future conversations.

Good morning Don. I completed the sixteen-hour interviewing course you co-authored through for ACFE CEU credits a couple weeks ago. Just wanted you to know that I enjoyed it very much and found the writing style to be easy to follow for any level investigator. Though I no longer work as an investigator, I found the material to be valuable for anyone to read. It gave me a lot of reminders of things I could do better as a professional in terms of preparing for face meetings and presentations. Just thought I would drop you a note and say great job sir.

Ripped from the headlines and into the interview

Here is a headline posted April 13, 2018: **Comey Didn't Tell Trump the Infamous Dossier Was Financed by Hillary Clinton**. Within the article a portion of the interview between Comey and Stephanopoulos was included as follows:

Stephanopoulos: Did you tell him that the Steele dossier had been financed by his political opponents?

Comey: No. I didn't, Comey responded.

Stephanopoulos: But did he have a right to know that?

Comey: That it had been financed by his political opponents? I don't know the answer to that.

This is an interesting exchange. As you well know, deception via concealment (omission) is the first club out of the bag for the deceptive individual. It is the easiest form of deception for the deceiver and the most challenging to detect by the interviewer. With concealment, everything

the subject is relating is the truth. It is just not the whole truth! If the salient points are: A, B, C and D and the subject relates A, B, D, then we are looking at deception via concealment.

This element brings up the importance of questioning and having the ability to recognize indications of deception via concealment. We don't know if the President asked, "What is the source of this dossier?". If he did, it would be most interesting to know the answer he received. As interviewers, we are well aware that we will never know what we don't know, if we don't ask.

Now, as to Comey's response to Stephanopoulos' question, whether the President had a right to know the source, Comey's response is also notable. He is conducting a presidential briefing on this dossier, but yet he does not know if the President had a right to know from whence it came! Then how did he know what portions of the briefing the President, **did** have a right to know? Furthermore, why didn't he ask someone above his paygrade as to should he share with the President the source of the dossier or what he should reply in the event the President did ask for the source?

There are some excellent teaching points herein, for us as interviewers:

One: Make sure that we can recognize the indicators of the possibility of deception by concealment;

Two: Have the capability to place an amplifying question into the area where the indicators presented;

Three: Develop the capability to attend to the interviewee's response or the lack thereof at an optimal level. This skill is critical for ensuring that you do not leave money (information) on the table having succumbed to deception via concealment as in the above.

Interviewer Attribute: Maintaining Objectivity

As I endeavor to put this, May 2018 issue to bed, I am placing the final touches on the webinar I am conducting on May 15th, titled as above. Interviewer objectivity is an often noted element regarding the conduct of the interview. But like the concept of "rapport", once its importance has been noted, the "how to" specifics for achievement are often lacking. Informing an interviewing neophyte to "be objective and develop a rapport" then boldly marching onward as if the skill-sets, necessary for both, were innately written in our DNA, constitutes a bridge too far.

Within the conduct of an interview, micro-tasks are not incidental factors. They matter a great deal as to the outcome (positive or negative) of the communication event. Compare and contrast our examination, herein, on individualism and concealment with objectivity. As I have often noted and strongly believe, "Interviewing is the theatre of life". Within society, shifting paradigms, politicians with their moistened index fingers raised to determine which way the "winds" are blowing and the diminution of trust in our institutions, all require that the interviewer strive to maintain objectivity all the more.

Don't ever become an investigator with a predetermined agenda. Don't ever take it upon yourself to unilaterally decide, "This law applies in this case to them and not to others". At a time when, more and more, Truth seems to be relative, you be that absolute.

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

Interviewing and Interrogation, 2nd edition;

Fraud Related Interviewing;

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

Investigative Discourse Analysis 2nd Edition;

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

Okay, see you in July and stay in touch. You know, that of all those that make up the readership, you're my favorite.

Don Rabon, CFE

Successful Interviewing Techniques