CIVIL RIGHTS

Trisha Ford
Stephen Lopez
Erin Davis

Mentimeter

5 THINGS YOU'LL LEARN TODAY

01 **Complaint Framework & Intake**

The structure: who's covered and when to proceed

02 **Advisors, Notice & Due Process**

Equitable treatment, advisor limits, and written notice obligations

03 **Timelines, Reports & Process Control**

65-business day structure, Report Template, extensions, and status updates

04 **Consent & Capacity**

What consent means and forms of incapacity

05 **Trauma-Informed Interviewing & Evidence**

Memory, credibility, and neutral documentation

INTAKE IS THE FOUNDATION.

Investigators don't build it — but they must know when it's missing or cracked.

There is no compliant shortcut.

DO

Pause and go back to the T9 Coordinator if notice doesn't clearly support the allegations.

DO

Clarify allegations before building a case on a shaky foundation.

DON'T

Rewrite allegations or fill in missing facts on your own.

DON'T

Push forward with an unclear case — skipping intake creates rework and risk.

4.2 Investigations and Adjudications

4.2.1 The designated office(s) to receive complaints of discrimination will review each one to determine if there is sufficient information to proceed with an investigation or if additional information is needed.

(a) If the information is insufficient, the designated office, in consultation with OGC, may conduct an initial assessment into the circumstances of the complaint and (1) dismiss it as baseless; (2) close it for insufficient information to investigate or lack of jurisdiction (see 4.2.9); (3) refer it to another office which has responsibility for such complaints; or (4) with the consent of the parties, as well as with the approval of SECO, refer the complaint to informal resolution. Cases involving allegations based on sex require the submission of a formal complaint before they may be referred to informal resolution. The designated office will notify the complainant of such action in writing.

(b) If the information is sufficient, the designated office will forward the complaint to an appointed investigative authority within five (5) business days of the determination to proceed with the investigation.

08.01.01 is the Main Road

Everyone starts on the main road – but different cases move into specific lanes.

08.01.01 covers students, employees, Applicants and Third Parties (Vendors, visitors, contractors)

🏫 TITLE VI LANE

If a public school gets federal money, it must treat everyone fairly .

🏢 TITLE VII LANE

Discrimination at work. Covers Employees and Job Applicants.

📚 TITLE IX LANE

Sex Discrimination or harassment + Affects access to education

What is the Standard of Evidence in 08.01.01, Civil Rights Compliance Regulation?

Saved to K: Drive

[PLACE ON APPROPRIATE LETTERHEAD]

[Date]

MEMORANDUM

TO: [Full Name], [Respondent/Complainant]
[Work Title or "Student"]
[Location: i.e. department, institution, office]

FROM: [Full Name], [Intake Authority]
[Work Title]
[Location: i.e. department, institution, office]

RE: Notice of Allegations for Complaint Dated [DATE]

This memorandum serves as notice that the System Ethics and Compliance Office (SECO) has received a complaint alleging conduct that, if substantiated, may constitute a violation of [*insert policy/regulation and embed hyperlink* i.e. Texas A&M System Regulation 08.01.01, *Civil Rights Compliance*]. SECO will conduct a preliminary review to determine whether further investigation or other action is warranted. The complaint identifies [Name of Complainant] as the Complainant and [Name of Respondent] as the Respondent.

The following allegations have been reported:

- [*Between March 2026 through June 2026, the Respondent is alleged to have….*]
-

These allegations have not been substantiated, and no determination has been made regarding their accuracy or validity.

Following this preliminary review, the parties will be notified regarding the disposition of the complaint and any applicable next steps, including whether additional information is needed or whether the matter will proceed under the processes outlined in [*insert policy/regulation linked in first paragraph*].

Please feel free to contact me at [Email Address] for any questions regarding this notice or to request supportive measures.

cc: Full Name, Title, Intake Authority

ADVISORS: SUPPORT THE PARTY, NOT RUN THE PROCESS

ALLOWED	NOT ALLOWED	INVESTIGATORS
· Attend any meeting or hearing	· Object on the record	· Explain advisor rights and limits
· Sit silently and pass notes	· Answer questions for the party	· Enforce boundaries consistently
· Request a short break to confer	· Interrupt interviews	· Document advisor conduct
· Ask logistical / process questions	· Email investigator on behalf of party	· Escalate issues to T9 Coordinator / OGC
· Question parties at a formal live hearing	· Control scheduling or delay timeline	· Never take direction from advisors

"If the advisor's voice is the loudest in the room, the line has been crossed."

Texas A&M University
South Padre

Description of Role: Third-Party Advisors

By agreeing to serve as a third-party Advisor to a party in a civil rights complaint resolution process, Advisors agree to the following terms and conditions.

1. As an Advisor, you may accompany your advisee to any meeting, interview, or hearing related to the member's civil rights grievance process as outlined in System Regulation 08.01.01 (Civil Rights). You may be made privy to sensitive information and concerns related to alleged sex or gender-based discrimination, harassment, violence, and/or retaliatory conduct; you will have access to the evidence that is directly related to the allegations at issue; and you may receive a copy of Texas A&M University – South Padre's Investigation Report, as directed by the party being advised.

2. As an Advisor, you in no way serve as a representative for the party in any and all meetings and proceedings. All communications between Texas A&M University – South Padre, and the advisee are official communications, not subject to routing through a third-party Advisor. While the advisee is welcome to share their communications with their Advisor, Texas A&M University – South Padre shall always communicate directly with the party (advisee) during all civil rights complaint resolution processes.

3. As an Advisor, you understand and acknowledge that Texas A&M University – South Padre and its members may limit the scope of the involvement of the Advisor in any meeting or proceeding. Advisors are responsible for asking questions of parties and witnesses in a formal (live) hearing but may not otherwise represent the advisee verbally or in writing at any time. Advisors are restricted from engaging in any conduct that would interfere with supportive measures or emergency actions in place for the conduct of the proceedings.

4. As an Advisor, you understand and acknowledge that it is your responsibility to develop questions and determine the limits of the Advisor's ability to ask additional questions in consultation with the advisee. Such preparation is to be done both in advance of and during the formal (live) hearing. It is the responsibility of the advisee to initiate contact and schedule time to meet with the Advisor in sufficient time to prepare for the formal (live) hearing.

5. As an Advisor, you understand and acknowledge that Texas A&M University – South Padre and its members may limit an Advisor's use and disclosure of these sensitive materials and information.

6. As an Advisor, you understand and acknowledge that records associated with the case and with Texas A&M University – South Padre grievance process may be subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (or other federal or state laws) and may be considered confidential.

7. As an Advisor, you understand and acknowledge that evidence, information, and/or materials contained within the Investigation Report or to which you are made privy by Texas A&M University – South Padre, by any means of conveyance, in your role as an Advisor may only be used for purposes directly related to the grievance resolution process. Dissemination and/or disclosure of these materials to any non-involved third parties and/or the public is strictly prohibited.

8. As an Advisor, you understand and acknowledge that a party's failure to attend any meeting or hearing where that party was expected to attend will result in a refusal to admit the Advisor into the proceeding.

9. As an Advisor, you understand and acknowledge that any unauthorized use, dissemination, or disclosure of any materials related to any case will result in your removal as an Advisor and could result in your being permanently barred from serving as an Advisor in future proceedings. Advisors employed by any member of The Texas A&M University System acknowledge that violation of these conditions may result in employee discipline. Advisors enrolled as students at any member of The Texas A&M University System acknowledge that violation of these conditions may result in student disciplinary action. You also understand and acknowledge that you may be civilly liable to other parties for breach of privacy or public revelation of private facts.

10. Advisors who are employed by any member of The Texas A&M University System or enrolled as students at any member of The Texas A&M University System acknowledge that their communications with their advisee are private unless the advisee discloses information that would be subject to mandatory reporting under System Regulation 08.01.01 or under state law.

11. An Advisor's refusal to sign this agreement shall disqualify the individual from serving in the capacity of Advisor.

12. Your signature below indicates acceptance of all terms herein.

_____
Advisor (Printed)

_____ _____
Advisor (Signature) Date

_____
Member Representative (Printed)

_____ _____
Member Representative (Signature) Date

This agreement is to be maintained as a part of the case file. A copy of this agreement is to be provided electronically both to the party and to the Advisor.

Remember This:

✅ Explain advisor rights and limits

Enforce boundaries consistently

Do not negotiate process rules

Document advisor conduct

Escalate issues to the Coordinator or OGC

❌ Take direction from advisors

Provide legal explanations

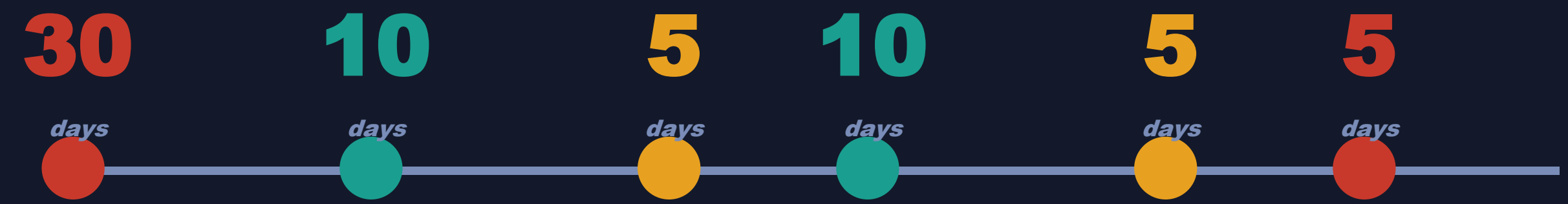
Allow advisors to dominate interviews

Delay the process due to advisor availability

65 BUSINESS DAYS.

~91 calendar days.

**Informal Resolution available*



Initial Draft Report

OGC / SECO Review

Final Draft Report

Party Review

Final Report

Final OGC / SECO Review

STATUS UPDATES

Every 10 business days — update both parties.
Silence = frustration.
Communication = trust.

EXTENSIONS

For: Complex evidence, new allegations, emergencies
Not for: Poor planning, being busy, advisor delays
Approved by CRO – update CR portal

Remember This:

Don’t rush.

Communicate often.

Ask for help when needed.

What happens when you learn information that supports a new allegation?

Complaint Scenarios

Scenario 1: Alleged Discrimination – Disparate Treatment based on race

Alicia Sanders (Hispanic) received formal discipline for missed deadlines, while Daniel Foster (non-Hispanic) received only informal coaching for similar or more serious infractions.

REVIEW THE DEFINITIONS

DISCRIMINATION

a materially adverse action or actions that intentionally or unintentionally excludes one from full participation in, denies the benefits of, or affects the terms and conditions of employment or access to educational or institutional programs – *based on a protected class*.

DISPARATE TREATMENT/COMPARATOR

someone was treated differently from others in a way that may be linked to a protected class

Who else has the same job, duties, and similar work records/infractions as the complainant?
What happened to those employees?

Scenario 2: Alleged Discrimination – based on disability

Casey Morgan requested noise-canceling headphones due to ADD, but HR provided alternative accommodations (quieter workspace, flexible scheduling). Alternatives effectively addressed needs and maintained essential job functions.

REVIEW THE DEFINITIONS

DISCRIMINATION

a materially adverse action or actions that intentionally or unintentionally excludes one from full participation in, denies the benefits of, or affects the terms and conditions of employment or access to educational or institutional programs – *based on a protected class*.

ACCOMODATIONS/REQUEST

Did the employee request an accommodation?
Review the Interactive Process
Was the accommodation effective?
Reasonable/Unreasonable Request?

Scenario 3 – Alleged Stalking

Emma and Ryan were acquaintances who met at a student club event early in the semester. Emma was friendly but made it clear she was not interested in a romantic relationship.

Over several weeks, Ryan began contacting Emma regularly:

- **He sent her frequent texts and social media messages, even after Emma asked him to stop.**
- **He showed up at her classes, the dining hall, and the library on multiple occasions, often waiting for her.**
- **One night, Ryan appeared at Emma's off-campus house at 2 a.m. He was captured on her Ring doorbell camera leaving a note. The note included personal information (her class schedule, friend's names, and places Emma visited) and contained a statement like, "If I can't see you in person, I will always know where you are."**
    - **Emma felt increasingly anxious and fearful, began changing her routines, and avoided certain campus locations.**

REVIEW THE DEFINITIONS

STALKING

Course of conduct = 2+ acts
Reasonable Person
Substantial Emotional Distress

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Behavior that makes someone's life, work, or education so uncomfortable or distressing that they can't do normal things (like attend classes, eating on campus, participate in school activities etc.).

Texas A&M University
South Padre

Proposed Witness List for Investigations

You have been named as a party in an ongoing investigation being conducted by Texas A&M University – South Padre Title IX Office. During the investigation, the Complainant and the Respondent will have an equal opportunity to identify witnesses who may have relevant information, and to submit questions that they believe the Investigative Authority (IA) should direct to those witnesses.

Witnesses with relevant information include Direct Witnesses who personally observed an event(s) relevant to the allegation(s) listed in the complaint, and Indirect Witnesses who heard a retelling of an event(s) relevant to the allegation(s) listed in the complaint directly from one of the parties (e.g. the first person the party told after the event happened).

Absent good cause, fact witnesses who have not been interviewed as part of the investigation will not be allowed to testify during a potential hearing. A fact witness must fully submit to cross examination at a hearing, or the Hearing Officer may not consider any statements from that witness when deciding the outcomes of the case.

Witnesses who have no direct or indirect knowledge of the allegations listed in the complaint but wish to speak on the character of either party will not be interviewed. They may submit written character statements to the IA.

Please list any witnesses with relevant information that you wish to identify. **Please list them in your order of importance with the most important being listed first**. If you wish to list additional witnesses, please attach an additional typed page with all the requested information.

Name: _____ Relationship to Party: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Direct or Indirect Witness: _____

If Indirect, when/how did you tell them about what happened? (e.g. I texted him/her about it the day after the alleged assault): _____

_____

What relevant information can they provide: _____

Texas A&M University
South Padre

_____

Any specific questions the IA should ask this witness:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Name: _____ Relationship to Party: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Direct or Indirect Witness: _____

If Indirect, when/how did you tell them about what happened? (e.g. I texted him/her about it the day after the alleged assault): _____

_____

What relevant information can they provide: _____

_____

Any specific questions the IA should ask this witness:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Name: _____ Relationship to Party: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Direct or Indirect Witness: _____

If Indirect, when/how did you tell them about what happened? (e.g. I texted him/her about it the

Texas A&M University
South Padre

day after the alleged assault): _____

_____

What relevant information can they provide: _____

_____

Any specific questions the IA should ask this witness:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

By signing below, I acknowledge that this is a proposed witness list. The decision whether or not to interview a witness is solely at the discretion of the IA. I further acknowledge that interfering with the testimony of a witness in this investigation is prohibited by Texas A&M University System Regulation 08.01.01, the Texas A&M University Student Rules, and the Aggie Honor Code. Failure to uphold this responsibility may result in discipline/conduct action, up to and including dismissal.

Party Name: _____

Party Signature: _____ Date: _____

INTERVIEW SUMMARIES & RECORD KEEPING

NOT a transcript

Capture key points and direct quotes that matter. Not word-for-word dialogue.

Reviewed by both parties

Share within 3-5 business days. Set a deadline. No response = accepted.

Disputes → exhibits

If a party disagrees with content, their version becomes a separate exhibit — not a rewrite.

Confidential

Treat all notes, recordings, and emails as confidential.

Temporary Records

Destroy after case is resolved — unless OGC has placed a preservation hold.

Each party = 1 exhibit

Re-interviews add to the same exhibit with a new date. Each person has their own exhibit.

Texas A&M University
South Padre

Interviewee: Emily Rivera
Interviewee's Email: erivera@tamu-sp.edu
Interviewee's Phone: 956-281-4667
Involvement: Complainant

Advisor: None

Date of Interview: February 28, 2025

Format: In-Person

Interviewer(s): Jordan Blake – Title IX Investigator

Discussion:

1. **Describe your relationship with Dr. Callahan?**
   - She first met Callahan when she took his Organic Synthesis course in the Fall of 2024, and she had labs with him. He was really easy going, funny, and very good at grant writing.
   - She is a research assistant for the RapidStream: High-Throughput Approaches in Organic and Analytical Chemistry grant headed by Callahan and two other chemistry professors, Lisolette Mueller (Mueller) and Joao Silva (Silva).
   - Rivera was taking Callahan's Mechanisms of Organic Chemistry course this Spring 2025 semester until recently.
   - She started "dreading" working with him.

2. **In your email to the Title IX office you indicate that Dr. Callahan requested your presence in the lab where you worked under him as a research assistant, even though there are other qualified assistants. Can you elaborate on this?**
   - There are 7 of them (research assistants) in total (4 females and 3 males), but she soon realized he was only requesting her to help with his research. At first, she was flattered, but over the past 6 months she has started to dread working with him.

Emily Rivera, a junior Chemistry major at Texas A&M University South Padre, reported escalating inappropriate conduct from her professor, Dr. Callahan, both in his Organic Synthesis course and during her work as a research assistant. Initially, Dr. Callahan frequently requested her presence in the lab, despite there being several other qualified assistants. Rivera soon began to feel uncomfortable, as he repeatedly brushed his hand against her thigh, made sexualized comments about her appearance (such as complimenting her clothing, hair, and scent), and singled her out for these interactions, which she observed did not occur with other students.

Over the Fall 2024 semester, Rivera experienced about 6-8 instances of inappropriate physical contact. The comments from Dr. Callahan became increasingly offensive, including remarks about how her dress would look better "on the floor" and referring to her shoes as "stripper shoes." These behaviors intensified in Spring 2025, culminating in February 3, when Dr. Callahan touched her left breast under the guise of commenting on a coffee stain, accompanied by suggestive remarks and visible signs of arousal. Rivera described feeling uncomfortable, unsafe, and upset, and her fear of retaliation led her to limit interactions with Dr. Callahan, avoid his office area, and ultimately drop his class the following day.

Rivera shared her concerns with her roommate, Kayla Thompson, who encouraged her to report the incidents, and with her academic advisor, Daniel Morales, when she dropped the course. She stressed that Dr. Callahan's actions denied her equal access to her education and made her dread participating in program activities, preferring to work with other professors and avoiding situations where she would be alone with him. Rivera expressed anxiety about potential retaliation and emphasized her wish just to graduate without further complications from Dr. Callahan's behavior.

Remember This:

Not a transcript
Reviewed by each party
Silence = accepted
Disputes become exhibits

THE THREE REPORTS

IDR

Initial Draft Report

- Spell & grammar check – review with T9 coordinator
- Add DRAFT watermark
- Civil Rights Officer/T9 Coord forwards to OGC & SECO
- No other people access the IDR

FDR

Final Draft Report

- Answer OGC / SECO feedback
- You may decline suggested edits; however, edits that identify gaps, missed evidence, or unresolved questions should be carefully considered.
- Clean copy: remove internal commentary
- Send to parties for 10-business-day review

FIR

Final Investigative Report

- No party feedback = acknowledge + finalize
- Commentary becomes an exhibit
- Substantive changes – send to OGC & SECO for review
- Civil Rights Officer sends charge or dismissal letter

Report Template Review

WRITE TO INFORM, NOT TO CONVINCE.

If it sounds persuasive, rewrite it.

✓ *Can a reviewer understand the dispute without talking to me?*
✓ *Is every factual statement traceable to evidence?*
✓ *Did I analyze both sides of each allegation?*

USE

- Neutral verbs: stated / reported / described
- Link Evidence to Exhibits
- Plain, clear language throughout

AVOID

- Avoid charged language: clearly / obviously / egregious
- Legal/Policy violation conclusions — that's the decision-maker's job
- Speculation or assumptions

CONSENT

What was agreed to, by whom, and under what conditions?

CLEAR	VOLUNTARY	ONGOING	SPECIFIC	CAPABLE
Words or unambiguous actions	No pressure, threat, or coercion	Required at each step; can be revoked	Applies to this act, not a blanket yes	Person has capacity at that moment

Learning to recognize descriptions of behavior

CAPACITY IS ASSESSED AT THE TIME OF CONTACT.

ALCOHOL & DRUGS	MENTAL / COGNITIVE	INJURY & ILLNESS	ASLEEP / UNCONSCIOUS	UNDER AGE 17
Observable impairment 'Should have known' standard applies	Document behaviors Never diagnose or speculate	Immobility, heavy medication Limited ability to communicate	Absolute incapacity Prior consent is irrelevant	Legally cannot consent

Physical Characteristic

Drinking Habits

External Influences

Factors that affect how your body reacts to alcohol

APPEARING FUNCTIONAL DOES NOT MEAN CAPABLE OF CONSENT.

Blackout ≠ Unconscious

A person can walk, talk, and appear responsive while unable to form lasting memories.

Lack of Memory ≠ Incapacitation

Having no memory of events does not by itself support consent was given or revoked.

Investigator Focus

Assess what was observable to the Respondent at the time — not what the Complainant can recall now.

TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVIEWING

Memory gaps ≠ dishonesty

Trauma fragments memory. Fragmented recall is normal, not a credibility problem.

Freeze is not consent

Fight / flight / freeze are physiological responses. Don't misread them.

Emotions ≠ credibility

Numbness, anger, detachment — all are normal. Don't let them shape your analysis.

Open-ended questions first

'Tell me what happened.' Then follow up. Never lead, never assume.

Silence is information

Give them time. A pause is not evasion. Patience = better data.

Your body language matters

How you show up signals safety — or threat. Safety gets information.

Thank you for the work you do.

Civil rights investigations require care and intention.

Thank you for bringing attention, dedication (and lots of caffeine and venting) to this meaningful work.

Investigation Fundamentals

Trisha Ford
Stephen Lopez
Erin Davis


There’s room here for beginners and experts—and both contribute.

Engagement & Flexibility



8 THINGS YOU'LL LEARN TODAY

01 Understand your job as an investigator

02 Prep Work before the investigation

03 Know what evidence matters

04 Develop better interview questions

05 Clarify Word Choices

06 Listen carefully and document accurately

07 Interview Techniques

08 Investigator Self-management

Mentimeter



YOUR ROLE



IMPARTIAL

Check your bias.
Approach with humility.



DILIGENT

Thorough in gathering,
examining every angle.



CONFIDENTIAL

Handle sensitive information
responsibly and carefully.

KNOW YOUR TIMELINE

7
business days
Complaint Filed

15
business days
Investigation Period

5
business days after report
Decision Issued

If additional time is needed, the investigator notifies the parties of an extension.

BEFORE THE FIRST INTERVIEW

1

Review the Allegation

Understand nature of the complaint

2

Review Policies & Regulations

Know the relevant rules that apply

3

Create a Plan

Outline steps, order, timeline

4

Identify potential evidence

Identify & preserve all relevant material

5

Prep Interview Questions

Tailor open-ended questions per role



Remember This:

Review the allegations/ policies

Create a plan

Collect evidence

Prep questions.

Advisors

HR/Student Conduct

EMPATHY WITHOUT ADVOCACY

The Investigator's Balance

Stay emotionally neutral · Be curious, not convinced · Let evidence — not emotion — drive decisions

Empathy

"I understand how this feels."

Sympathy

"I feel bad for you."



Remember This:

Acknowledge emotions

Stay neutral

Listen without agreeing

SCHEDULE

Early — *Before memories fade*

Fairly — *No one feels targeted*

Privately — *Neutral, safe locations*

Clearly — *State purpose and limits*

Most interviews need ***60–90 minutes*** *Rushed interviews = missed information.*

WHY WORD CHOICE MATTERS

INTERROGATING	CONVERSATING
"Why did you say that?"	*"What led you to say that?"*
"Why did you choose that approach?"	*"Can you share your thought process?"*
"Explain yourself."	*"Help me understand."*
FINGER POINT	OPEN DOOR



Remember This:

- Questions signal either accusation or curiosity
- “Why” often feels like blame → defensiveness
- Curiosity language → psychological safety
- Safety leads to honest, useful information
- Swap “why” for how / what / can you share

Let's Practice



THEFT OF TIME: MOCK INTERVIEW

Roles: Investigator, Complainant, Respondent

THE CURRENCY OF CLARITY

Words are slippery. Two people can use the same word and mean two completely different things.

If they didn't say it, don't use it.

You are expected to ask the hard questions.



Remember This:

Words don’t mean the same thing to everyone

Your job is not to guess
Your job is to ask the hard questions.



Motivations & Feelings

Remember This:

Investigate actions, not assumptions.

Explain feelings with facts.



Interview Recording

Remember This:

Record only if it helps accuracy.

Consider concerns
and destroy temporary
documents — unless told
otherwise.



What Good Listening Looks Like

Remember This:

Be present. Listen without distraction. Reflect, clarify, and stay neutral.

People talk more when they feel like they are part of a conversation and not an interview— and better listening leads to better investigations.

Deceptive behaviors ≠ proof of lying.

PULL THE THREAD

Remember This:

Suspicion is a signal, not a conclusion

Deception cannot be determined by body language

Your job is to ask, probe, and corroborate

Let evidence and inconsistencies speak, not accusations

Let's Practice

I don't remember vs I didn't do it.



What You Ask:

At the staff potluck, did you proclaim that ‘gluten is the secret ingredient to world domination’ and then dramatically confiscate all the dinner rolls?

What You Hear:

I don’t remember saying anything like that.

What You Ask:

On Thursday in the break room, did you say, 'Damn, your butt looks good – you been doing them squats?’

What You Hear:

Absolutely not! I just took the sexual harassment training. I would never say that to someone at work.

Credibility – Not all differences matter



Remember This:

People remember the same event a little differently — that's normal.

Memory differences on small details are expected.

Pay attention to whether the disagreement is about the core event or about the background/minor details.

EVIDENCE DOESN'T NEED TO BE PERFECT.

IT NEEDS MAKE SENSE, BE EXPLAINABLE, AND HOLD UP WHEN SOMEONE ASKS QUESTIONS.

Direct Evidence

Proves a fact without guessing (admission, video, message)

Circumstantial

Needs connecting clues (patterns, timing, access)

Corroborating

Different sources confirming the same information

SUFFICIENCY TEST

Would someone who wasn't involved in the investigation come to the same conclusion if they looked at the evidence?



Resistance in Interviews

What could it mean?

55%

of communication is body language. But stress ≠ deception.

MYTH

"They wouldn't make eye contact — they're lying."

MYTH

"They looked up to the right — deception!"

TRUTH

Body language reflects stress, not truthfulness.

TRUTH

Use behavior to guide questions, not conclusions.

SIMPLE RULE: BEHAVIOR GUIDES QUESTIONS, NOT DECISIONS.

Short Video:

Pivot!

INVESTIGATOR SELF-MANAGEMENT

Emotional Carryover

Carrying feelings or attitudes from one case to the next without realizing it.

Burnout Signs

Getting tired from too many cases, leading to shortcuts or a loss of interest.

Decision Fatigue

Getting tired from making lots of small decisions, so you start oversimplifying.

When to Pause

Knowing when to take a break or ask for help.

Remember This:

Start every case clean.
Don't let the last case write this one.

Shortcuts are a warning sign, not efficiency.

Thank you for the work you do.

How we investigate matters, because real people live with the results.