



MARCUS WILLIAMS TRAINING ACADEMY

Investigations Certification Program



INVESTIGATIVĂ PLANNINGĂ

Lesson 1: Investigations Certification Program



ABOUT ME:



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President/Subject Matter Expert

- MS in Criminal Justice
- 20 years investigative experience
- NCIS, Brigham Young University, Pentagon (responded to 9/11 attacks)



NOW WHAT?

You've received an allegation. What's the next step?

- What options are allowed in your policy?
- Are you required to investigate every allegation?



INITIAL ASSESSMENT

- Is the alleged behavior, if true, a violation of your policy?
 - What is the actual potential policy violation?
- Is there another more appropriate way to handle the complaint?
- An investigation is not the way to influence or change policy
- Don't dismiss or ignore allegations by rationalizing yourself out of the policy



INVESTIGATION INITIATED

- Begin building your investigative plan immediately
- You have limited information, so create a plan articulating how you are going to obtain needed information.



STEP 1

- Obtain a detailed statement regarding the allegation.
- This may come from the reporting party, a third party, the victim, or an internal organization.
- What is actually being alleged as a violation of your policy?



INTERVIEWS

- Purpose of the interview is to build library of knowledge
- Open ended questions
- More detailed follow-up questions
- You are the interviewer. You control the interview. Accept all information but focus on the policy violation
- Who, what, when, where, how, and maybe why



NEXT STEP - CORROBORATION

- Make a list of information presented as fact that needs to be corroborated.
- Corroborate the who, what, when, where, how, and maybe why
 - Motive is harder to corroborate and may not be relevant



HOW TO CORROBORATE

- Witness interviews
- Evidence gathering
- Records searches



ADD TO YOUR PLAN

- Just because you add something to your plan, does not make it a requirement. Continued investigation may make the information not relevant or may corroborate in a different way
- If you don't complete a step, you should be able explain why
- Your plan should be constantly adapting to the investigation



THE WRITTEN PLAN

- Writing your plan shows that you are being thorough an unbiased
- Keeps you accountable
- Allows others to know your status
- Writing helps you organize



THE WRITTEN PLAN FORMAT

- Format
 - You can use a template. See my website for an adaptable template.
 - You can write freeform
- Use the format that works best for you. But it should be legible and understandable to others.
- Think: If I quit today, will my replacement be able to pick up where I left off?



WITNESSES

- Witnesses can be presented by the parties, but don't limit yourself to those only
- Think back to the facts you need to corroborate
- Even if you think a fact is obvious, if a witness can corroborate, conduct the interview
- Be careful on what information you share with witnesses. The flow of information should be primarily one way - towards you



CHARACTER WITNESSES

- Consider relevance
- You may agree to interview character witnesses, but remember you are not investigating whether your respondent is a nice person. You are investigating if they violated a policy.
- Consider limiting witnesses to people with relevant information



EVIDENCE

Be creative in thinking about what kind of evidence will corroborate the details.

- Electronic communications
- Written communication
- Photos
- Video surveillance
- Bank records
- Audits
- Performance Reviews



EVIDENCE REVIEW

- If you have collected some form of evidence, you must review it thoroughly.
- If there are 1000 pages of text, then read 1000 pages
- Document your review
- Maintain your evidence with care. Be able to speak to how the information was received and how it was stored.



NEW LEADS

- Every interview or piece of evidence may create further information that needs to be corroborated.
- Be thorough. Update your plan.
- Beware the rabbit hole of interesting yet irrelevant facts. No need to corroborate things that don't matter. You can make a note of why in the plan or in your notes.



COMPLETING INVESTIGATION

- When you believe you have completed your investigation, refer back to your plan. Is everything completed? Are there any other steps you can take?
- As you write your final report, you may find information that you did not originally consider important that you now need to corroborate.
 - Add these steps to your plan and complete them as normal.



THE PLAN AT A GLANCE

- Your investigative plan should subdue any complaints of bias or incompleteness on your part.
- Your leadership should be able to see at a glance that you considered and corroborated all of the facts of the case.
- Your conclusion is evidence based and based on a thorough investigation, all documented in your plan.
- You can include dates and descriptions.



THE PLAN IS NOT!

- Your plan is not your final report.
- Your plan may contain brief notes or summaries, but full details should be documented elsewhere.
- Your plan is a roadmap of the work you did.



CONCLUSION

- Investigators with different levels of expertise or different styles may prepare different styles of plans, but the plan should exist.
- It is a valuable tool for the investigator, but also a valuable historical document that outlines all of the work completed in an investigation.
- A thorough plan details a thorough investigation.



WHAT'S NEXT?



Marcus Williams Training Academy

- EBook- "Bias in Investigations"
- Lesson 1 Quiz
- YouTube Supplemental Lesson Videos
- Lesson 2 - Biased Investigations

<https://marcuswilliamstraining.com>

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