



THE SCIENCE OF INTERVIEWING



Effective Audit Conversations

OVERVIEW:

This course provides delegates with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to facilitate any meeting/interview with an investigative purpose. The tools and techniques learned will help individuals make their conversations with interviewees more efficient, reducing the need to return to verify or probe for more information and enhance their personal credibility with stakeholders.

In this two-day workshop, delegates will learn a process and techniques to enhance the quality of the Audit meetings/interviews they conduct. The course focuses on building influencing skills and questioning techniques that will help auditors secure a detailed, reliable, and accurate account whilst avoiding confirmation bias and other common cognitive fallacies.

In order to tailor the course we will require input from relevant people to understand how current Audits/interviews are being conducted, methodology and the current standards of questioning and information retrieval.

Subject matter specialists with many years of applied experience conducting and evaluating the most challenging interviews deliver the course.

The course is delivered with a ratio of 1 trainer to 7 participants to allow sufficient time for role-play and individual feedback.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this seminar delegates will be able to:

- Understand the PEACE model of interviewing and appreciate its application to Audit.
- Conduct meetings/interviews according to the principles in the PEACE framework.
- Utilise proven questioning techniques to gather and verify information.
- Improve their interpersonal influencing ability with stakeholders to facilitate effective recommendations.
- Use a structured note-taking system.

DAY ONE

Session 1: Introduction to PEACE interviewing

The process for conducting interviews, founded upon the principles of a widely used and acclaimed framework known as the 'PEACE' model of interviewing, internationally recognized as the most ethical and thorough model to guide the investigative interview process.

- » Planning and Preparation – Interactive group presentations activity.
- » Engage and Explain – how to deal with the early phases of an interview and build rapport.
- » Account, Clarification, Challenge - the process used to obtain the interviewee's recollection of their needs, to obtain the fullest possible account from the stakeholder. How to probe into details and challenge the veracity of the account, identifying weaknesses and inconsistencies.
- » Closure and Evaluate - Interviewer ensures there is a planned closure rather than an impromptu end. Material gathered should be fully evaluated, including consideration as to whether the objectives were achieved.

Session 2 The Memory Process

- » Understanding how memory is encoded, stored and retrieved.
- » The implications of this process for obtaining accurate information from stakeholders.
- » Do's and don'ts of interviewing for accurate memory recall.

Session 3 Questioning Skills

- » An interactive practical examination of conversational techniques used to initiate and facilitate dialogue.
The interviewer's approach, listening, opening up topics for discussion, encouraging the interviewee to give a truthful and accurate account, using questions, taking notes and highlighting areas needing clarification and challenge.

- » Credibility Assessment; understanding how stakeholders can create false perceptions in the mind of another person.
- » How to identify systematically transient changes in an individual's pattern of non-verbal and verbal behaviour.

Session 4 Note Taking

When conducting interviews, Auditors face the formidable task of having to actively listen, formulate questions and take notes simultaneously. In the absence of a structure to taking their notes, Auditors may be inclined to make a contemporaneous written record of the information provided by the interviewee.

This session builds on the existing practices of participants and teaches three different note-taking systems that helps Auditors:

- » plan and prepare for interviews
- » take notes during interviews
- » summarise the information from interviews

Session 5: Conversation Management

- » The Conversation Management Model used to assist recollection and sharing of information.
- » Case study: interactive and practical examination of a scenario tailored to Audits.

DAY TWO

Session 6 The Peace Framework In Action (Role Plays)

- » Delegates participate in a role-play meeting/interview.
- » Scenarios need to be created around realistic scenarios for Audit.
- » Evaluated and given feedback by the trainer according to a structured ratings scale that assesses their performance on each element of the interview/meeting. This builds their confidence as well as highlighting areas for further development.

Business Outcomes:

- Improved levels of knowledge, planning and interviewer skills raise effectiveness and save time with relevant cost benefits
- High levels of knowledge and skills raise the effectiveness levels of auditors
- Raising staff confidence levels, leading to increased job satisfaction and higher employee engagement levels
- Raised levels of confidence and accuracy from stakeholders
- Improved control of interview contact and content leads to applications containing more relevant details, checkable facts and identified inconsistencies
- More complete, accurate information and reliable information
- Less duplication of effort (e.g. Re-interviewing)
- Greater consistency in performance
- Better deployment in staff
- Better decision making
- Enhanced creditability
- Improved stakeholder trust and confidence

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