

# BASIC COURSE UNIT GUIDE

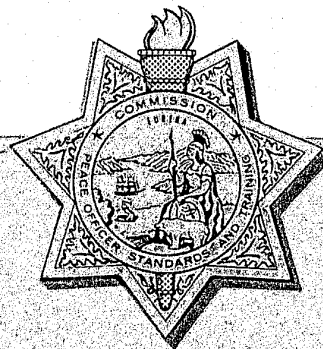
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## INTERVIEWING

This unit guide covers the following learning goals contained in the POST Basic Course performance objective document:

10.8.0 Interviewing

Revised October 1990



THE COMMISSION  
ON PEACE OFFICER STANDARDS AND TRAINING  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

This unit of instruction is designed as a **guideline** for Performance Objective-based law enforcement basic training. This unit is part of the POST Basic Course Guidelines system developed by California law enforcement trainers and criminal justice educators for the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

This Guide is designed to assist the instructor in developing an appropriate lesson plan to cover the performance objectives, which are required as minimum content of the Basic Course.

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## Learning Goals and Performance Objectives

10.8.0 INTERVIEWING

Learning Goal: The student will have a working knowledge of interpersonal communication applied to criminal investigations.

- 10.8.1 The student will identify the following steps which an officer should take in preparing for an interview with suspects, victims, witness(es), and other officers.
- A. Review any information about the case and the person to be interviewed
  - B. Select a proper time and place which will be conducive to the purpose of the interview
  - C. Develop a list of questions
  - D. Make preparations for recording the interviews, when appropriate
- 10.8.2 (See Unit Guide #55)

## Material/Equipment

Each training institution should develop its own list of equipment and materials for each unit. This list is dependent upon the instructional strategies methods/media considerations.

No special material or equipment needed.

**Learning Goal 10.8.0 :** The student will have a working knowledge of interpersonal communication applied to criminal investigations.

Unit Outline & Presentation	Objectives & Instructional Cues
<p>I. INTERVIEWING (10.8.0)</p> <p>A. Interviewing compared to interrogating</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The interview and the interrogation are techniques of acquiring information from a person who may have knowledge about a specific matter.</li> <li>2. Generally, an interview will not be limited to the questioning of one who is suspected of participation in the commission of a crime.</li> <li>3. Interrogation specifically applies to the questioning of one suspected of a crime.</li> </ol> <p>B. Complainants and Victims Can Usually Be Handled Differently Than Suspects.</p> <p>C. Pre-interview Preparation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mental checklist           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Be mentally prepared</li> <li>b. Know the type of person to be interviewed-- complainant, informant, victim, witness</li> <li>c. Select proper time and place</li> <li>d. Develop list of questions which must be answered               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Main questions directed toward establishing facts of the incident</li> <li>(2) Other questions to establish rapport</li> <li>(3) Keep in mind questions defense attorney might ask</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Decide whether to take notes during interviewing (tape record, written, video)</li> </ol>	<p>NOTE: See Unit Guide 15 for cross information.</p> <p>10.8.1 The student will identify the following steps which an officer should take in preparing for an interview with suspects, victims, witness(es), and other officers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Review any information about the case and the person to be interviewed</li> <li>B. Select a proper time and place which will be conducive to the purpose of the interview</li> <li>C. Develop a list of questions</li> <li>D. Make preparations for recording the interviews, when appropriate</li> </ol>

**Learning Goal 10.8.0 :** The student will have a working knowledge of interpersonal communication applied to criminal investigations.

Unit Outline & Presentation	Objectives & Instructional Cues
<p>a. Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) Definitive guide for recall and reports</li><li>(2) Helps prevent misinterpretation of statements</li><li>(3) Orders responses</li><li>(4) Provides checklist upon review</li><li>(5) Can be used in court</li></ul> <p>b. Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(1) May cause subject to refrain from talking freely</li><li>(2) Time consuming</li><li>(3) May cause interviewer to "lose track" of the interview</li></ul> <p>D. Conducting the Interview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Allow person being interviewed to tell own story in own words</li><li>2. Control the interview</li><li>3. Determine if there is a violation of law</li><li>4. Have patience with those being interviewed<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Some people have difficulty expressing themselves</li><li>b. Mentally retarded or mentally ill</li><li>c. Alcoholics or drunks-not necessarily invalid information</li><li>d. Eyewitness reports may be unreliable--proper interview techniques can control some of the inconsistencies often found in statements</li></ul></li></ul>	

**Learning Goal 10.8.0** : The student will have a working knowledge of interpersonal Communication applied to criminal investigations.

Unit Outline & Presentation	Objectives & Instructional Cues
<p>5. When interviewing a subject, keep in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Physical, emotional, mental and educational factors</li><li>b. Tact may be necessary--witness cannot be required to talk to police</li><li>c. Probable reliability of witness</li><li>d. Possible need to use the report of the interview as hearsay at a preliminary hearing.</li><li>e. Do not indicate or assure the witness that he or she will not have to go to court</li></ul>	



**SUPPORTING MATERIAL**

**AND**

**REFERENCES**

## Reference Materials

This section is set up as reference information for use by training institutions. These materials can be utilized for prime instruction; remediation, additional reading, viewing or for planning local units of instruction. They are presented here as instructional materials that may assist the learner or the academy staff in the teaching-learning process. Each training institution is encouraged to expand this list but only after careful viewing and reading to determine its acceptability.

"Building Respect for Law and the Criminal Justice System,"  
Module #2, Project STAR, California Commission on Peace  
Officer Standards and Training. 1974.

IACP Training Key #51, "Interviewing Techniques"

Nierenberg, G.J. and H. Calero, "How to Read a Person Like A  
Book," New York: Hawthorn. 1971.

In no way is this list an endorsement of any author, publisher, producer, or presentation. Each training institution must read or view these materials, and others to establish their own list of reference materials.