

Cognitive Interviewing in the Workplace

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Learning about Interviews

- Union Rep “cross examining” a witness at a hearing.
- Conference: 1981
 - “Everybody had to be someplace.”
 - “Something had to have happened next.”



What is an Interview?

An interview asks a witness to:

1. Communicate
2. A memory, of an
3. Observation



Agenda

- Standard Interview Process
- Cognitive Interview Process
- Relevant Analogies
- How to Teach the Process

Standard Interview Procedure

- Predetermined set of issues
- Specific question(s) about each predetermined issues
- Witnesses play passive role: **respond to questions with what they remember.**

Fischer, et. al. (2010). "Interviewing Witnesses and Victims," in Granhag, P.A., editor (2010), Forensic Psychology in Context: Nordic and International Approaches, Chapter 4. Routledge.



Cognitive Interviews

- “The Cognitive Interview is a questioning technique...to enhance retrieval of information...from the eyewitnesses and victims (sic) memory.
- ...(T)here are a number of ways that these memories can be accessed. The cognitive interview exploits this by using multiple retrieval strategies.”

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/cognitive-interview.html>



Cognitive Interviews

Four Prompts/Mnemonics (Crossland, et. al. 2020, p. 2215)

- Report everything
- Change sequence of questions
- Change perspective
- Remember “context” (e.g., “think about how you were feeling that day.”)

Crossland, et. al. (2020) “Improving intoxicated witness recall with the Enhanced Cognitive Interview.” *Psychopharmacology*, 237:2213–2230



Cognitive Interviews

- **Help people remember**
 - More completely
 - More accurately
- Avoid contaminating their memories

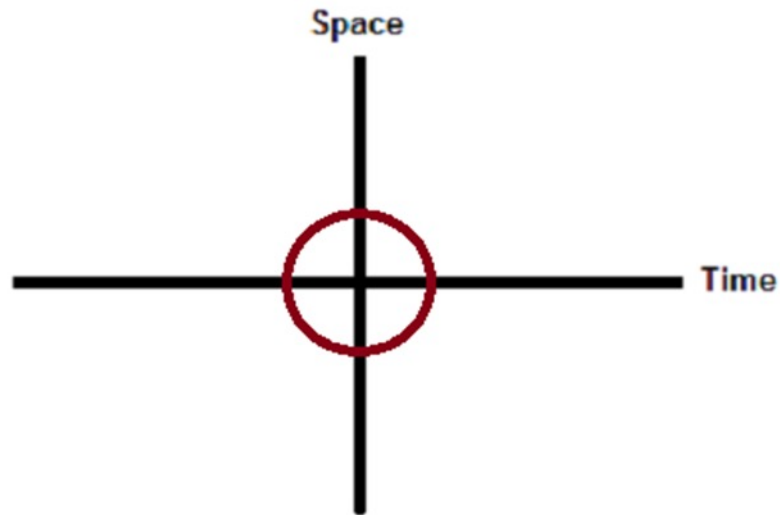
Experience as a Guide

1. Finding one's car keys
2. Slicing the bologna



Who is a Witness?

Intersection of Time and Space





Beginning the Interview

1. Introduction
2. Purpose
3. “What can you tell me about this incident?”
4. Transition Statement based on response:
 - “I saw what happened.”
 - “I didn’t see what happened.”



Transition Statement 1

Witness Acknowledges Incident:

Your Response: “You’ve given me a lot of information. I need to go back and ask more detailed questions about what you remember.”



Transition Statement 2

Witness says, “I Know Nothing”:

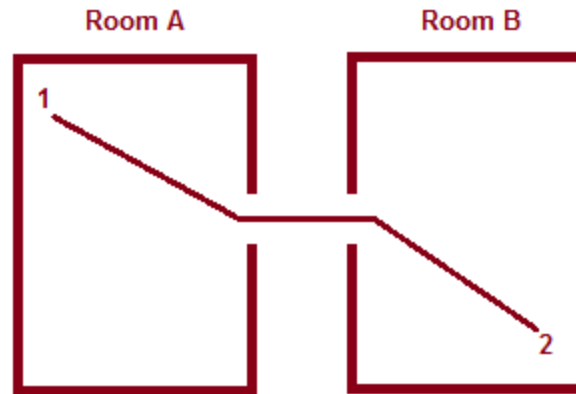
Your response: “Sometimes people who are in the vicinity of an incident may have seen or heard something that could be helpful. I need to ask you questions about what you do remember.”

Beginning the Interview



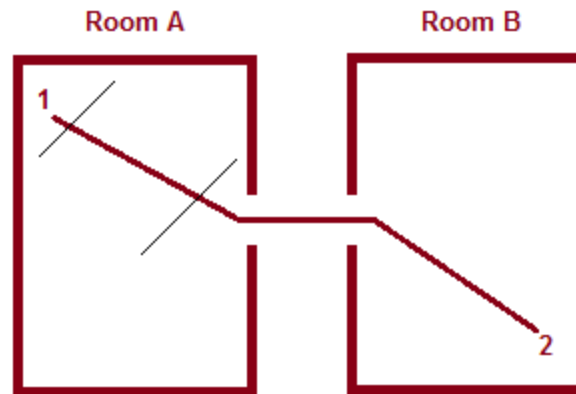
Slicing the Bologna

What is a “Slice of Time”?



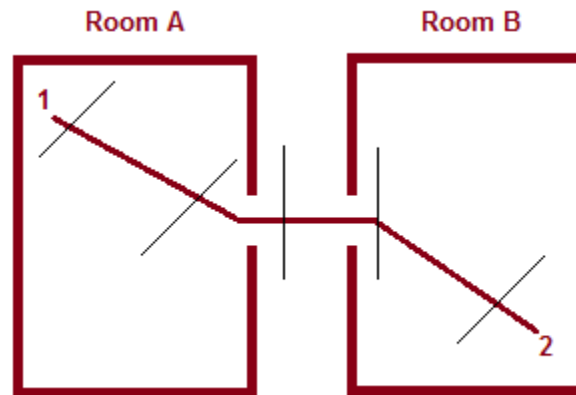
Slicing the Bologna

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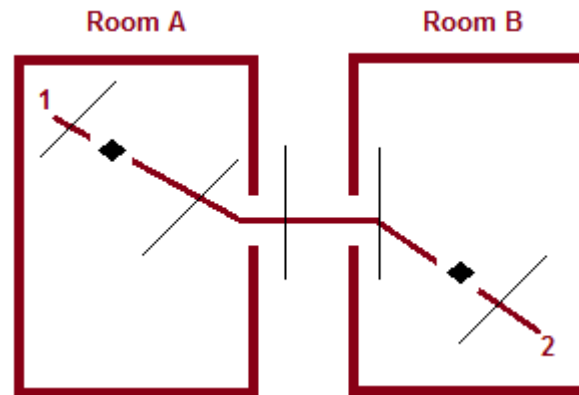
Slicing the Bologna

What is a “Slice of Time”?



Slicing the Bologna

What is a “Slice of Time”?



Teaching: Organizing the Interview

	Seeing	Hearing	
Slice #1	What did you see? Who did you see?	What did you hear?	What happened next?
Slice #2	Repeat		
Etc.			

Slicing the Bologna

Conducting Incident Interviews

	Sight	Hearing	
	What See? Who See?	What hear?	
Slice #1			What happened next?
Slice #2			What happened next?
Slice #3			What happened next?
Etc.			

Example



Follow-up Questions: See?

- Who did you see? (Answer: Frank Smith)
 - Who is Frank?
 - Where was Frank?
 - What was Frank doing?
 - What else do you remember about Frank?
- Who else did you see? (no one)
- What else did you see? (nothing)



Follow-up Questions: Hear?

- What did you hear? (Answer: Someone yelling)
 - Who was yelling?
 - What words did you hear?
 - What was the tone of the voice?
- What else did you hear?



Example



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