

PROSECUTORS' CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE POP-UP

SCIENCE-BASED INTERVIEWING FOR THE MODERN PROSECUTOR AND DETECTIVE

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SEPTEMBER 9, 2025



AGENDA

SEPTEMBER 9, 2025

12PM-2PM (ET)

This Pop-Up will focus on prosecutor's use of evidence-backed techniques grounded in psychology and cognitive science to gather accurate and reliable information from witnesses, victims, and suspects. These methods prioritize rapport building and open-ended questioning to reduce bias, enhance recall, and strengthen the quality of evidence.

Part One -

An Introduction to Science-Based Interviewing

Wayne Thomas, BSC (HONS) PSYCH, MA (OXON), PGCE, MBPSS
Tailored Training Programs

Part Two -

The Manhattan District Attorney's Office's Science-Based
Interviewing Development Program

Linda Ford, Counsel to the Legal Training Unit
New York County District Attorney's Office, NY

SPEAKER BIOS

Linda Ford

Counsel to the Legal Training Unit
New York County District Attorney's Office, New York



Linda Ford is Counsel to the Legal Training Unit and Senior Trial Counsel at the New York County District Attorney's Office, where she has served as a prosecutor since 1988. She spent thirty years as a homicide prosecutor, handling all aspects of homicide cases from pre-arrest investigations through trial, sentencing, and post-conviction litigation. Her homicide trials have encompassed a wide range of cases, including murder of a NYPD police officer, murder of witnesses, gang-related murders, domestic violence homicides, vehicular homicides, and murders committed during robbery, burglary, arson, kidnapping, and rape. While serving in the Firearms Trafficking Unit, ADA Ford initiated and led long-term, multi-jurisdictional investigations, utilizing techniques such as undercover buy operations, search warrants, electronic surveillance, and confidential informants. More recently, she incorporated Science-Based Interviewing into legal training at DANY, a transformational approach that advances ethical, effective, and fair prosecution. Linda was honored with the 2024 Robert M. Morgenthau Award presented by the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York. She holds a JD from Georgetown University Law Center.

Kristine Hamann

Executive Director
Prosecutors' Center for Excellence



Kristine Hamann is the founder and Executive Director of Prosecutors' Center for Excellence (PCE). PCE provides consulting, assessments, publications, national meetings, independent case review, and research services for prosecutors in offices of all sizes. PCE promotes best practices, spurs innovation, and implements solutions on a wide variety of topics. Ms. Hamann chairs the National Best Practices Committee for prosecutors and the Best Practices Committee for the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York. She teaches a prosecutor practicum at Georgetown Law School. From 2013 to 2016, Kristine Hamann was a Visiting Fellow at the United States Department of Justice/Bureau of Justice Assistance pursuing best practices for prosecutors. From 2008 to 2013, Ms. Hamann was the Executive Assistant District Attorney for the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York. From 2007 to 2008, Ms. Hamann was the New York State Inspector General. Prior to that Ms. Hamann served as the Executive Assistant DA to DA Robert Morgenthau in the Manhattan District Attorney's Office in New York City. Ms. Hamann held several other positions in that office including Deputy Chief of the Trial Division and Director of Training. She has received many awards for her public service.

Wayne Thomas, BSC (HONS) PSYCH, MA (OXON), PGCE, MBPSS

Tailored Training Programs



Wayne has over three decades of operational experience, spending the first years of his career as a UK police detective, specializing in the investigation of serious and organized crime and the use of covert policing methods. This was followed by a career as a UK government intelligence officer working in counterterrorism investigations around the world. He now collaborates with police and intelligence agencies to train interviewers and investigators in science-based methods that provide ethical and effective information elicitation. He has delivered training across the USA, Europe, Australia, South America and the Middle East, to both local and national agencies. When not teaching, he participates in research into the behavioral and cognitive aspects of interviewing in support of the Hope Applied Cognition Laboratory in Portsmouth University, U.K. and the Cold Case Network (a collaboration with Carleton University, Canada, and Goldsmiths University, U.K.). He is a deputy editor of "Investigative Interviewing Research and Practice", the journal of the International Investigative Interviewers Research Group.



RELATED MATERIALS



A Brief Evolution of Science-Based Practices

Interview and interrogation techniques have evolved significantly over the years, reflecting changes in societal norms, legal standards, and advancements in psychological understanding. Traditional methods of interrogation often relied on coercion and intimidation, leading to questionable ethical practices and unreliable information. There was a focus on overcoming resistance and gaining compliance. However, in recent decades, there has been a shift towards more scientifically grounded approaches to interviewing, focusing on gaining cooperation.

One pivotal development in this evolution was the U.S. government's establishment of the High-Value Detainee Interrogation Group (HIG) in 2009. The HIG was created partially in response to a backlash from "enhanced interrogation" practices. These methods not only gained information that was later found to be unreliable but resulted in a significant shift in public opinion about the methods employed in the War on Terror.

The development of Science-Based Interviewing (SBI) training, through the HIG, represented a groundbreaking advancement in interview and interrogation techniques. Being that most traditional U.S. interview methods had not been subjected to scientific or systematic inquiry or evaluation, the HIG aimed to develop methods that were not only effective but also non-coercive and grounded in scientific research utilizing the examination of best practices through the lens of peer-reviewed academic research. These methods came to be known as Science-Based Interview (SBI) methods. All research involved in SBI methods is published openly in academic journals and has been validated in real-world field settings. Using these techniques has been shown to increase the accuracy and yield of relevant information. Throughout a Science-Based Interview, the professionalism and credibility of the interviewer is preserved while respecting the rights and potential vulnerabilities of the interviewee.

SBI is rooted in psychological principles and emphasizes the importance of understanding human behavior. It centers on the principle that effective interviewing should be built on a foundation of science, law, and ethics and an ability to make educated decisions based on scientific knowledge of human behavior. By creating a non-threatening environment, interviewers can foster a sense of mutual respect and openness, prompting the interviewee to be more forthcoming with information.

More specifically in SBI, cognitive and social psychology combine to elicit the fullest possible account of events while avoiding the coercive methods. One example is the emphasis on working with the natural structure and function of memory, maximizing recall, and minimizing contamination or false memories. Memory-based strategies have



proven to increase relevant information gain. They also underpin scientifically grounded credibility assessments, which work with the strategies of truth tellers and against those of liars. SBI also focuses on establishing a conversational rapport and encouraging the interviewee to share information willingly. Based on the premise that individuals are more likely to provide important information when they feel an interviewer is actively engaging with them, this approach has been shown to yield better results than using fear-based tactics. Eliciting cooperation by understanding the interview subject works to create an *information provider* rather than a *question answerer*.

In 2011, the HIG with the support of Tailored Training Programs (TTP), began translating research into practice and over time created a Science-Based Interviewing program tailored to the HIG's mission. This program included multiple courses across science-based topic areas to include a 5-day Interview and Interrogation Course. In 2017, TTP began collaborating with LAPD and NYPD to tailor the content of the SBI materials to the needs of local and state law enforcement. Since 2019, TTP has been working to train legal professionals and law enforcement personnel in these transformative practices.

The application of psychological principles in interrogations has implications beyond just optimizing information yield and veracity. As procedural justice continues to evolve, the need for ethically sound interrogation techniques has become increasingly important. By prioritizing ethical standards and psychological principles, SBI has set a new benchmark for effective and humane interview practices and signals a crucial turning point in how interrogators, police officers, detectives, prosecutors and other criminal justice professionals approach their work. This transformative practice is gaining momentum as the new standard for interview and interrogation methods and is seeding a cultural shift for federal, state and local law enforcement and legal professionals as flagship programs take root across the nation.

About Tailored Training Programs

Tailored Training Programs (TTP) is a small business focused on optimizing the alignment of organizational systems so as to maximize team and individual human performance for the past 20 years. The company was in support of the HIG, developing the SBI Framework and training curriculum as well as was integral in designing their instructor development framework. Currently, TTP is working with multiple states and municipalities to implement SBI and assist with a shift in the culture of interviewing. For more information, contact Kristin Richmond at krichmond@ttp-usa.com.



This reference list includes just some of the research underpinning the science-based interview framework shown in this pop-up. For more specific information on research, contact Wayne Thomas at wayne.thomas@ravenwoodcognition.co.uk.

Science-Based Interviewing Overviews

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CLE CREDIT INSTRUCTIONS

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The Prosecutors' Center for Excellence has **not** requested continuing legal education accreditation for this program. Instead, we will supply you with a **Uniform Certificate of Attendance**. This certificate will include Prosecutors' Center for Excellence (PCE) as the sponsor, the title of this conference, the dates of this conference, the location of this conference as well as a calculation of the CLE Credit Hours under both a 60-minute and 50-minute hour system. We believe that these hours accurately reflect the CLE credit you should receive. However, each state has its own rules on the accrediting process which could affect this calculation.

At the end of each session, you will receive a conference evaluation. You will need to fill out the survey in order to receive the **Uniform Certificate of Attendance**.

As part of the meeting materials, PCE will supply you with this meeting's agenda, a description of the various content to be covered throughout this conference, as well as the names and biographies of the speakers.

You will need to apply for CLE credit on your own through your state's specific process. Most jurisdictions have this as an option. Some jurisdictions require members to apply and report within 30 days of the original program date. We hope that the **Uniform Certificate of Attendance** will aid you in this process.

Sign-In Sheets

To obtain CLE credit, most states require attendees to sign in at the time of the meeting. PCE will maintain a copy of the registration list as well as a record of who attended each session (present at start and end of each session) and send copies upon request.

Here are some specific sign-in rules from a variety of states. There will be no physical sign in sheet, instead PCE will be taking time-stamped log of participants from zoom reports. If you need a copy of our records please contact PCE.

Delaware Attorneys: Delaware Attorneys and speakers seeking CLE credits must sign in at each individual session you attend.

Illinois Attorneys: Illinois Attorneys and speakers seeking CLE credits must sign in at each individual session you attend. The sign-in documentation is used to verify your total number of CLE hours.

New York Attorneys: New York Attorneys and speakers seeking CLE credits must sign in and sign out of each individual session you attend.

Pennsylvania Attorneys: Pennsylvania Attorneys must complete the Pennsylvania CLE Credit Request form to report attendance at in-person programs.

Texas Attorneys: Texas Attorneys must complete the Texas CLE Course Attendance Form to report attendance at in-person programs



UNIFORM CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

SPONSOR: Prosecutors' Center for Excellence

ACTIVITY TITLE: PCE Pop-Up - Science-Based Interviewing for the Modern Prosecutor and Detective

DATE: September 9, 2025

LOCATION: Virtual Meeting

THIS PROGRAM OFFERS A TOTAL OF:

Full Program: 2 hours of CLE Credit – (0 hour ethics, and 2 hours of professional practice), PENDING STATE APPROVAL.

Please adhere to your state's requirements.

TO BE COMPLETED BY ATTORNEY (Please note: If you are required to report to more than one state, complete a form for each state.)

By signing below, I certify that I attended the activity described above and am entitled to claim _____ CLE credit hours of which --- hour was in ethics.

ATTORNEY'S NAME (please print)

SIGNATURE

BAR MEMBERSHIP, REGISTRATION
OR SUPREME COURT NUMBER

STATE WHERE CREDITS ARE TO BE
REGISTERED

ACKNOWLEDGED BY:

Kristine Hamann

Kristine Hamann
Executive Director/Founder
Prosecutors' Center for Excellence
Phone: 917.885.9065

NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM TO PCE



PCE

Meeting Survey

The September 9, 2025 PCE Pop-Up, Science-Based Interviewing for the Modern Prosecutor and Detective survey will be available at the end of the meeting. If you need proof of your survey for CLE credit please email PCE at contactpce@pceinc.org.

QUESTIONS?

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