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(Extract from TM 30-210 Dept Army Technical Manual "Interrogation Procedures")

8. PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO INTERROGATION

a. General. One important aspect of interrogation is the "approach." Without proper contact successful questioning of an ^{interrogator} ~~interrogate~~ may never materialize, and the situation may get out of control and degenerate into an argument. The decision as to what approach to employ depends on the interrogator's psychological evaluation of the ^{interrogator} ~~interrogate~~ and on the personality of the interrogator. Each interrogator is expected to develop his own techniques and acquire proficiency from experience. The skilled interrogator selects his approach on the basis of his knowledge of techniques and his ability to apply them to individual cases in accordance with his evaluation of that case, always keeping his interrogation mission foremost in mind.

b. General Psychology. Psychology is the study of human behavior and its causation. Interrogators must conscientiously strive to increase their knowledge of human behavior in order to be able to accomplish their mission. A basic knowledge of practical psychology will enable the interrogator to better evaluate his subjects. The following are examples of human behavior which may be useful to the interrogator:

- (1) Human beings tend to be talkative, especially after harrowing experiences.
- (2) Human beings tend to be deferential when confronted by superior authority, and are therefore inclined to be cooperative with persons demonstrating power.
- (3) Human beings seek opportunities to rationalize acts about which they feel guilty.
- (4) Human beings, under pressure, tend to forget what they have been taught, especially if such lessons have not been practiced to the point of becoming habitual. For example, instructions received on resisting interrogation beyond the name-rank-serial number and date of birth catechism are unlikely to be lived up to. In the excitement and strain of capture, resistance to interrogation usually becomes an individual performance dictated by habit, conditioned responses, and circumstances at the time of interrogation.
- (5) Human beings tend to attach less importance to their own information when someone else demonstrates that he too possesses the same, or related, information.
- (6) Human beings tend to appreciate flattery and exoneration from guilt.

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- (7) Human beings resent the belittling of cherished individuals or ideals, and may be aroused to the extent of sharp verbal defense.
- (8) Human beings are likely to respond to kindness and understanding, especially under severe and unfamiliar conditions.
- (9) Human beings tend to liberalize rules in the light of the particular situation in which they find themselves, rather than to follow their instruction literally. Few interrogees will stop talking after they have once stated their name, rank, date of birth, and serial number. Having begun talking, the tendency is to continue.

c. Applied Psychology. Applied psychology is merely the application of such tendencies as those given above to interrogation techniques. The interrogator applies his knowledge of human behavior, for example, by purposely avoiding certain questions, during interrogation and substituting other questions, or by assuming certain moods or attitudes because he thinks they will be more productive of results. Since the variables in any interrogation situation are many, no simple hard and fast rule can be set down for the application of psychological techniques.

d. Types of Approach. Numerous devices may be effectively employed by the interrogator to establish mental contact or rapport with an interrogee. At the outset it should be emphasized that the objective of an interrogation is seldom, if ever, to obtain an admission or a confession, ~~from an interrogee.~~ The subject is interroged for accurate and reliable information. The use of physical or psychological duress in this type of situation is generally unproductive and an indication of frustration and lack of ability on the part of the interrogator. Several types of interrogation approaches are listed below. There are many others: in fact, the variety of approaches is limited only by the initiative, imagination, and ingenuity of the interrogator. The approach should be tailored to suit each individual case, and may be combined with other methods to suit special requirements.

(1) Direct approach. In this method the interrogator seemingly "lays the cards on the table," apparently making no attempt to hide the purpose of the questioning. This approach should be used only in cases where the interrogator assumes or knows that the person interroged will not refuse to give information. It is especially suitable for questioning persons who have had little security training. The advantage of this method is that important information can usually be obtained in the minimum of time. ~~Interrogers at regimental level will employ this method frequently with recently captured enemy personnel.~~ An oversimplified direct approach may employ the following order of questions, leading directly to the pursuit of the information desired.

- (a) Name?
- (b) Rank?
- (c) Serial Number?
- (d) Unit?

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(2) Stressing the futility of withholding information. With this approach the interrogator attempt to convince the ^{POW}interrogatee that security considerations are no longer valid. Various bits of information must be selected to fit the facts of the situation. It is essential that the interrogator be well informed about the general and specific situation and any physical, social, political, economic, psychological, or moral weaknesses of the enemy which may be exploited to advantage. Following are some of the more common ideas which can be subtly employed in connection with this approach.

(a) Withholding of information is futile, since defeat is already inevitable for the subject's country, force, or unit.

(b) The information ~~is~~ no longer has any significance, since the situation under discussion has already culminated.

(c) Comrades have already given all the important information.

(d) Uncooperative persons receive less consideration in detention camps. Withholding of information means prolonging the war, with more eventual casualties among his relatives and "buddies".

(3) Rapid fire questioning. This method consists of a rapidly delivered series of questions which keeps the ^{POW}interrogatee constantly on the defensive and off balance thereby weakening resistance and/or his determination to give evasive answers. When this approach is employed the ^{POW}interrogatee often loses patience, becomes angry, offended, or confused, and begins to talk in self defense. Once the ^{POW}interrogatee has begun to talk, he tends to become more involved and perhaps ~~is~~ more angry, to the point where his judgment is adversely affected and he inadvertently reveals more than he had intended. The interrogator who uses this approach should vary the subject matter of his questions. He should ask non-military as well as military questions in rapid succession. This change of procedure sometimes enables the interrogator to ferret out the topics most sensitive to the ^{POW}interrogatee and create an opening for further exploitation. This approach is difficult to control and should not be attempted by unskilled interrogators.

(4) Emotional approach. This approach consists of playing upon the emotions of a person in order to bring out the required information. When using this approach, the interrogator creates an atmosphere of emotional confusion designed to reduce security consciousness. The emotional approach utilizes hate, revenge, fear, jealousy, sadness, pity, and similar emotions. It also exploits religious and patriotic feelings, sense of social duty, and other concepts based on emotional reactions. Two examples of techniques are---

(a) The first, and by far the easiest method, is to take advantage of the ^{POW}interrogatee's personal problems. After determining the ^{POW}personal problems of the ~~interrogatee~~, the interrogator paints a harrowing word picture of the ^{POW}interrogatee's situation. A clever interrogator, using this method, can sometimes bring a sensitive person to the point of tears and despondency within a very short time. Interrogation becomes comparatively easy after this point has been reached.

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(b) The second and more difficult, method of utilizing the emotional approach is for the interrogator himself to simulate a temperamental outburst for the purpose of creating an acute feeling of insecurity and anxiety in the ~~interrogatee~~^{POW}. Once such emotional pressure is applied, the ~~interrogatee~~^{POW} should not be given an opportunity to recover his composure. The interrogator may raise his voice and pound the table, storm up and down and generally conduct himself in such a manner as to alarm the ~~interrogatee~~^{POW} to a point of talking to relieve his apprehension. ~~Interrogators are warned, however, that this approach is most difficult to achieve and can only be utilized by an interrogator with experience and psychological insight, as well as the ability to play a role.~~

(5) Trickery. This approach has an almost limitless number of variations. Its purpose is to cause the ~~interrogatee~~^{POW} to divulge information without being aware of it, or without a conscious or willful choice in the matter. Trickery may vary from the simple device of telling a group of interrogation prospects to answer by name when the number of their regiment is called to elaborate systems involving monitoring equipment and informers within an enclosure. The numerous variations within this approach are a constant challenge to the ingenuity of the interrogator. He must, of course, choose that form of trickery which will fit a particular set of circumstances, his personality, and the personality and intelligence of the person interrogated so as to make him less susceptible to future interrogation. It is important therefore, that the method be successfully handled each time it is attempted. It is further important that an ~~interrogatee~~^{POW} never become aware of the fact that he has been or is being tricked. ~~At tactical levels where time is generally limited, trickery is especially advantageous and useful since important information can sometimes quickly be obtained thereby from high-ranking or security conscious~~^{POW's} ~~interrogatees~~. The more elaborate forms of ruses, designed to obtain continuous and complete information, are not suited to lower command levels.

(6) Variations. Any of the usual approaches may be varied in many ways. ~~The interrogator must constantly invent new variants to established approaches, as each successive interrogation situation arises, and as different types of individuals are encountered. Listed below are some variations which might fit into any of the categories of the approaches already discussed. The ingenious interrogator will develop new adaptations of his own.~~

(a) Sympathy. The interrogator adopts a ~~sympathetic~~^{etc} manner assuring the person interrogated that justice and good treatment will be accorded him. In some instances ~~the interrogator, or a collaborator, will associate informally with the~~^{POW} ~~interrogatee~~ prior to interrogation. This friendly attitude may enable the interrogator to elicit identifications, locations, and other information which would be refused during formal or direct interrogation.

(b) Sternness. As the term applies, the interrogator appears particularly grim and uninviting. With youthful or ~~par~~ frightened persons, a very stern but just attitude is often useful. Some people are most susceptible to an interrogator who inspires awe by means of a severe attitude.

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When utilizing this approach, the interrogator ~~must~~ never give the impression that he is bluffing; once he does, he will lose control of the interrogation.

(c) Pride and ego. This approach is sometimes successful with nominally security-minded commissioned or non-commissioned officers. It may work also on persons who may have feelings of inferiority. It is a psychological stratagem designed to goad the interrogee into giving information. A real or imaginary deficiency within the enemy army or country or a particular shortcoming in a given interrogee's character can provide an opening for this approach. An example of "pride and ego" question is: "Why did you surrender so easily when you still had plenty of ammunition to defend your position?" If the prisoner attempts to defend or vindicate himself by offering proof that he did not surrender easily, he almost invariably provides some information which will give the interrogator his lead for the next question.

(d) National pride. This approach is similar to the "pride and ego" approach, in that the interrogee is taunted into giving information. In this case, however, the interrogator's remarks are designed to attack the interrogee's ideals concerning government, family, or homeland in order to tempt him to make rash statements. A "patriotic" prisoner can almost always be drawn into conversation in this manner.

(e) Face saving. Some ^{POW's} interrogees will talk if they can be made to feel that it will not subject them to the ridicule or public condemnation of others. Orientals, particularly are susceptible to this treatment. A hint that he write the answer and leave it in his quarters if he will not tell you, or that the subject may be classified as to disclosure to civilians, but surely not between military men, may have astonishing results.

(f) Bluff. This approach can be very effective, but can be easily abused. If an interrogator decides he wants to bluff, he must be very sure of his ground. Once the ^{POW} interrogee determines the interrogator is guessing or lying, the interrogator may lose control, and the interrogation then may have to be turned over to another interrogator. A good example of a purely psychological bluff at tactical level would be to place several deserters, or similarly vulnerable prisoners who are reluctant to talk into a vehicle and give them the idea that they are to be returned to their own lines. Such individuals would of course be most unwilling to be turned over to their own forces as deserters and if the bluff is not called, and it seldom is, it would undoubtedly result in successful interrogation.

^{POW} (f) Fear. Play upon apprehension, superstition, and fear of an interrogee may be effective if used under appropriate circumstances.

(h) Drawing attention away from real object. No interrogator worth his salt will let a prisoner know what he, the interrogator, is really after. The questions should be asked in random sequence, minor points (especially if the POW is reluctant to discuss them) may be stressed to draw his attention away from the true target and cause him to inadvertantly reveal important facts. This "jumbling" of questions should include "dummy" questions which are of no

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importance, to keep him from learning the importance of a desired bit of information and putting his uninterrogated comrades on their guard.

(i) Threat and rescue. This approach technique combines the "stern approach" with the "kindness and sympathy" approach as discussed above. It is one of the rarer techniques of interrogation where the use of two interrogators is recommended. One interrogator is very stern and blustery acting, very antagonistic. The other interrogator is sympathetic, giving the impression that he wants to help the inter^{ro}gee. After the "mean" interrogator leaves the inter^{ro}gee in disgust, the "friendly" interrogator goes to work.

(j) Concealed identity. In this approach the interrogator insists that the inter^{ro}gee is not the person he purports to be. Since proper identification is important to any captive, he will offer circumstantial proof of his own identity, incidentally revealing some useful information such as his unit, locations, names of officers, and other pertinent data.

(k) "We know all". This is one of the basic approaches. In this, as in all interrogation approaches, the interrogator familiarizes himself with all available data on the inter^{ro}gee and his unit or whatever subject is being explored. He asks questions to which he already has the answers and scornfully answers them himself when the inter^{ro}gee hesitates. He is striving to convince the inter^{ro}gee that he already knows all the inter^{ro}gee does so that resistance is wasted effort. When the prisoner starts giving correct information and answers freely, a few "mystery" questions can be slipped in. Dummy questions should still be used from time to time to test the inter^{ro}gee, to conceal from him the fact that he is giving new information, and to prevent him from realizing that he is "spilling the beans".

(l) Stupid interrogator. In this approach the interrogator pretends to be a stupid individual with very little understanding of military or other matters. This device may have the desired effect of disarming the person interrogated. The inter^{ro}gee is required to "explain" everything (Even inconsequential items) because the interrogator is so "stupid."

(m) Other variations. Other attitudes which the interrogator may employ are---

1. Officer of a winning army to soldier of a defeated one.
2. Officer to enlisted man.
3. Friend to friend.
4. One soldier to another, one musician to another, one religious faith to another, etc.

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