

Utilising forensic information in the interviewing of suspects; the 'PEACE' approach

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In some countries the traditional oppressive way of interviewing suspects is being replaced by an 'information gathering then challenge' approach in which what a suspect says is compared with what the investigators already know (e.g. from forensic science). An overview of this 'PEACE' approach will be presented along with analyses of UK tape recorded interviews with suspects regarding serious crimes (e.g. murder, rape). The interviewer strategies most frequently used were 'presentation of evidence', 'challenge', 'explicitly asking for an account/the truth', and 'rapport/empathy'. Tactics some people seem to be unethical such as 'minimisation' and 'maximisation' never/almost never occurred. Regarding whether suspects (i) admitted or (ii) denied or (ii) made no comment, strategies found relevant were 'rapport/empathy', 'requests attention', 'explicitly asking for an account/the truth', and 'describing the victim trauma'. Most of the suspects' responses were on topic. (Although most suspects denied involvement in these serious crimes, many were subsequently convicted.)

Biography

Ray Bull is Professor of Forensic Psychology at the University of Leicester. His major research topic is investigative interviewing. He has advised a large number of police forces in several countries on the interviewing of witnesses and of suspects, and he has testified as an expert witness in a considerable number of trials. He has authored and co-authored a large number of papers in quality research journals and has co-authored and co-edited many books including *Investigative Interviewing: Psychology and Practice* (1999 – a second edition is now being written) and *Witness Identification in Criminal Cases* (2008). He has been an invited speaker at a variety of meetings around the world. In recognition of the quality and extent of his research publications he was in 1995 awarded a higher doctorate (Doctor of Science).

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