

Crime Scene Investigation Tactics

Choosing the team

- Try to compose your team with a variety of people with different skills, this may not always be your friends
- Pick partners that compliment your abilities, if you are naturally shy, you may need to find a more verbal person to help out with the questions
- Keep in mind the different roles of the teammates
 - 1.) **Interviewer**- this needs to be a person that is familiar with law enforcement procedures and definitely not shy or embarrassed about asking questions. This should also tbe the person who writes the reports (and needs to have a good control of their grammar skills and handwriting.) This person needs to be able to think and process information quickly in order to ask the right questions from the information that is given.
 - 2.) **Sketch Artist**- this person needs to be very neat and have decent drawing capabilities. Also necessary is the ability to be able to quickly convert things to a scale drawing. This person needs to be observant and be able to distinguish evidence from non-essential items in the room. Perfectionists generally make good sketch artists as long as they are willing to work quickly.
 - 3.) **Crime Scene Technician**- this person needs to be observant and work quickly when collecting evidence. He or she also needs to be able to distinguish evidence from non-essential items in the room. This person must be organized and descriptive in a few words.

Before the event

- Study all of the information about crime scene investigation that you have been provided (or can find). Recall information from classes like Criminal Investigation.
- Meet as a group to decide a general plan of attack. Who will secure the crime scene and enter the room first? Who will help the sketch artist to measure things? Will you be dressed professionally and similar? What types of evidence does your team feel is necessary to take for lab processing? Who will announce that this evidence will be processe? (in most cases this is the crime scene technician).
- Measure your hotel room if you are staying in the same hotel, often they use similar rooms and this can get you a head start in getting your sketch started. (be very careful, the room may appear similar but in fact it is slightly smaller or larger).
- Find out if you will need to solve the crime. If you are to solve it this will need to go into the report.
- Obtain templates of evidence logs, graph paper for sketches, and general lists of questions that the interviewer may want to ask.
- Gather all the necessary materials ahead of time: clipboards, paper, pens, pencils, rulers, templates, tape measures, etc.
- Allow yourself enough time so that you are not late. **BE ON TIME.**

During the event

- Enter the room and secure the crime scene
- The interviewer should listen intently to the description of the crime provided and takes notes as necessary while the other members of the team keep an ear open but go ahead and begin their work.
- **Interviewer-** try to think about what questions you would be asked if you were reporting the crime. Are there any witnesses, interviews, surviving victims, who are the friends or acquaintances of the victim, are there any suspects, was someone seen fleeing the scene, and if the victim owns vehicles and where are they? After you have asked the basic questions, follow up on anything that seems out of the ordinary and ask any questions that come to your mind. Don't forget that lab reports are available sometimes. Just because you are told that you are the first officers on the scene, it does not mean that there hasn't been information already collected.
- **Sketch Artist-** if available go in with a sketch of the perimeter of the room. Work quickly to place the main fixtures of the room (bed, TV, tables, etc.) so that you can also quickly place the evidence accordingly. If there is a body, measure the location of the body in relation to two walls in the room, also do this with the weapon and any major evidence such as drugs, blood, bullet casings, etc. It is not necessary to measure things such as lamps and beds. Work with the crime scene technician to ensure that no pieces of evidence are overlooked. Measure the evidence itself using a ruler to get the general size (and take notes on this).
- **Crime Scene Technician-** this person takes "pictures" of the crime scene and "sends" items of evidence for lab analysis as well as interpreting evidence that is found at the scene. If there are any closed containers, ask the proctor "If I open this, what will I find?" Also you can ask things like "If I dusted this for prints would I find any, and if so whose?" You may want to try to explain that you are taking pictures and what they are of. Make lists of evidence and general descriptive notes on each piece. Assist the sketch artist with measurements.

Report Preparation

- Listen carefully when your time is read, make sure your watch is set with the proctor's so that you are not late
- Work quickly but neatly and thoroughly
- Write in pen
- **Interviewer-** write the report in chronological order, state the date, time, location, and why you were called to the scene. Give a general description of what was found upon arrival. Include any pertinent information that was obtained from your questioning. Put suggestions of where to investigate further. **DO NOT INCLUDE OPINIONS.** The only opinion type of material that will need to be in there is if you are to solve the crime. Keep this as professional as possible, if you have seen a police report before, try to mimic that tone of writing. Write legibly.
- **Sketch Artist-** Use the rough draft from your observations to make a neat copy to scale. It's more important to put the evidence in the right locations than non-essential items, though they may help to place the evidence spatially. Work with the crime scene technician to ensure that your evidence is numbered or lettered the same as his on his list. List the evidence names below your sketch, numbered or lettered appropriately.
- **Crime Scene Technician-** List the evidence and number it or letter it in sequential order. Put a quick description of the evidence and its destination for processing if necessary. You may want to also compile a photo log. This will contain picture of the crime scene as well as evidence.

After the even

- Stay positive and get your report in on time!

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