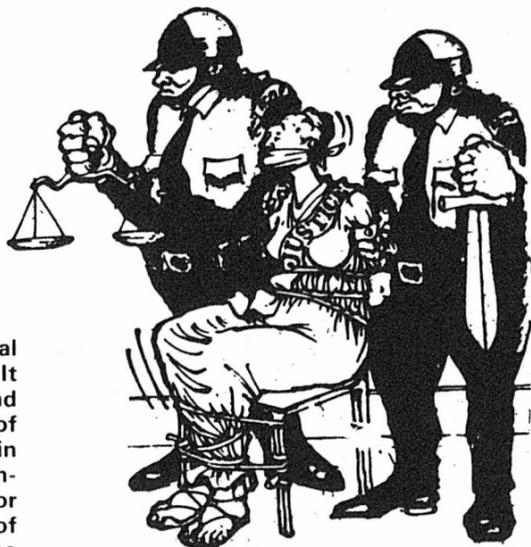


Are these nutcrackers sweet?

by Calgary City Policeman
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Printed below is the RCMP's official Interrogation Techniques handbook. It originates from the RCMP Training and Development Branch at the headquarters of the RCMP in Ottawa. It is important to keep in mind that the Interrogation Techniques outlined here are to be used on "suspects" or individuals who according to our system of justice ought to be assumed innocent of the crime until proven guilty by a court of law.



Police generally are not unfair in interrogations whereby they subject the suspect to unnatural stresses. We are simply exploiting those tendencies that are most common to all people. We do not go against human nature but rather go along with human nature. To succeed, the interrogator must have confidence in himself and the technique he employs. He must have confidence in his powers of persuasion, his powers of perseverance and be able to adapt to any situation that may arise in the interrogation room. As one author states "the torture must come from within the suspect's own mind and not from any interrogation method employed by the police." The subject must psychologically feel that he will benefit from confessing. It is psychologically wrong to suppose that a suspect will confess for nothing. In his mind he may think the very act of confessing to his crime may help him in court or it may be for the good of his family or for the good of society but he must, in the final analysis believe that he is helping himself.

We as professionals and we are professionals, have had to broaden our base of interrogation techniques by new methods and hidden techniques. None of the techniques which are discussed in this paper will employ physical force of any kind. The techniques outlined hereunder do however employ a hidden battery of "hsi nao" (brainwashing) techniques to influence the emotional attitudes of the subject or suspect.

Certainly to begin with in any interrogation we are going to do everything that is legal and right. We will attempt to get a confession that is free and voluntary and that may be admissible in court and will stand the test of cross examination. We will employ no tricks which could be construed as illegal tactics.

But there is a point which is reached in every interrogation when you still may not have that statement and you know if you go any further in the specific technique that you are employing that your statement will be ruled inadmissible. It is at this point the interrogator must make a decision: does he now

leave the interrogation room without the statement or does he now proceed with other techniques which he knows will not allow the statement in but may give him information which will lead to the securing of other evidence which itself may be admissible. I suggest that at this point that the Marquis of Queensbury Rules go out the window and the interrogator must open up his bag of tricks and go for the recovery of the weapon or the stolen property or the names of accomplices or any evidence which may be presented in court regardless of the method employed to secure that evidence. In our present day law and rule governing the admission of evidence, one could conceivably steal evidence and still present it in court and it could not be held out of court by the very fact that it was stolen. If we carry this through further, the interrogator could conceivably hit the suspect over the head with a baseball bat to secure real evidence that may be admissible in court in the case in question. In our careers as police officers we have heard of many weird and fantastic techniques that have been allegedly employed to secure confessions. Some of these techniques referred to are the 'plastic bag' technique; whereby a plastic bag is placed over the subject's head or perhaps the insertion of ice cubes up the rectum or still further, the application of a pair of pliers on the subjects testicles.

I do not advocate any of the above techniques because if these techniques were practised, the results would be catastrophic. There is no doubt in my mind that any person subjected to such treatment would confess to anything the interrogator wanted him to. With such a technique we could find out who shot the hole in Davy Crockett's hat or who stole the Brooklyn Bridge. I'm sure that Einstein, the greatest mathematician of our time, would say that two and two makes seven if we kept hitting him over the head with a baseball bat. Again I repeat, I do not advocate violence in any form to secure a confession or statement from any suspect no matter how heinous the crime. There is a better way, there is a more humane way — by using the power of the spoken word. The following are

some suggested techniques of interrogation that have been successfully employed by many interrogators.

Again in the case of a pervert or indecent assault or any crime where sex is involved, our lineage may go something like this.

"Son, do you think you are the only one who ever touched (substitution) a girl? I'll guarantee you everyday thousands of us, as we walk down the streets think what it would be like with a certain girl that we see. Don't think for one moment that you're the only one that has had these thoughts. We just simply didn't have the guts to do anything about it. Everybody does it. Girls are the same way. You don't mean to tell me that they aren't thinking of it when they see a good looking fellow on the street. It's just human nature, that all. And anyway, this broad was probably asking for it."

We can readily see that the technique above entitled "everybody's doing it" can now lead into this technique whereby we blame the victim in the case of a child molester or an indecent assault on a male or female or in the case of a theft from employer. Our lines in this instance may go something like this.

"Damn it all, I can't blame you. I had a look at that kid. I'll tell you, nowadays you can't tell their age, the way they use lipstick and powder and these damn mini-skirts. They are just asking for it, and in your case with your old lady hot on your neck, you can't get anything at home. I don't blame you. Hell, when I spoke to this girl she even sort of looked like a prostitute to me. You just can't tell nowadays about these women. They give you the come on and then holler if they're caught. Hell, we're all human. We all get ideas. I don't care whether you're a policeman, a minister or who you are, she probably only squawked because she was afraid her mother might find out (or her old man in the case of a wife). She probably led you on and then when it got right down to the business she wanted to back off. Hell, even I had ideas when I was talking to her. She's just that type that would give anybody ideas."

In the case of theft from employer, the interrogator can ask how much the subject is earning or what type of surroundings he works in and then blame the employer. "Hell, I don't blame you for stealing ten bucks. I would probably have taken more. Do you mean to tell me he only pays you sixty bucks a week? Who can live and support a wife and family on that kind of wage? He should be reported to the board of industrial relations, (or it serves him god damn well right). Anybody who can't afford a cash register to keep his money in deserves to lose it. Hell, anybody coming by could have put his hand in that box and taken the money. I don't blame you at all. I'll guarantee you he loses lots of money everyday like this. Probably he puts his hand in the till himself when nobody's looking. I'll tell you this mister, I'd steal too if my wife and my kiddies were hungry. It takes a lot of guts to do a thing like that."

I would like to digress a moment here and speak briefly about sizing up the suspect so that we may be better equipped to choose the proper interrogation technique. As I stated before, the efficient interrogator will attempt to find out everything that is possible about the crime committed but he must also find out everything that is possible about the suspect that he is about to interrogate. There is evidence that physique and temperament are closely related. Short stocky people tend to be liable to swings of mood and usually are extroverts. For example:

(a) Short and fat physique — these people are usually the happy type. Eat, drink and be merry. When interrogating this type, humour them.

(b) Tall and slender — These types of people are usually withdrawn and introverted. These are the thinkers, the scientists, poets, the writers. They may be withdrawn and the interrogator must attempt to bring them out by appealing to their intellect.

The interrogator must train himself to take advantage of every facet of human nature.