



U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Gathering Inspection Information
Through Interviews

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Course Agenda: Day 1

Time	Item	Description
8:30 a.m.	Introductions	Opening and welcome
8:50 a.m.	Module 1	Planning the Interview
9:40 a.m.	Break	Morning Break
10:15 a.m.	Module 1	Mid-America Power Company (MAPC) Exercise
11:45 a.m.	Lunch	Midday Break
12:45 p.m.	Module 2	Asking Questions
1:45 p.m.	Break	Afternoon Break
2:00 p.m.	Module 2	MAPC Exercise (continued)
3:00 p.m.	Module 3	Perception
3:15 p.m.	Module 3	MAPC Exercise (continued)
3:50 p.m.	Summary	Summary of Day 1
4:00 p.m.	Adjourn	End of Day 1

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Course Agenda: Day 2

Time	Item	Description
8:30 a.m.	Review	Review of Day 1
8:45 a.m.	Role Play	Videotaped Role-Play Exercises
11:45 a.m.	Lunch	Midday Break
12:45 p.m.	Role Play	Videotaped Role-Play Exercises
1:45 p.m.	Break	Afternoon Break
1:55 p.m.	Module 4	Handling Difficult Situations
2:30 p.m.	Break	Afternoon Break
2:45 p.m.	Module 4	Handling Difficult Situations
3:45 p.m.	Summary	Summary of Day 2
4:00 p.m.	Adjourn	End of Day 2

Table of Contents

Subject	Page
Introduction	I-1
Introduction	I-2
Workshop Objectives	I-2
 Section 1: Planning the Interview	 1-1
Planning the Interview	1-2
Interview Planning Guide.....	1-3
Interview Planning: Short List	1-4
Interview Planning: General Strategies	1-5
Techniques for Opening an Interview	1-6
Techniques for Closing an Interview	1-7
Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I	1-8
 Section 2: Asking Questions	 2-1
Asking Questions	2-2
Types of Questions	2-2
Open Questions vs. Closed Questions	2-2
Advantages of Open Questions	2-2
Disadvantages of Open Questions	2-3
Advantages of Closed Questions.....	2-3
Disadvantages of Closed Questions	2-3
Probing Questions, Follow Up	2-4
Leading Questions	2-4
Loaded Questions	2-4
Indirect Questions.....	2-4
Open Questions vs. Closed Questions	2-5
Examples	2-5
Six Good Open Questions for Almost Any Situation	2-6
Four Phrases that Function as Open Questions.....	2-6
Six Useful Functions of Open Questions	2-7
Five Useful Functions of Closed Questions.....	2-7

Table of Contents

Subject	Page
Probing Questions.....	2-8
Categories of Probes, Follow-up	2-8
Examples of Probing Questions	2-8
Exercise 2-1 Probing Questions	2-9
Indirect Questions.....	2-10
Examples of Indirect Questions	2-10
Exercise 2-2: Changing Direct Questions to Indirect Questions	2-11
Factors and Techniques in Phrasing Questions	2-12
Changing Your Approach	2-13
Exercise 2-3: Questioning Techniques, MAPC Part II	2-14
Section 3: Perception	3-1
Perception.....	3-2
The Struggle to <i>"Make Sense"</i> of the World.....	3-2
Perception Definitions	3-3
The Story	3-4
Cultural Differences.....	3-5
Beliefs, Values, and Attitudes	3-6
Cognitive Systems.....	3-7
Personal Needs.....	3-8
Expectations.....	3-9
Personal Images and Life Scripts.....	3-9
Exercise 3-1: Perception, MPAC Part III	3-10
Perception Tips for NRC Inspectors	3-19
Section 4: Handling Difficult Situations.....	4-1
General Strategies and Techniques.....	4-2
Overcoming Resistance, Reticence	4-2
Controlling Direction and Focus	4-2
Dealing with Hostility and Confrontation	4-3
Calling Behavior	4-3

Table of Contents

Subject	Page
Facilitating Recall	4-4
Managing Asymmetry	4-4
Five Common Mistakes Made by Interviewers.....	4-5
Maintaining Professional Bearing	4-6
Appendix A	A-1
Useful Phrases.....	A-1
Appendix B	B-1
Role Play Instructions: Difficult Interviewees	B-1



Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Introduction

The gathering of inspection information by NRC personnel is one of the most important activities in the fulfillment of the agency's mission. Sometimes the setting may be in a large meeting with licensee and vendor representatives making sophisticated presentations to justify and explain issues. Other times it is a face-to-face or telephonic interview with individuals who are thought to have knowledge pertinent to the investigation. In all cases, it is the NRC investigator's skill in gathering information through communication techniques coupled with his or her technical and regulatory expertise that determine the success of the mission.

Licensees may resist providing information in a variety of ways and for many reasons. Getting through this resistance to obtain accurate information presents a challenge to the interviewer.

NRC inspectors need very specific interpersonal and communication skills. Not only must they be able to uncover information needed, they must be able to do so without "hitting people over the head with two-by-fours." Given the inherent potential for adversarial relationships, NRC inspectors must be skilled at defusing hostility and dealing with difficult situations so as to avoid long-term negative effects. It is within this context that this course was designed.

Workshop Objectives

After completing this workshop, participants will:

- Be able to develop an effective interview plan.
- Know a variety of questioning techniques.
- Understand the factors that influence interpersonal perception.
- Be better prepared to deal with difficult situations.
- Get feedback on personal interviewing style.



Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

SECTION 1: PLANNING THE INTERVIEW

Section 1: Planning the Interview

Planning the Interview

Effective information gathering begins with defining your purpose and then analyzing your task to determine the information needed. Sometimes you will want answers to a few specific questions. Other times you will seek general information, the "big picture." Do your homework. Study relevant reference material, reports, records and logs. Talk to the resident inspector, previous inspectors and available licensee personnel.

Your assignment to the inspection should contain a succinct statement of the overall goal. You will have to analyze this to determine exactly how it applies to the person you are about to interview and what are your specific information needs. If the stated purpose contains ambiguities, you should check with your supervisor for clarification. Occasionally you may want to decide on an approach and form hypotheses to be confirmed during your interview. The facts you need to confirm these hypotheses then become your initial information needs. During the interview you may constantly revise your information needs in response to the information you receive.

You will have to determine the individuals you want to interview. You may be able to single out one person, or you may have to develop a list of several people. The task of deciding whom to interview may generate more information needs.

You may have alternatives as to the time and setting for interviews. The choices you make and the way you arrange the interview can convey messages about your interests, your authority, and whether you present yourself as an adversary or a collaborator.

Interview Planning Guide

1. Be clear about the purpose. Usually you will have a prescribed mission. You should review this carefully and refine it to focus on the specific individual you will be interviewing.
2. Determine information needs. What specific information do you need to accomplish your purposes? Is there additional information you would like to get?
3. Select person(s) to be interviewed.
4. Develop lines of questioning. Plan tentative question sequences that will produce the information you need.
5. Compose specific phrasing for key questions.
6. Choose the setting for the interview.
7. Make the necessary arrangements. Ensure that the place you have chosen is available and meets your needs. Arrange for notification of the person to be interviewed. Does this person need to make any preparations or bring anything?
8. Plan how you are going to begin the interview. How will you set the climate and the level of formality?
9. Anticipate obstacles and resistance. What might go wrong? Are there any special circumstances? Think through your questions and the possible answers. Put yourself in the place of the licensee. Do the questions make sense? Are they answerable?
10. Prepare any materials or outline you need for taking notes.

Interview Planning Guide: Short List

1. Purpose
2. Information needs, questions
3. Obstacles, sources of resistance, special conditions

Interview Planning: General Strategies

Inquiry, Surveillance

1. Equipment
2. Procedures
3. Personnel
 - Qualifications
 - Training
 - Recent changes

Equipment Failure

1. Operating history
2. Maintenance history
3. Surveillance history
4. What's changed?

Incident Response

1. Current status
2. Action taken
3. Next steps
4. Extent of condition
5. What do you need?
6. Apparent cause
7. Root cause

Techniques for Opening an Interview

As quickly as you can, you should answer the licensee's implied question: *Why is the NRC talking to me now about this?*

1. Summarize the concern. Present your data – *all of it* – up front.
2. Explain how the issue was discovered.
3. Explain the “big picture;” the goals of your team and your role.
4. Request help.
5. Refer to the person who sent you.
6. Request a specific amount of time.
7. Ask an “icebreaker” question, a subjective “feeling” question, one that serves to acknowledge the other person and humanize the exchange, one that does not have a right or wrong answer.
 - *“Do you get a lot of satisfaction from working in the control room?”*
 - *“How long have you lived in the area?”*
 - *“Is that your sailboat in that picture?”*

Techniques for Closing an Interview

1. Offer to answer any questions the subject may have.
2. Ask a "clearinghouse" question: *"Is there anything else I ought to know?"*
3. Summarize what has taken place in the interview.
4. Indicate reaching the appointed time.
5. Initiate planning of the next step, if the interview's business is incomplete.
6. Express thanks and appreciation.

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I

MAPC Part I

MID-AMERICA POWER COMPANY

Instructions: You have just been assigned the role of team leader of a special inspection team. You have an engineering degree from a mid-western university, six years experience in a shipyard, and seven years experience with the NRC.

Recently the new resident at Mid-America's Swift River plant mentioned to you that he was concerned about implementation of the fire protection requirements at the plant. In a particular area of the auxiliary building, several fire doors were regularly left open. This observation triggered a series of events involving the fire chief and others. At this time Mid-America seems to have satisfied the concerns about fire procedures. However the NRC has decided to look more closely at other systems at Swift River. One of these is the DHR (decay heat removal) system; another is the turbine-driven emergency feed-water pump. At this point your inspection team was organized.

You should take the next hour to work on Part I of this exercise. Time should be allocated as follows:

1. Ten minutes to review all the material that follows.
2. Ten minutes working individually to decide upon an approach and plan your first interview. Refer to the "Interview Planning Guide" and use the "Individual Work Sheet" at the end of this section.
3. Thirty minutes to meet with team members, discuss the situation, and agree upon an approach to this inspection. Develop a consensus interview plan using the "Individual Work Sheet," and choose one person to report to the large group.

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

MAPC Part I

General Discussion of Situation at Swift River Plant

Reactor vessel water level at Swift River is being maintained at mid loop within the following constraints:

1. Cold leg level is sufficiently low so that water will not spill over the lip at the reactor coolant pumps' discharge into the steam generator plenums.
2. Hot leg level is sufficiently high so that air will not be drawn into the DHR drop line.

Hot leg level is being read in the control room using the normally operating instrumentation. Cold leg level is being read from a temporary tygon tube installation.

First Sign of Problem: A four-inch discrepancy is noticed between the two read-outs.

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

MAPC Part I

Initial Processing Steps Taken

You, the team leader, have received certain initial documentation. Copies follow on the next four pages of:

1. The initial report, which identifies the gage discrepancy.
2. The memorandum, which establishes the inspection team and action officer.
3. The initial response or licensee explanation.
4. An organizational chart of key individuals at Swift River.

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

MAPC Part I

Initial Report

At 0200 on August 24, 2002, control room personnel received a RHR low flow alarm and observed fluctuating RHR flow readings and RHR pump amperage. The unit was in RCS mid-loop operation with the RPV head removed and steam generator channel head manways removed for tube eddy-current testing. The operators secured the operating pump and started the standby pump. Hot leg levels indicated within the correct range and normal flow rates were observed. Approximately 20 minutes after this shift, the second RHR pump experienced a trip and the RHR low flow alarm annunciated. Successive attempts to start the pump were to no avail. RHR Pump A was then started but adequate flow could not be established. After approximately five minutes the pump was again secured.

The control room immediately dispatched personnel to the pump room for investigation. The operator sensing that RHR Pump A may have become air bound attempted to vent the pump. Upon confirmation of the situation, the control room commenced charging to raise the hot-leg level to the upper end of the band. Also, the secondary level (tygon tubing) instrument was checked for level and found to be reading 4" lower than the CR instrument. Upon completion of venting, RHR Pump A was restarted and flow returned to normal at 0256. RCS temperature had only risen 3.5 degrees during the loss of flow.

Subsequent calibration checks of the CR hot-leg level instrument found the level to have been reading 3" high. The cause of the RHR Pump B trip is still being investigated.

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

MAPC Part I

Memorandum

Date: August 28, 2002
To: J. K., Section Chief
Reactor Project Section I
From: A. F. Johnston, Director
Reactor Projects Division
Subject: Special Inspection at Swift River NPS

Per our conversation of August 25, 2002, this authorizes the establishment of a Special Inspection Team to verify the circumstances and root cause determination for the recent RHR events at Swift River. The team will also ensure that proper corrective action has been implemented in each area as well as for any generic process control areas.

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

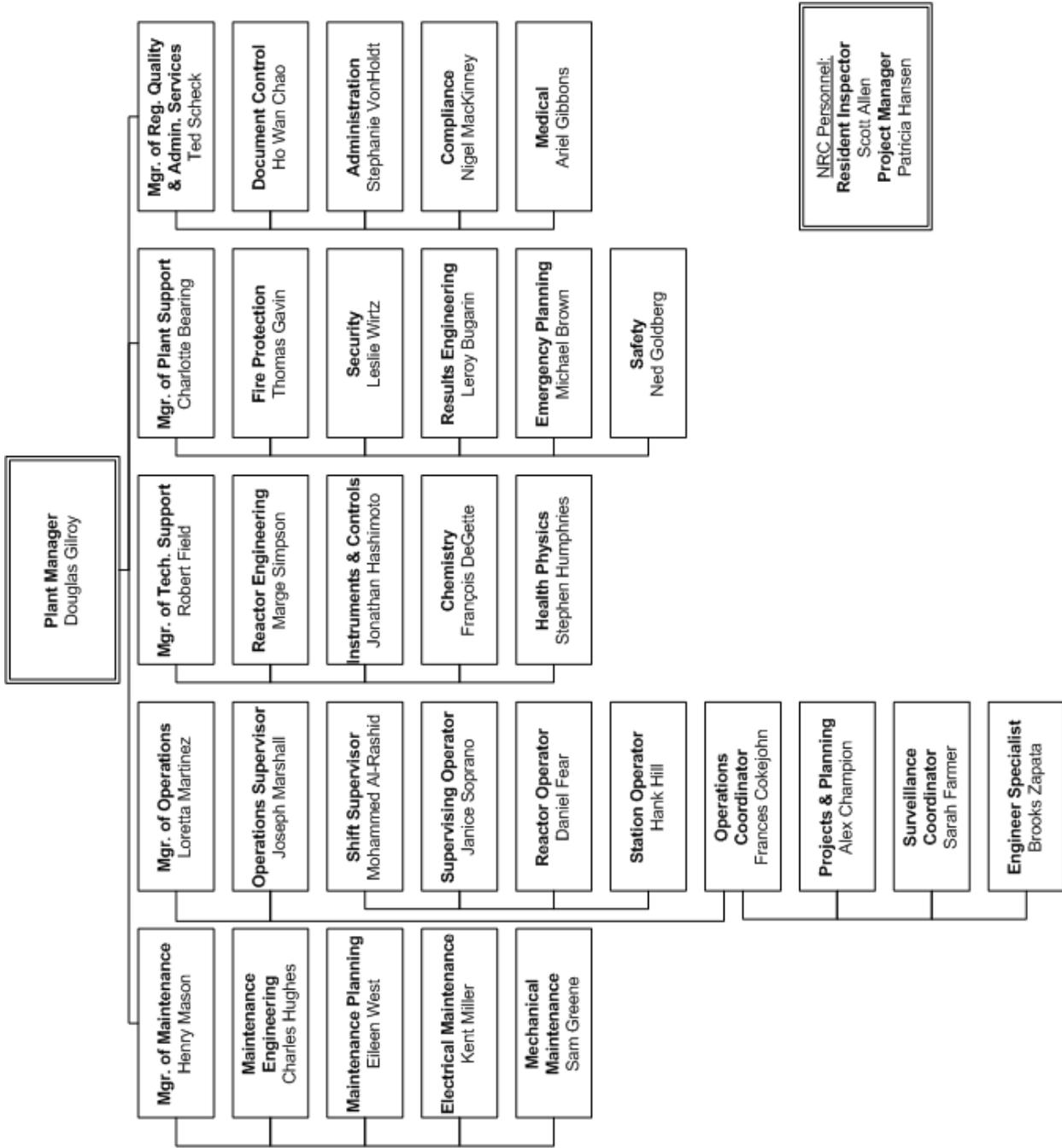
MAPC Part I

Licensee Explanation

The licensee's initial response centers on the problem being instrument error and mechanical difficulty rather than admitting personnel error in either equipment setup or operator evaluation of readings.

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

MAPC Part I



Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

MAPC Part I

Individual Worksheet

1. What is the purpose of the interview? Write down a concise statement of what you need to accomplish.
2. What are your specific information needs?
3. What line of questioning will you use? (List two or three; if appropriate, note specific phrasing of questions)
4. Who is the first person you will interview? Alternative person?

Exercise 1-1: Planning an Initial Interview, MAPC Part I (continued)

MAPC Part I

Individual Worksheet

5. What arrangements and coordination have to be made? Does the person to be interviewed have to prepare in any way?
6. How will you set the climate and begin the interview?
7. What are possible obstacles, sources of resistance, special conditions?

SECTION 2: ASKING QUESTIONS

Section 2: Asking Questions

Asking Questions

To get information from other people you must ask questions. Those who are more skilled at asking questions will be able to get more and better information. As an NRC investigator an important part of your job is to get information from other people – ask questions. Competence in planning, phrasing and asking questions is essential to your task.

People are seldom trained in techniques of asking questions. Parents do not guide their children in questioning skills. On the contrary, kids are more likely to be rebuked with, "Don't ask so many questions!" School and college curricula focus on answering questions, not on asking. Nevertheless, these skills are like any others; they can be improved by attention and practice.

Types of Questions

Open vs. Closed Questions: Open questions are an invitation to the respondent to talk at length about a general subject. The classic example is, "Tell me about yourself." Another example would be, "What do you know about the reactor coolant system leak?" Open questions allow the respondent to determine the amount and the kind of information he or she will give.

A closed question asks for a specific piece of information. Typically, it can be answered with a few words or with a "yes" or "no." An example would be, "Did you perform a joint tightness test after completing the seal welds?" Or, "What time did you leave the control room?"

Advantages of Open Questions:

- The respondent does the talking while the interviewer plays the role of listener and observer.
- Open questions are less threatening and provoke less anxiety in the respondent.
- The respondent can say what he or she thinks is important, providing information you hadn't thought to ask about.
- Lengthy answers may bring out the respondent's conceptual framework, feelings, beliefs, prejudices, and stereotypes.

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Disadvantages of Open Questions:

- They consume time. The respondent may dwell on information you don't want or need.
- The respondent's answer may change the focus of the interview. The interviewer then has to make quick choices about how to get back on track. Redirecting an interview in mid-course can have serious repercussions on the communication climate.
- The respondent may give a brief answer to a broad question, and the interviewer will need to do a great deal of probing.

Advantages of Closed Questions:

- The interviewer can get a clear, unambiguous answer.
- The interviewer can save time getting specific information.
- Closed questions are effective for controlling the direction and pace of the interview.

Disadvantages of Closed Questions:

- The interviewer sometimes gets too little information.
- The specificity and rapid-fire manner of closed questions may inhibit communication because the respondent may feel the interviewer has little interest in him as a person or in his answers. Worse, the respondent may feel attacked and bullied.

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Probing Questions, Follow Up: Primary questions are usually open questions, used to get an initial response. Secondary, or probing, questions then focus the respondent's attention on specific areas or items of information. Probing questions are also used to clarify or refine responses. "You said you attempted to shut the manual isolation valve after the leak occurred; how many attempts did you make and what did you do?"

Leading Questions: Leading questions contain a statement and then, in effect, ask, "Isn't that so?" For example, "Didn't you find evidence of leaks when you inspected the cold leg valves?"

Loaded Questions: Loaded questions contain a hidden assumption, which the respondent confirms by answering the question. The classic example is, "When are you going to stop beating your wife?" Sometimes the assumption can be a frame of reference rather than a specific fact: "There are two types of engineers, sloppy ones and conscientious ones; which type are you?" Loaded questions inherently contain an element of manipulation. Most often they make the respondent guarded, defensive, and distrustful of the interviewer.

Indirect Questions: Indirect questions attribute the question to someone other than the interviewer. With this technique sensitive subjects can be introduced with less direct emotional confrontation. "The report says...what's your reaction to that?" "How would you answer the guy who says...?" "I've heard it said that...do you think it's true?"

Open Questions vs. Closed Questions

Examples:

Closed:	Did the new procedure work?
Open:	What are the advantages of the new procedure?

Closed:	Do you find the web site useful?
Open:	How do you use the web site?

Closed:	Can your department improve?
Open:	How can your department improve?

Closed:	Do you think this procedure is adequate?
Open:	What could be done differently?

Change the following closed questions to open questions:

Closed:	1. Did you check the pressure gage?
Open:	

Closed:	2. Who was responsible for the poor rating on the inspection?
Open:	

Closed:	3. Have you had any malfunctions with these instruments?
Open:	

Closed:	4. Did you follow the regs in making that repair?
Open:	

Six Good Open Questions for Almost Any Situation

1. *What has been your experience with this?*
2. *What do you see as the problems of this situation?*
3. *How do you feel about it?*
4. *How can we resolve these discrepancies?*
5. *What are some of the reasons this didn't work as well as we had hoped?*
6. *What changes would you make to improve the situation?*

Four Phrases that Function as Open Questions

1. *Please explain the process.*
2. *Walk me through the process.*
3. *Tell me what's going on.*
4. *Help me understand.*

Six Useful Functions of Open Questions

1. Getting general information about a situation
2. Understanding the subject's priorities, what he or she thinks is important
3. Hearing the subject's conceptual context or frame of reference
4. Reducing anxiety
5. Understanding the subject's feelings, beliefs, biases, and stereotypes
6. Allowing the interviewer to listen and concentrate on observing non-verbal cues

Five Useful Functions of Closed Questions

1. Getting specific information, and getting it quickly
2. Changing direction of an interview
3. Maintaining control
4. Confirming agreement
5. Getting attention

Probing Questions

Categories of Probes, Follow-up:

- Get additional information, more detail.
- Get background, context.
- Obtain more evidence, proof.
- Pursue related information.
- Gain an understanding of dynamics of a system: physical, social, political.
- Resolve inconsistencies, contradictions, confusion.

Examples of Probing Questions:

- Tell me more about. . .
- What evidence makes you think that?
- What leads you to that conclusion?
- What do you base that on?
- Can you give me a breakdown; what are the factors/elements/causes?
- Can you lead me through a causal chain?
- How would you rank these factors in order of importance to you?
- What criteria did you apply in that situation?
- Give me an example.
- Give me a measurement. . . (frequency, percentage, time, distance, quantity, etc.)
- Who, what, when, where, why, and/or how?

Exercise 2-1: Probing Questions

Q:	<i>As a contractor, have you had training on this procedure?</i>
A:	<i>My company conducts training on this twice a year.</i>
Q:	

Q:	<i>What's been your experience with this type of sump pump?</i>
A:	<i>Pretty good. We haven't had many problems.</i>
Q:	

Q:	<i>To sum up, you lost all ability to communicate with off-site organizations – land-based phone lines in the control room, satellite phones, ERDS. What do you think was the problem?</i>
A:	<i>Frankly, I think there are just some folks who don't know what they're doing.</i>
Q:	

Q:	<i>In the past when you've had these kinds of leaks, did you fix it or did you use a contractor?</i>
A:	<i>Usually my crew fixes it. Sometimes we use a contractor.</i>
Q:	

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Indirect Questions

Examples of Indirect Questions:

Direct:	Why didn't you notify your supervisor about the high temperature readings?
Indirect:	The report says your supervisor should have been informed of the high temperature readings. What's your comment on that?

Direct:	Has this plant deferred important maintenance on safety significant equipment?
Indirect:	It's been said that this plant has deferred maintenance on safety significant equipment; what can you say about that?

Direct:	Why did you spend that much for a pair of shoes?
Indirect:	A lot of people would say \$175 is too much for a pair of shoes. What do you think?

Direct:	Senator, have you ever committed adultery?
Indirect:	The Washington Post quotes Fannie Flowers as saying you and she had a ten-year affair. Is that accurate?

Exercise 2-2: Changing Direct Questions to Indirect Questions

Change the following direct questions to indirect questions:

Direct:	Does anyone on your shift use amphetamines?
Indirect:	

Direct:	Is the procedure adequate?
Indirect:	

Direct:	How can you accurately measure the injection quantity if the pump isn't calibrated?
Indirect:	

Direct:	Do you think it's safe to talk on your cell phone while you're driving?
Indirect:	

Factors and Techniques in Phrasing Questions

- 1. Language:** The type of language chosen by the interviewer can communicate such things as cultural identity, political loyalties, attitudes, and feelings. Certain words, even subtle inflections, can be interpreted as code words for approval or disapproval of programs, policies, or individuals.
- 2. Context:** The context in which the interviewer presents the question gives the respondent cues as to how to interpret the question.
- 3. Technical Level and Complexity:** In general, choose phrasing that is appropriate both for you and the level of the respondent. Using a higher level of technical expertise or complexity will increase the interviewer's authority, increase formality, and probably increase the respondent's inhibitions and anxiety. A lower level will cause the respondent to become more relaxed and less guarded, but may reduce the accuracy of information gained.
- 4. Human Interest and Level of Self Disclosure:** Phrasing that shows human interest and discloses the interviewer's feelings and attitudes can be used to build trust and encourage openness.
- 5. Accusation:** Phrasing that carries an implied or stated accusation should be avoided. Such phrasing can signal the beginning of an adversarial relationship, if it has not already appeared. The respondent will usually react defensively and become very wary of what he or she says. Be careful about "why" questions, and especially "why didn't you..."
- 6. Emotional Tone of the Question:** Emotional tone surrounding the phrasing can convey the seriousness of the subject. "I want you to answer this one question: did you or did you not shut the safety valve?" Compare this phrasing with, "How about the safety valve; did you shut it?"
- 7. Non-Verbal and Situational Cues:** Non-verbal cues, such as body language, voice inflection, talking speed; and situational cues, such as location of the meeting, time of day, other persons present, can significantly affect the phrasing you use. They can be indicators of attitudes, truthfulness, loyalties, and power relationships between the parties.

Changing Your Approach

1. Assume another person's viewpoint, another group, gender, race, age, etc. ("If you were the plant manager, how would you interpret these events?")
2. Shift to an emotional or subjective level. ("What's your gut reaction to this situation?" "How do you feel about this situation?")
3. Ask for a ranking of priorities. ("When you heard the alarm, what were your concerns? Put them in rank order.")
4. Ask for a specific example.
5. Use a hypothetical situation. ("Suppose the back-up system had failed... ")
6. Ask the interviewee to instruct the interviewer. ("Let's say I'm making this repair according to the regular procedure. Lead me through it. What do I do first?")
7. Compare the sequence of events to a normal situation or normal behavior and seek an explanation of why it wasn't that way. ("Whenever people see water on this floor, wouldn't they normally investigate the cause of the leak? Why do you suppose nobody checked it out?")

Exercise 2-3: Questioning Techniques, MAPC Part II

MAPC Part II

MID-AMERICA POWER COMPANY

Instructions: In each group one participant will assume the role of the team leader. Another will be Daniel Fear, a reactor operator. Assume that Daniel Fear is one of the key persons that Raymond Craft has selected to be interviewed. The other members of your group will be observers.

For guidelines on the team leader's role, refer to the instructions for Part I. Instructions for the role of Daniel Fear will be handed out; only the person playing Daniel Fear's role should read these instructions.

We now continue the situation at the Swift River Plant. The team leader is about to interview one of the operators, applying a questioning strategy developed previously.

You will have about one hour for this part of the exercise. After each role-play give each other feedback.

- Which strategies, techniques, and phrases were most effective and which didn't work?
- What could be done differently?
- What are alternative questions, phrasing?



Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

SECTION 3: PERCEPTION

Perception

The Struggle to "Make Sense" of the World

People do not simply respond to what they hear and see, they respond to what it means to them. Meaning derives from interpretation. We are all very active interpreters, or "sense makers." In fact, it is so basic to our existence that we are usually unaware that we are doing it. Most often, people do not consciously see things and then give them an interpretation. They see things as interpreted. They normally make sense out of an event or a statement so quickly that they are unaware of the possibility that another person may interpret it differently.

People become aware of their interpretations only when they find a "better" interpretation, when further events or words fail to fit the earlier interpretation, or when they interact with others who have a different interpretation.

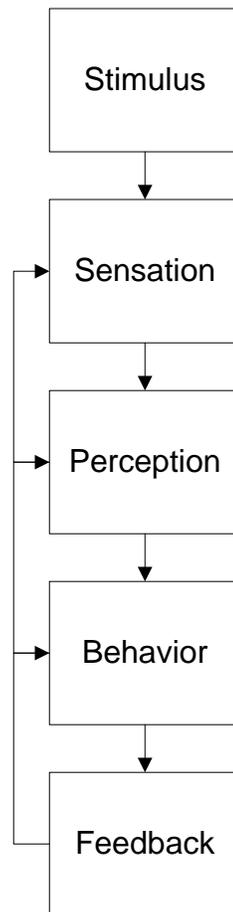
Some people believe that interpretations should be avoided as much as possible. This position fails to recognize the intrinsic connection between interpretation and human meaning. People's values, theories, and life tasks are an intrinsic part of what comes across. Every statement, no matter how literal, and every event, regardless of how clear it may seem, can be properly understood several different ways. A simple statement like, "This valve is defective," can mean one thing to an NRC inspector, another thing to an investor in the utility company, and still another thing to residents of a nearby town.

The goal of good communication is to understand why and how people have different meanings, how we can construct interaction to clarify what things mean to different people, and how we can check assumptions about how others see things.

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Perception: Definitions

Perception	The interpretation of stimuli.
Perceptual Set	The readiness to perceive a certain way, primarily expectations resulting from one's previous experiences. Perceptual set is modified by filters and one's faculty for pattern recognition.



Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

The Story

A businessman had just turned off the lights in the store when a man appeared and demanded money. The owner opened a cash register. The contents of the cash register were scooped up, and the man sped away. A member of the police force was notified promptly.

Directions: Mark your answers to the questions below; true (T), false (F) or unknown (?).

Statement	Answer		
1. A man appeared after the owner had turned off the store lights.	T	F	?
2. The robber was a man.	T	F	?
3. The man who appeared did not demand money.	T	F	?
4. The man who opened the cash register was the owner.	T	F	?
5. The store owner scooped up the contents of the cash register and ran away.	T	F	?
6. Someone opened a cash register.	T	F	?
7. After the man who demanded the money scooped up the contents of the register, he ran away.	T	F	?
8. While the cash register contained money, the story does not say how much.	T	F	?
9. The robber demanded money of the owner.	T	F	?
10. The story concerns a series of events in which only three persons are referred to: the owner of the store, the man who demanded money, and a member of the police force.	T	F	?

Cultural Differences

So much has been researched and written on the effects of cultural differences on perception that we cannot do justice to all issues here. We can highlight some of the most common areas of differing perceptions and illustrate how these dynamics can lead to communication problems.

One common difference between cultures relates to non-verbal communication and has to do with the use of space, particularly speaking distance. If one person's culturally defined speaking distance is closer than that of the other's culture, he may literally back the other into a wall as the two struggle to maintain comfortable distance. Similarly, differences in touching behavior, eye contact, punctuality, disclosure of personal information, and deference to speakers can have very different meanings to persons from different cultures.

Cultural differences are not restricted to people from different nationalities. There are numerous cultural differences within the United States based on socioeconomic class, racial heritage, and geographic region. Cultural differences can be even more localized. In some sense every place of work has its own unique culture. Acceptable dress can vary from suits and ties to jeans and t-shirts. Hairstyles can make all sorts of social and political statements. Tattoos and piercing are desirable in some situations, but still frowned upon in most organizations. There are many other fundamental differences – social expectations, stories and mythologies, meanings of conflict and disagreement, management philosophies, and social practices – that make some places of work unlike others and change the meanings of actions that look very much alike to outsiders.

People attend to different things. You cannot assume that other people are paying attention to the same elements of a situation that you are. While it might be plausible that nearly everybody ignores the buzz of fluorescent lights, people of different cultures give varying levels of attention to slight accents, type of eye contact, firmness of handshake, etc.

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Beliefs, Values, and Attitudes

People's beliefs, values, and attitudes are frequently derived from the wider culture and comprise the most fundamental assumptions that people make about the world and themselves. The assumptions govern what people think is true and good, and what ought to be done. People's beliefs, values, and attitudes organize and clarify the nature of the physical and social world for them and predispose them to certain perceptions and responses to others and to different situations.

Beliefs are the most basic statements of what people consider to be self-evidently true. Beliefs take many forms: "The sky is blue." "People are good." "Technological advancement will improve the quality of life." "Hard work will be rewarded." These statements indicate what things are, what is to be expected, and who is to be trusted. They have a direct impact on perception.

Values are statements about what is good or ought to be. As such, they serve as the bases of all evaluations of people and experience. Examples are: "People ought to be honest." "Education is important." "People should strive for competence." "Competition leads to better performance." "Collaboration leads to better performance." "Punishment is the only way to keep people in line." "People respond to rewards better than punishment." Values cannot be proved universally true or false, but rather are useful or not useful. Experience rather than reason serves as the foundation for most people's values.

Attitudes are derived from beliefs and values. They are the concrete orientations toward thinking and acting people have with regard to the world and others. If people believe that cigarette smoke in the air causes cancer in nonsmokers and they value human life, they are likely to have a negative attitude toward public smoking and act to stop it under some circumstances. Certainly people with different beliefs or values will have different attitudes and will respond differently to smoking and statements about it.

Cognitive Systems

Cognitive systems refer to the constructs or mental categories people use to perceive and think about their world and to the way these constructs are organized. For example, depending on your job you might divide components of a nuclear plant into categories of electrical or mechanical, radioactive or non-radioactive, inside the gate or outside the gate. Constructs describe the ways in which some things are alike and others are different. Hence, they perform an ordering and interpretation of experience.

People use different constructs to compare and contrast other people and events and put them together in different ways. Radioactivity may be a scientific fact to one person, a dire peril to another. Still another may need a measurement of radioactivity in order for the construct to be useful.

Another way of looking at cognitive systems is to understand the metaphors that people use to perceive and interpret the complexities of life around them. For example, life is sometimes conceptualized metaphorically as a game. People who think this way often speak in terms of the game-like qualities of life such as rules, roles, winning and losing, and lack of genuine involvement. To some extent people using different metaphors live in different worlds.

Leadership or consensus can cause teams to accept a common metaphor for the task. Sometimes an individual in a group will feel pressure to accept a metaphor that is not natural for him or her. This can manifest itself in a vague feeling of discomfort or a sense that everyone else sees things differently.

Examples of metaphors an inspection team might use are:

A journey: We've got a long way to go. We can't turn back now. We're at a crossroad. I don't think this line of questioning is going anywhere. We're stuck on this maintenance problem. We're just spinning our wheels. Let's get back on the track.

War: We'll beat this thing yet. If we don't fight for our point of view, the licensee will win. You've got to pursue that question about instrumentation. We're gaining ground. He's trying to fend off our inquiries. The licensee has enlisted the manufacturer as an ally.

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Physical force: The problem revolves around mid-level management. I keep feeling drawn back to the maintenance records. There were sparks in that meeting. The atmosphere in the control room is tense. If we lose momentum, they will gravitate back to the old system.

Disease: This is a sick plant. They have a strong, healthy security system. Their training department is almost dead; it's got to be revived. Management is tired. They're on the mend. They're getting back on their feet.

Personal Needs

People vary greatly in the needs they experience in particular settings. With differing needs, statements and events take on different meanings. What is threatening, pleasing, or important to one person may mean nothing to another. Money motivates some people, prestige others, and self-esteem yet others.

Abraham Maslow proposed a way of classifying needs by categorizing them into a hierarchy ranging from physiological needs at the lowest level, to safety and security needs, to social needs, to esteem needs, and finally to self-actualization needs. He suggested that as lower order needs are satisfied, they cease to motivate, and subsequently people are more strongly motivated by higher order needs. People with differing needs frequently find it difficult to understand one another's reactions. Suddenly being on food stamps may be a relief to a person with safety needs, or may mean little to a person with self-actualization needs, but may be a major embarrassment to someone with high esteem needs.

Expectations

In ambiguous situations, people tend to see what they would normally expect or what they want to see. Expectations can determine how people fill in gaps in their information about a situation and thus influence their conclusions about the meaning of a situation. Research has shown that students who are considered bright do better on essay questions even though their answers differ little from others. In most cases, this phenomenon is reduced by "blind" evaluation. In the NRC regulatory environment "blind" evaluation is seldom feasible.

Personal Images and Life Scripts

People develop conceptions of themselves early in life. These conceptions become an important part of the way they organize their experience and perceive the world. Personal images may differ greatly in their degrees of development and in the extent to which a person is "invested" in them. Many people stay on diets because they see themselves as much heavier than others see them. Some very outgoing people consider themselves shy.

These images have tremendous influence on the way people perceive messages, particularly if the message is construed as a threat to the self-image. Carl Rogers has suggested that people do not defend themselves as strongly as they defend their self-concepts. For example, a person who prides them self on their independence is likely to react very negatively to any statement that suggests that they are dependent, especially if it is true.

Life scripts refer to the way some of these images are organized over time. They describe central goals and hopes. Some people spend their lives trying to please their parents; others seek to be well known and powerful; others want to be perfect parents. Much of what people see and hear in the world is interpreted according to how it contributes or detracts from such a script.

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III

MAPC Part III

MID-AMERICA POWER COMPANY

Background on Transcript

Concerning the turbine-driven emergency feedwater pump, you, the team leader, are going to be interviewing Sydney Greene, a maintenance manager at the Swift River plant.

You have looked at written maintenance procedures. You have also interviewed shift maintenance supervisors and mechanics, who told you of the absence of certain written repair procedures. You want to check out potential problems, which appear to be either in the procedures, people's understanding of them, or people's use of them.

One procedure apparently missing from the materials which you've been given involves repair of the overspeed trip ball and tappet when pumps are serviced. You also noticed in a report on a recent repair procedure that a tappet was bent, which resulted in the crewman not being able to reset the overspeed trip mechanism. Though the pump is working now, you'd like to find out more about why the tappet was bent.

Sydney's supervisor is Henry Stone, who has arranged for you to meet with Sydney this afternoon at 3:00 pm. A transcript of your brief conversation with Henry follows as Attachment A.

Last night your team met to plan the next several days of investigation and to divide the work. When you drew the interview with Sydney, Tom Geiger, the resident, spoke briefly with you about him. A transcript of this conversation follows as Attachment B.

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

Attachment A

The Team Leader's Conversation with Henry Stone

Team Leader:	<i>I'm going to need to talk with all of the maintenance supervisors. What are their names?</i>
Stone:	<i>There's Harris, Richards and Greene.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Okay, why don't I reverse them and start with Greene?</i>
Stone:	<i>Oh (slight frown), well I can get a hold of him and have him here at 3:00 pm.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Fine. I'll see the others on their shifts.</i>
Stone:	<i>You'll find Greene an interesting guy. He doesn't have a degree in Engineering, but he's been around for years. He's always saying that experience can be more important than formal training.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Oh?</i>
Stone:	<i>Yeah! But don't get me wrong. Sydney is smart, and has a keen memory. He's the kind of manager who stays on everyone's toes. I'm just saying that you might get some resistance, if he thinks that the adequacy of maintenance activities is being questioned. Sydney sometimes reacts as if it were a personal attack upon his adequacy.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Okay. Thanks.</i>

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

Attachment A

The Team Leader's Conversation with Tom Geiger

Team Leader:	<i>I'm going to talk to Greene about the lack of procedures during the repair of the emergency feed pump overspeed trip mechanism. Right now it appears to be a violation, for lack of procedures to control safety-related maintenance.</i>
Geiger:	<i>Don't be surprised if Greene argues with you about that. He's a contemptuous son of a gun when it comes to talking with the NRC.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Oh?</i>
Geiger:	<i>Yeah! It's usually nothing overt. He puts up a cooperative front, unless you question his performance or the performance of his people. Watch out or he'll try to intimidate you.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Thanks for the warning.</i>
Geiger:	<i>Sure. Also he's prone to presenting wishful thinking as facts. In short, Sydney is difficult to deal with.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Well, I'd better get going, if I'm going to be prepared to meet him at 3:00 pm.</i>

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

Scene: It is 3:20 pm and you are waiting for the arrival of Sydney Greene.

STOP

Answer Questions Below:

1. What are your expectations regarding the way Sydney Greene will interact with you?
2. What is your strategy for interviewing Sydney Greene?

Turn the page and continue.

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

Team Leader's Interview with Sydney Greene

Team Leader:	<i>I looked at the work package and procedure used to repair the pump turbine overspeed trip mechanism. The procedure didn't cover repair of the ball and tappet. Why not? If the ball and tappet was repaired during maintenance, what did you use for guidance?</i>
Sydney:	<i>Where does our program say that every move has to be in a procedure? I can't be expected to write something to cover everything that goes on.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>When I talked to the mechanic and the shift maintenance supervisor, they indicated to me that the work package didn't specify the correct procedure because it doesn't exist. However I found out that in the past a work plan had been developed to replace this same tappet. Why didn't you simply use that?</i>
Sydney:	<i>You're probably confused. We don't re-use work plans. Besides, the tech manual was available. I'm sure that was referred to. Hey, what's the problem? The pump's fixed now! We have good people who know their jobs. We train them, and I personally oversee their work.</i>

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

STOP

Answer Questions Below:

1. How do you perceive Sydney's attitude toward the interview at this point?
2. How do you perceive the inspector's attitude toward the interview at this point?
3. Is the interview off-track? If so, how?
4. At this point should you change your approach? If so, how?

Turn the page and continue

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

Transcript Continued:

Team Leader and Sydney Greene

Team Leader:	<i>I just want to verify that your control of this safety related maintenance activity met the quality control requirements of Appendix B, Part V. Just because the pump appears to have been fixed properly doesn't mean it would be next time.</i>
Sydney:	<i>Well, I supervised the work myself. I know what I'm doing. What more do you want? I had my engineering assistant there also, and we checked with the vendor by phone. He OK'd what we wanted to do. Besides if we followed the tech manual method, we'd have gone past the 72-hour LCO.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Did you determine how the tappet got bent, which prevented you from resetting the overspeed trip mechanism?</i>
Sydney:	<i>We straightened it out and reused it. I got engineering doing a justification for it now. It's aluminum, so it's okay.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Who is engineering? Do you have an engineering evaluation request number on that?</i>
Sydney:	<i>Well no. My engineering assistant is doing it, but I've worked with things like this before.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>How do you know the tappet won't bend again?</i>
Sydney:	<i>We determined the tappet extension was too long. You get it from the vendor in one size. It's designed for the full range of turbine sizes that Terry makes. You're supposed to cut it off at the appropriate length. We just cut some off the top. The length is okay now.</i>

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

Transcript Continued:

Team Leader and Sydney Greene

Team Leader:	<i>Do you plan to incorporate this information in the procedure for doing maintenance on the Terry Turbine? The vendor manual makes no mention of cutting the tappet to size.</i>
Sydney:	<i>Okay! Sure! We're in the middle of upgrading our procedures. It'll be included. In fact, I'm sure it is. I'll check on it.</i>
Team Leader:	<i>This appears to be a violation for failing to have adequate written instructions to repair the pump. I'll check with my management on this. We'll probably have to discuss this further.</i>
Sydney:	<i>I don't see the problem. The pump is operable. What's the point? Look, I gotta go!</i>
Team Leader:	<i>Thanks for your time. I hope I haven't made you late. Have a nice day.</i>

Exercise 3-1: Perception, MAPC Part III (continued)

MAPC Part III

STOP

Answer Questions Below:

1. To what extent did the outcome of this interview meet your initial expectations?
2. What could you have done differently to produce a better outcome?

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Perception Tips for NRC Inspectors

- Withhold judgment. Focus on gathering information.
- Listen carefully.
- Ask clarifying questions to check your perceptions.
- Ensure you have a complete picture in your mind.
- Put yourself in the other person's place – viewpoint, values, organizational context.
- Monitor your own perceptual set. Acknowledge your own biases, prejudices, attitudes.

SECTION 4: HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Section 4: Handling Difficult Situations

General Strategies and Techniques

- There's no substitute for preparation.
- Know the rules and sources for your authority. Know the limits exactly.
- Show an ability to understand the interviewee's point of view – context, values, interests, etc.
- Pay attention to climate setting. Be careful to avoid an accusatory or adversarial tone.
- Always monitor your own performance. How are you coming across?
- Encourage trust and openness instead of just demanding information.
- Be persistent and systematic in following up with probing questions.
- Acknowledge and show appreciation for the interviewee's experience, expertise.
- Don't ever be defensive.
- Always be courteous.

Overcoming Resistance, Reticence

- Be alert for clues as to the interviewee's underlying attitudes.
- Use closed questions and leading questions.
- Avoid the temptation to provide multiple choice answers.
- Now and then try an open question.
- Try an indirect question.
- Try a subjective "feeling" question
- Ask the interviewee to instruct you.
- Don't be hasty in filling silence.

Controlling Direction and Focus

- Use closed questions.
- Slow the pace.
- Don't hesitate to interrupt, but do it politely.
- When you signal a change in direction, avoid giving the impression you don't want to listen.
- Keep in mind phrasing such as, "That's interesting, but that's not the focus of this interview."

Dealing with Hostility and Confrontation

- Maintain an emotionally neutral, professional demeanor.
- Anticipate and control your own reactions.
- Don't counterattack. Do not get hooked in to an argumentative or defensive mode.
- Slow the pace.
- Raise the level of formality.
- Ignore personal attacks, unless they become flagrant or otherwise dysfunctional.
- Use specific technical questions to shift attention from negative emotions.
- Respond to internal needs and conditions ("I can understand how you might feel frustrated.")
- Actively listen so the other person feels understood. Use the paraphrase technique. ("What I hear you saying is . . . is that fair to say?")
- Ask for more detailed explanations. ("In order to understand your assertions I need to hear more from you about how you arrived at those conclusions.")
- Ask for help in understanding the situation. Emphasize common interests.
- Change the point of view ("Suppose we look at this from the public's viewpoint").

Calling Behavior

An interviewee occasionally may engage in behavior that is either inappropriate or just strange. Examples are gratuitous insults, irrelevant assertions, or physical actions – tapping a pencil, bouncing in the chair. Your initial response should be to ignore the behavior and go right ahead with your questions as planned. Be alert, however, for important cues. The behavior may reveal emotions or attitudes useful to you in interpreting the information you are receiving. When the intensity of the behavior reaches the point that it is dysfunctional, i.e., interfering with the flow of useful information, you may choose to call it. This means making a direct comment on the behavior, usually a question about the reason for it ("You seemed angry when you gave that answer; is there a reason?). Sometimes you may make a simple statement. ("Your comments about the NRC are not helpful right now" or "When your cell phone rings, I lose my concentration").

Gathering Inspection Information Through Interviews

Follow these guidelines for calling behavior:

1. Describe the behavior, not interpretations or conclusions.
2. Use non-judgmental terms.
3. Respond to the interviewee's emotions.
4. Maintain an emotionally neutral tone.

Facilitating Recall

When your interviewee has trouble recalling events, activities, or details, you can assist by applying a structured process.

Use the following categories to trigger recall by association:

- Chronology
- Location
- Activity
- People
- Results, effects

If you think your interviewee is deliberately evading or lying, try to build a wall of facts around the deception using the same categories.

Managing Asymmetry

Occasionally you will find yourself in an interview with an element of great disparity between the interviewer and the interviewee. The most common examples are age and experience. Gender and ethnic differences can have similar effects.

In such situations follow these guidelines:

- Ensure you are well prepared.
- Show respect.
- Acknowledge differences.
- Maintain a confident, emotionally neutral demeanor.
- Don't feel you have to prove yourself or explain your credentials.

Five Common Mistakes Made by Interviewers

- 1. Asking multiple questions:** Sometimes an inspector will ask more than one question at a time, or in an attempt to clarify a question, will rephrase it several times to the point of confusion. The interviewee either won't know how to answer the question, or will simply choose which part he or she wants to answer.
- 2. Tipping off the desired answer:** Many interviewers either ask their questions or react to the subject's answers in a manner that reveals which responses are most desirable. These interviewers may ask such questions as, "You did follow procedure on that repair, didn't you?" Or they may cue the subject with non-verbal behavior, such as nodding with approval or only writing down information that is negative in character.
- 3. Jumping to conclusions:** Some interviewers tend to make decisions or final interpretations too early. They may hold certain biases that encourage snap judgments. Others may get caught up in the zealous pursuit of evidence to support a premature conclusion. Sometimes referred to as "chasing bones," this behavior can lead to the collection of apparently valid information that "proves" an erroneous conclusion.
- 4. Missing important clues:** Interviewers may not listen carefully to what their subjects are saying, and just as significantly, what they are not saying. Both verbal and non-verbal cues may go undetected. As a result, the interviewer does not follow up or probe areas that might shed a great deal of light on the situation.
- 5. Leaving the subject with a bad impression:** If, in the eyes of the subject, the interviewer has not demonstrated appropriate courtesy or respect, or has not allowed the subject to fully present his or her side of the issue, the subject will probably leave the session with a bad impression. This can have repercussions throughout the licensee's organization as the word gets passed around. Subsequent NRC interviews may be more difficult.

Maintaining Professional Bearing

"Professional bearing" describes the bearing and conduct that we want to promote in this workshop. It characterizes an inspector who is firm but fair.

The NRC inspector should:

- Be clear about purpose and role. Have the immediate task clearly defined. Understand the overall mission of NRC in promoting safety and in protecting the health of the public, and ensure that the licensee understands.
- Derive authority from competence and technical excellence, not merely from being in the position of an NRC inspector.
- Be tough, diligent, and astute in searching out the facts of a situation.
- Be open and transparent with your interviewing strategies and techniques.
- Be able to defuse conflict and deal effectively with difficult people, encouraging cooperation rather than confrontation or other adversarial modes of interaction.
- Promote mutual professional respect between the NRC and the licensee; be able to understand and appreciate the licensee's point of view.

At times during an investigation licensees may begin to strain the inspector's professional bearing. They may stubbornly insist on withholding information. They may give devious responses when their professional status is at stake. Mutual respect can deteriorate to the point where neither party thinks the other knows what he or she is talking about. Anger and resentment can pre-empt the useful exchange of information. On the other hand, the relationship can get too friendly, too compromising. The search for facts can become superficial. At all times the NRC inspector should keep in mind that the interests of nuclear safety are best served by promoting collaboration and mutual respect.

Appendix A

Useful Phrases

Paraphrase leads:

- *Let me see if I understand you...if I'm hearing you correctly...*
- *What I hear you saying is...*
- *So in other words...*
- *So your position is...*
- *So the way you see it is...*
- *Is it fair to say...*

Follow ups:

- *Could you clarify...elaborate, explain, give me more specifics.*
- *Help me get this right...*
- *Help me understand...*

Deflecting insults, distracting comments:

- *That's not helpful right now.*
- *Those kinds of comments are not appropriate.*
- *That's not the focus of this inspection...of this interview.*

Responding to accusations ("Are you questioning my judgment...calling me a liar?):

- *I'm trying to understand your thinking...your motivation...your rationale.*

Using "what" instead of "why":

- *What was your thinking when you...your motivation.*
- *What assumptions did you make when you decided to...*

Appendix B

Role Play Instructions: Difficult Interviewees

The Reticent One

During the interview say as little as possible. You may make gestures. Try to appear confused and anxious.

The Rambler

When responding to the interviewer's questions, try to talk as long as possible. Deviate from the subjects about which you are being questioned. Try to keep the interviewer from interrupting you.

The Role Reverser

Try to establish control of the interview. Start asking your own questions as soon as possible. (Before the interview begins, you may want to spend a few minutes thinking of questions you might ask).

The Suspicious One

Act as if you are suspicious of the interviewer's questions and intentions. Question him or her closely concerning who will have access to the information you are providing, the real purpose of the interview, and so forth. Be negative and untrusting.

The Amiable One

Be positive throughout the interview; do not say anything negative. Attempt to please the interviewer by being excessively nice and cooperative. Answer questions with too much information.

The Arrogant One

Take a very snobbish, superior attitude. Whatever the subject, you are better educated and more experienced. Find opportunities to make condescending and even slightly insulting remarks. Be impatient with the interview process and offended by the NRC's clumsy intrusions into your valuable time.