

Human Resource Exploitation Training Manual

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Contents

NON-COERCIVE TECHNIQUES	4
I. General	4
II. Techniques	5
COERCIVE TECHNIQUES	8
I. THE THEORY OF COERCION	8
II. Objections to coercion	9
III. Justification for using coercive techniques: These techniques should be reserved for those subjects who have been trained or who have developed the ability to resist non-coercive techniques.	9
IV. Coercive techniques	9
IV. Regression:	13

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NON-COERCIVE TECHNIQUES

I. General

A. Subjects make admissions or confessions because they are in a state of mind which leads them to believe that cooperation is the best course of action for them to follow. The effective use of the proper “questioning” technique will aid in developing this state of mind.

B. All non-coercive “questioning” techniques are based on the principle of generating pressure inside the subject without the application of outside force. This is accomplished by manipulating him psychologically until his resistance is sapped and his urge to yield is fortified.

C. The effectiveness of most “questioning” techniques depends upon their unsettling effect. The “questioning” process itself is unsettling to most people encountering it for the first time. The “questioner” tries to enhance this effect, to disrupt radically the familiar emotional and psychological associations of the subject.

D. Once this disruption is achieved. The subject’s resistance is seriously impaired. He experiences a kind of psychological shock. Which may only last briefly. But during which he is far more open to suggestion and far likelier to comply. Than he was before he experienced the shock.

E. Frequently the subject will experience a feeling of guilt. If the “questioner” can intensify these guilt feelings, it will increase the subject’s anxiety and his urge to cooperate as a means of escape.

F. The initial advantage always lies with the “questioner.” From the outset, he knows a great deal more about the subject than the subject knows about him. He is able to manipulate the subject’s environment, to create unpleasant situations. The subject is very much aware that the “questioner” controls his ultimate disposition.

G. The number of variations in techniques is limited only by the experience and imagination of the “questioner.” The success and skill of an experienced “questioner” lie in his ability to match the technique selected to the personality of the subject and his radio exploitation at the moment of shock.

H. The “questioner” should not try various techniques until he finds one that works. The use of unsuccessful techniques will in itself increase the subject’s will and ability to resist.

I. If in the opinion of the “questioner,” a subject has the will and determination to withstand all non-coercive techniques. It is better to avoid them completely.

II. Techniques

A. The direct approach: The “questioner” makes no effort to conceal the purpose of the “questioning” because he feels the subject. Will offer little or no resistance. Its advantage is that it is simple and takes little time. It has proven effective with low level sources with little or no security training. It is also used with a subject who has proven cooperative during a previous session.

B. Going next door: Occasionally the information needed from a resistant subject is obtainable from another, more willing source. The “questioner” must decide whether the information itself is his goal or whether a confession is essential for operational considerations.

C. Nobody loves you: A subject who is withholding information of no grave consequence to himself may sometimes be persuaded to talk by pointing out that everything concerning his case has been learned from persons who may be biased or malicious. The subject owes it to himself to be sure the “questioner” hears both sides of the story, or else he may be sentenced on the testimony of personal enemies without a word in his own defense.

D. We know everything: The “questioner” explains to the subject that he already knows everything, that the purpose of the “questioning” is not to gain information, but to test the sincerity (honor, reliability, etc.) of the subject. The “questioner” then asks questions based on known data. If the subject lies, he is informed firmly and dispassionately that he has lied.

A pile or dossier can be prepared containing all available information concerning the subject or his organization. It can be padded with extra paper, if necessary, to give the illusion that it contains more data than is actually there. It should have index tabs such as: “education,” “employment,” “criminal record,” “military service,” etc.

The “questioner” confronts the subject with the dossier and explains that he has a complete record of every significant happening the subject’s life, he may even read a few selected bits of information to further impress the subject.

By manipulating the known facts, the “questioner” may be able to convince a naive subject that all his secrets are out and that further resistance is pointless. However, if

this technique does not work quickly, it must be dropped before the subject learns the true limits of the “questioner’s” knowledge.

E. Double informers: Planting an informant in a subject’s cell is a well-known trick. Less well known is the trick of planting two informants (A & B) in the same cell. Now and then, “A” tries to pry a little information from the subject. At the proper time, and during A’s absence, “B” warns the subject not to tell “a” anything because “B” suspects him of being an informant.

(Suspicion against a single informant may sometimes be dispelled if he shows the subject a hidden microphone that he has “found” and suggests that they talk only in whispers at the other end of the room)

F. News from home: Allowing a subject to receive carefully selected letters from home can help create an effect desired by the “questioner.” For example, the subject may get the idea that his relatives are under duress or suffering. A suggestion at the proper time that his cooperation or confession can help protect the innocent may be effective. If the subject can be led to believe that letters can be smuggled out without the knowledge of the authorities. The letters he writes may produce information which is difficult to extract by direct questioning.

G: The witness:

1. A witness can be escorted into an inner office past the subject in an outer office without allowing them to speak to each other. After an hour, a stenographer is called in from the outer office, to give the impression she is taking a statement. She later re-emerges and types the statement in the outer office. She telephones for someone to come in to act as legal witness. And takes the completed work into the inner office. Then the “questioner” emerges “no instructs the guard to take the subject back to his cell stating, “we don’t need him any more.” Even if the subject insists on telling his side of the story, he is told to relax because the “questioner” will get around to him tomorrow or the next day.

2. A cooperative witness can sometimes be coached to exaggerate the subject’s involvement or accuse him of a worse crime than the matter at hand. Upon hearing these remarks from a recording, a subject may confess the truth about the lesser guilt in order to provide himself with an alibi.

3. If the witness refuses to denounce the subject, the “questioner” elicits and records remarks from him denouncing someone else known to him, for example, a criminal who was recently convicted in court. During the next session with the subject, these remarks, edited as necessary, are played back so that the subject is persuaded that he is the subject of the remarks.

H. Joint suspects (a.k.a. divide and conquer): If two or more subjects are suspected of joint complicity. They should be separated immediately. If time permits, “questioning” should be postponed for about a week. Any anxious inquiries from one subject

should be met with a reply such as “we’ll get to you in due time. There’s no hurry now!” If documents, witnesses, or other sources yield information about subject “B.” Such information should be attributed to subject “A” to give “B” the impression that “A” is talking.

If the “questioner” is quite certain of the facts but cannot secure an admission from either subject, a written confession may be prepared with A’s signature reproduced on it. The confession contains all the salient facts but they are distorted. It shows that “A” is attempting to throw the entire blame on “B.” (Edited tape recordings which sound as if “A” is denouncing “B” can also accomplish the same purpose)

The inner-and-outer office routine may also be employed with “A.” The weaker, being brought into the inner office, and giving “B” in the outer office the impression he is talking. When the “questioner” is fairly certain that “B” is convinced that “A” was broken down and told his story he tells “B,” “since “A” has cooperated with us. He will be released, but it seems that he was pretty angry with you and feels that you got him into this jam. He might even go back to your superiors and say that you haven’t returned because you have decided to stay were and work for us. Wouldn’t it be better for you if I set you both free together? Wouldn’t it be better to tell me your side of the story?”

It is important that in all such gambits, “A” be the weaker of the two, emotionally and psychologically.

F. Joint “questioners” (a.k.a. friend and foe): The commonest of the joint “questioners” techniques is the “friend and foe” routine. The two “questioners” display opposing personalities and attitudes toward the subject. For example the first “questioner” displays an unsympathetic attitude toward the subject. He may be brutal, angry. Or domineering. He makes it plain that he considers the subject the vilest person on earth. His goal is to alienate the subject. At the height of the alienation, the second “questioner” takes over, sending the first out of the room. The second “questioner” then displays a sympathetic attitude toward the subject, perhaps offering him coffee and a cigarette. He explains that the actions of the first “questioner” were largely the result of his lack of knowledge in dealing with people and lack of human sensitivity. If brutes like that would keep quiet and give a man a fair chance to tell his side of the story, etc.. etc.

The subject is normally inclined to have a feeling of gratitude towards the second “questioner,” who continues to display a sympathetic attitude in an effort to enhance the rapport for the “questioning” which will follow. If the subject’s cooperativeness begins to fade, the second “questioner” can state that he cannot afford to waste time on sources who fail to cooperate and imply that the first “questioner-might return to continue the “questioning.”

When this technique is employed against the proper source. It will normally gain the source’s complete cooperation. It works best with women, teenagers, and timid men...

COERCIVE TECHNIQUES

I. THE THEORY OF COERCION

A. The purpose of all coercive techniques is to induce psychological regression in the subject by bringing a superior outside force to bear on his will to resist. Regression is basically a loss of autonomy, a reversion to an earlier behavioral level. As the subject regresses, his learned personality traits fall away in reverse chronological order. He begins to lose the capacity to carry out the highest creative activities, to deal with complex situations, to cope with stressful interpersonal relationships, or to cope with repeated frustrations.

B. There are three major principles involved in the successful application of coercive techniques:

Debility (physical weakness): For centuries “questioners” have employed various methods of inducing physical weaknesses: prolonged constraint; prolonged exertion: extremes of heat, cold, or moisture: and deprivation of food or sleep. The assumption is that lowering the subject’s physiological resistance will lower his psychological capacity for resistance. However, there has been no scientific investigation of this assumption. Many psychologists consider the threat of inducing debility to be more effective than debility itself. Prolonged constraint or exertion, sustained deprivation of food or sleep, etc. often become patterns to which a subject adjusts by becoming apathetic and withdrawing into himself. In search of escape from the discomfort and tension. In this case debility would be counter productive.

The questioner should be careful to manipulate the subject’s environment to disrupt patterns, not to create them. Meals and sleep should be granted irregularly, in more than abundance or less than adequacy, on no discernible time pattern. This [word unclear/crossed out as part of the editing process, see notes] done to disorient the subject and [words unclear] destroy his capacity to resist.

Dependency: He is helplessly dependent upon the “questioner” for the satisfaction of all basic needs.

Dread (intense fear & anxiety): Sustained long enough. A strong fear of anything vague or unknown induces regression. On the other hand, materialization of the fear is likely to come as a relief. The subject finds that he can hold out and his resistance is strengthened. A word of caution: If the debility-dependency-dread state is unduly prolonged, the subject may sink into a defensive apathy from which it is hard to arouse him. It is advisable to have a psychologist available whenever regression is induced.

II. Objections to coercion

A. There is a profound moral objection to applying duress beyond the point of irreversible psychological damage such as occurs during brainwashing. Brainwashing involves the conditioning of a subject's stimulus-response bond through the use of these same techniques, but the objective of brainwashing is directed primarily towards the subject's acceptance and adoption of beliefs, behavior, or doctrine alien to his native cultural environment for propaganda rather than intelligence collection purposes. Aside from this extreme, we will not judge the validity of other ethical arguments.

B. Some psychologists feel that the subject's ability to recall and communicate information accurately is as impaired as his will to resist. This objection has some validity, but the use of coercive techniques will rarely confuse a resistant subject so completely that he does not know whether his confession is true or false. He does need mastery of all his mental and physical powers to know whether he is a spy or not. Once a confession is gained, the classic cautions apply. The pressures are lifted enough so that the subject can provide information as accurately as possible. In fact, the relief granted at this time fits neatly into the "questioning" plan. He is told that the changed treatment is a reward for truthfulness and evidence that friendly handling will continue as long as he cooperates.

III. Justification for using coercive techniques:
These techniques should be reserved for those subjects who have been trained or who have developed the ability to resist non-coercive techniques.

IV. Coercive techniques

A. Arrest: The manner and timing of arrest should be planned to achieve surprise and the maximum amount of mental discomfort. He should therefore be arrested at a moment when he least expects it and when his mental, and physical resistance is at its lowest, ideally in the early hours of the morning. When arrested at this time, most subjects experience intense feelings of shock, insecurity, and psychological stress and for the most part have great difficulty adjusting to the situation. It is also important that the arresting party behave in such a manner as to impress the subject with their efficiency.

B. Detention:-cut hair –issue baggy clothing. A person’s sense of identity depends upon a continuity in his surroundings, habits, appearance; actions, relations with others, etc. Detention permits the “questioner” to cut through these links and throw the subject back upon his own unaided internal resources. Detention should be planned to enhance the subject’s feelings of being cut off from anything known and reassuring.

Little is gained if confinement merely replaces one routine with another. The subject should not be provided with any routine to which he can adapt. Neither should detention become monotonous to the point where the subject becomes apathetic. Apathy is a very effective defense against “questioning.” Constantly disrupting patterns will cause him to become disoriented and to experience feelings of fear and helplessness.

It is important to determine if the subject has been detained previously, how often, how long, under what circumstances, and whether he was subjected to “questioning.” Familiarity with detention or even with isolation reduces the effect.

C. Deprivation of sensory stimuli: Solitary confinement acts on most persons as a powerful stress. A person cut off from external stimuli turns his awareness inward and projects his unconscious outward. The symptoms most commonly produced by solitary confinement are superstition, intense love of any other living thing, perceiving inanimate objects as alive, hallucinations, and delusions.

Although conditions identical to those of solitary confinement for the purpose of “questioning” have not been duplicated for scientific experimentation, a number of experiments have been conducted with subjects who volunteered to be placed in “sensory deprivation tanks.” They were suspended in water and wore black-out masks, which enclosed the entire head and only allowed breathing. They heard only their own breathing and some faint sounds of water from the piping.

To summarize the results of these experiments:

1. Deprivation of sensory stimuli induces stress and anxiety. The more complete the deprivation, the more rapidly and deeply the subject is affected.

2. The stress and anxiety become unbearable for most subjects. They have a growing need for physical and social stimuli. How much they are able to stand depends on the psychological characteristics of the individual.

Now let me relate this to the “questioning” situation. As the “questioner” becomes linked in the subject’s mind with human contact and meaningful activity, the anxiety lessens. The “questioner” can take advantage of this relationship by assuming a benevolent role.

3. Some subjects progressively lose touch with reality, focus inwardly, and produce delusions, hallucinations and other pathological effects. In general, the more well-adjusted a subject is, the more he is affected by deprivation. Neurotic and psychotic subjects are comparatively unaffected or show decreases in anxiety.

D. Threats and fear: The threat of coercion usually weakens or destroys resistance more effectively than coercion itself. For example, the threat to inflict pain can trigger fears more damaging than the immediate sensation of pain. In fact, most people underestimate their capacity to withstand pain. In general, direct physical brutality creates only resentment, hostility, and further defiance.

The effectiveness of a threat depends on the personality of the subject, whether he believes the “questioner” can and will carry out the threat, and on what he believes to be the reason for the threat. A threat should be delivered coldly, not shouted in anger, or made in response to the subject’s own expressions of hostility. Expressions of anger by the “questioner” are often interpreted by the subject as a fear of failure, which strengthens his resolve to resist.

A threat should grant the subject time for compliance and is most effective when joined with a suggested rationalization for compliance. It is not enough that a subject be placed under the tension of fear: he must also discern an acceptable escape route.

The threat of death has been found to be worse than useless. The principal reason is that it often induces sheer hopelessness; the subject feels that he is as likely to be condemned after compliance as before. Some subjects recognize that the threat is a bluff and that silencing them forever would defeat the “questioner’s” purpose.

If a subject refuses to comply once a threat has been made, it must be carried out. If it is not carried out, then subsequent threats will also prove ineffective.

E. Pain: Everyone is aware that people react very differently to pain but the reason is not because of a difference in the intensity of the sensation itself. All people have approximately the same threshold at which they begin to feel pain and their estimates of severity are roughly the same. The wide range of individual reactions is based primarily on early conditioning to pain.

The torture situation is an external conflict, a contest between the subject and his tormentor. The pain which is being inflicted upon him from outside himself may actually intensify his will to resist. On the other hand, pain which he feels he is inflicting upon himself is more likely to sap his resistance. For example, if he is required to maintain rigid positions such as standing at attention or sitting on a stool for long periods of time. The immediate source of pain is not the “questioner” but the subject himself. His conflict is then an internal struggle. As long as he maintains this position, He is attributing to the “questioner” the ability to do something worse. But there is never a showdown where the “questioner” demonstrates this ability. After a period of time, the subject is likely to exhaust his internal motivational strength.

Intense pain is quite likely to produce false confessions, fabricated to avoid additional punishment. This results in a time consuming delay while investigation is conducted and the admissions are proven untrue. During this respite, the subject can pull himself together and may even use the time to devise a more complex confession that takes still longer to disprove.

Some subjects actually enjoy pain and withhold information they might otherwise have divulged in order to be punished.

If pain is not used until late in the “questioning” process and after other tactics have failed, the subject is likely to conclude that the “questioner” is becoming desperate. He will feel that if he can hold out just a little longer, he will win the struggle and his freedom. Once a subject has successfully withstood pain, he is extremely difficult to “question” using more subdued methods.

F. Hypnosis and heightened suggestibility: The reliability of answers obtained from a subject actually under the influence of hypnotism is highly doubtful. His answers are often based upon the suggestions of the “questioner” and are distorted or fabricated.

However. The subjects strong desire to escape the stress of the situation can create a state of mind which is called heightened suggestibility. The “questioner” can take advantage of this state of mind by creating a “hypnotic situation,” as distinguished from hypnosis itself. This hypnotic situation can be created by the “magic room” technique.

For example: The subject is given a hypnotic suggestion that his hand is growing warm. However. His hand actually does become warm with the aid of a concealed diathermy machine. He may be given a suggestion that a cigarette will taste bitter and he could be given a cigarette prepared to have a slight but noticeably bitter taste.

A psychologically immature subject, or one who has been regressed, could adopt a suggestion that he has been hypnotized. Which has rendered him incapable of resistance. This relieves him of the feeling of responsibility for his actions and allows him to reveal information.

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H. Narcosis

There is no drug which can force every subject to divulge all the information he has. But just as it is possible to create a mistaken belief that a subject has been hypnotized by using the “magic room” technique. It is possible to create a mistaken belief that a subject has been drugged by using the “placebo” technique.

Studies indicate that as high as 30 to 50 percent of individuals are placebo reactors. In this technique the subject is given a placebo (a harmless sugar pill) and later is told he was given a truth serum, which will make him want to talk and which will also prevent his lying. His desire to find an excuse for compliance, which is his only avenue of escape from his depressing situation, may make him want to believe that he has been drugged and that no one could blame him for telling his story now. This provides him with a rationalization that he needs for cooperating.

The function of both the “placebo” technique and the “magic room” technique is to cause capitulation by the subject, to cause him to shift from resistance to cooperation. Once this shift has been accomplished, these techniques are no longer necessary and should not be used persistently to facilitate the “questioning” that follows capitulation.

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IV. Regression:

As I said at the beginning of our discussion of coercive techniques, the purpose of all coercive techniques is to induce regression. How successful these techniques are in inducing regression depends upon an accurate psychological assessment of the subject and a proper matching of method to source. There are a few noncoercive techniques which can also be used to induce regression, but to a lesser degree than can be obtained with coercive techniques. The effectiveness of these techniques depends on the “questioner’s” control of the environment. For example:

- A. Persistent manipulation of time
- B. Retarding and advancing clocks
- C. Serving meals at odd times
- D. Disrupting sleep schedules
- E. Disorientation regarding day and night
- F. Unpatterned “questioning” sessions
- G. Nonsensical questioning
- H. Ignoring half-hearted attempts to cooperate
- I. Rewarding non-cooperation

In general, thwarting any attempt by the subject to relate to his new environment will reinforce the effects of regression and drive him deeper and deeper into himself, until he no longer is able to control his responses in an adult fashion.

Whether regression occurs spontaneously under detention or is induced by the “questioner,” it should not be allowed to continue beyond the point necessary to obtain compliance. A psychiatrist should be present if severe techniques are to be employed, to insure full reversal later. As soon as possible, the “questioner” should provide the subject with the rationalization that he needs for giving in and cooperating. This rationalization is likely to be elementary, an adult version of a childhood excuse such as:

1. “They made you do it.”
2. “All the other boys are doing it.”
3. “You’re a really good boy at heart.”

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This secret manual was compiled from sections of the KUBARK guidelines, and from U.S. Military Intelligence field manuals written in the mid 1960s as part of the Army's Foreign Intelligence Assistance Program codenamed "Project X." The manual was used in numerous Latin American countries as an instructional tool by CIA and Green Beret trainers between 1983 and 1987 and became the subject of executive session Senate Intelligence Committee hearings in 1988 because of human rights abuses committed by CIA-trained Honduran military units.

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