


**Organizing an Investigation**

**Antone Aboud**

March 2016

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**Investigation**

**Systematic collection of facts for the purpose of describing and explaining what occurred.**



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**Relevant Facts**

**Facts that have the potential to help describe and explain what occurred.**



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## Determining Relevant Facts

### The Investigatory Question

The reason the investigation is being conducted.



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## Planning

- Clarify ambiguities in report (if any);
- Contact supervisor at the scene:
  - Instruct that the scene be secured
  - Instruct that witnesses remain at location
  - Instruct that documentary evidence be secured



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## The Investigatory Question

Who was in the hallway at 8:00 p.m.?

vs.

How did Mary receive the broken right forearm that reportedly occurred at 8:00 p.m., March 20<sup>th</sup> in the hallway immediately outside of her bedroom?



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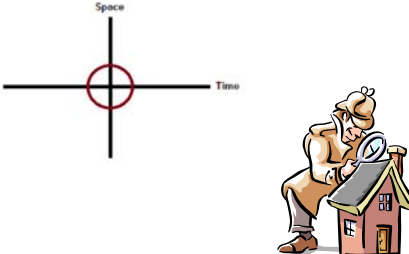
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## Incident Report: Time/Space



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## Step 1: Visit Scene

- Meet with the supervisor
- Identify location of witnesses
- Confirm the manner in which location of the incident was secured
- Interview reporter



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## Step 2: Collect Physical and Demonstrative Evidence

- Why should we move immediately to collection of physical and demonstrative evidence?
- Why not interview witnesses first?



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## Step 2: Collect Physical and Demonstrative Evidence (continued)

- Visit location at which incident occurred
- Take photos
- Make diagrams
- "Chain of Custody"



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## Step 3: Conduct Incident Interviews

- What is an incident interview?
- Why conduct an incident interview next?
- Why not read documentary evidence before proceeding?



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## Step 3: Conduct Incident Interviews

- Usually the victim will be the first interview
- Other incident witnesses (not the accused, if identified)
- The accused or suspected person
- Variations



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### Step 4: Review Documentary Evidence

- This is the most secure of all forms of evidence
- Will provide background information that can help understand not only what happened, but why
- Can help identify background witnesses



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### Step 5: Conduct Background Interviews

- An interview of a person who has information not derived from the time and location of the incident
- A background witness might also be an incident witness



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### Step 6: Conduct Follow-up Interviews

- Forgot to ask a question and return to do so. (Sometimes the question wasn't previously relevant.)
- Ask witness to clarify ambiguity in testimony or inconsistency with other evidence



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 **Questions**



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 **More Information: Contact**

**Lana Norwood**  
**lananorwood@LRAconsultants.com**  
**<http://www.lraconsultants.com>**



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