

# Security SpotLight

**An Informational  
Guide for  
Security Clients**

## **Interview Techniques**

**The result of the investigation is a narrative that describes the way things were prior to and after the incident. This can be achieved through interviews and observations.**

**The following techniques are established best practices for interviews.**

- **Question witnesses in familiar surroundings. This will help make the interviewee feel relaxed.**
- **Note exact phrases and descriptions from those being examined, when possible.**
- **Focus the conversation on facts, not opinions or speculations.**

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## **Effective Investigations**

A common aspect of security operations is the occurrence of an incident that requires further investigation. The nature of the inquiry is dependent upon the type of incident. It is important to understand the scope of investigation needed. When an investigation is necessary, Securitas expects its officers to be thorough and efficient while protecting our clients' interests, the privacy of the individuals involved, and maintaining a standard that reflects Securitas' values of *Integrity, Vigilance and Helpfulness*.

The type of incident will determine depth and scope of the investigation. Researching and documenting an incident creates a formal record that identifies the timeline and documents statements of the involved parties and any witnesses. Creating a record that is

complete, timely and accurate is important since it might be needed to support law enforcement or future actions. The investigation can also be used to identify solutions to help prevent similar events, or when looked at as part of a bigger picture, it might point to a pattern at the work site.

### **Vigilance in All Steps**

Follow a consistent process to ensure the integrity of the investigation and develop an accurate and thorough examination of the incident. Secure the scene and assess the situation as soon as possible. Once the scene is secured, assist those in need, protect any evidence and gather witness statements. Try to maintain a calm, orderly scene while making inquiries. While assessing the situation, determine if local law enforcement,

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- **Separate witnesses and persons of interests and conduct individual interviews to prevent people from influencing each other.**
- **Maintain a neutral demeanor and refrain from being intimidating, accusatory, or aggressive since this could alienate the interviewee.**

**Asking questions that are open-ended and non-leading allows the interviewee to provide a more direct and informative answer.**

other outside agencies or first responders need to be involved. Have a site plan that includes how and when to contact these agencies. Be careful not to hinder law enforcement in their investigation.

## **Documenting the Investigation**

Making detailed observations throughout the investigation will help document the location and sequence of events. Some incidents, like an accident or a gate left open, benefit from supporting documentation. If possible, take pictures or a video of the incident, being careful to follow applicable rules if any people are recorded. Avoid photographing proprietary items. In addition to taking photos of the scene, collect video from any remote cameras on site.

Accurate observations and corroborating documentation can help facilitate the determination of an accident or be useful as part of a criminal investigation. It is important to be vigilant, thorough and not rush to complete the investigation to avoid missing important details. Things commonly overlooked in many investigations are what the U.S. Department of Justice calls transient evidence and conditions—smells, sounds, sights, temperature, and weather, among others. Using a grid or other type of patterned examination will help lessen

the chance of something being overlooked.

## **Creating a Permanent Record**

Once the investigation is complete, the incident should be documented in a written report. Security officers include minor incidents as part of their Daily Activity Report and create a formal Incident Report for more significant events. Written reports should provide a detailed account of the who, what, when, where, and how of the incident. Any statements and evidence collected during the investigation should also be referenced in the completed report. Reports serve as a permanent record of the incident and might be referred to as part of a law enforcement investigation or for legal action. The report reflects the individual composing it, and care should be taken to ensure it is accurate and free of errors.

## **Service Excellence**

Conducting comprehensive investigations and submitting detailed, accurate reports is one way that Securitas demonstrates its commitment and dedication to the mission and goals agreed to in client contracts. Although they are just one aspect of the service provided, they are critical to delivering service excellence and establish a permanent record of events at the client site.

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Helpfulness*

For more information on this and other security related topics, visit the SCIS Safety Awareness Knowledge Center at <http://www.scisusa.com/knowledge-center/>