



Interviewing Clients

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Section 1: Preamble

A very important part of Paranormal Research is, and always will be, the human factor. When we enter a client's house, we have to remember that the client is the center of the investigation. It is the client that called us, who is providing the information and, ultimately, who is the best source of information when we are looking for evidence to support or debunk the events that are happening to them.

As I have mentioned in the past, the raw data is meaningless without the human interaction associated with it. For instance, what use is saying that there was an EMF field of 80 without quantifying it with how it was affecting the occupants and the other investigators.

Section 2: Preparing yourself to read people

There is no quick and easy way to read people. It is a long process which, over time, you will find yourself getting better and better at.

The first step in learning how to read people is gaining a general understanding of the makeup of others and also by doing this, you will find you are learning about yourself. If you cannot learn about your own walls and barriers that we all use every day, you will never be able to successfully read clients, and will not be able to interrupt what they are saying.

Section 3: Layers

All people have layers to their personalities. This is true of all peoples and all cultures. On a basic level, people have 4 layers that are constant.

The outermost layer is the layer that everybody sees. It is the layer we show to the strangers on the street, our bosses etc. This is the most superficial aspects of who we are. It is the layer that shows what we want other people to know about us.

An example of this can be seen when we talk with a stranger sitting next to us on a bus. Trivial topics like the weather, current events, sights and sounds around us are typical things we feel willing to talk about.

Around our friends and some acquaintances, we may show our second layer. This layer is more about the real person down at the core, but not too deep as to leave you feeling vulnerable.

For example, if you were chatting with a coworker this time, you would probably feel more comfortable revealing more about yourself. Your attitudes towards work, certain emotions and your general thoughts about life are some of the things that might come up in conversation.

Around a close friend or someone we have an intimate relationship with, we generally feel comfortable to show our next layer. In many cases, intimate relationships take time to develop, and with that time, trust is earned.

Imagine now sitting on that same bus next to your spouse or significant other. The depth of what you reveal this time is much greater than any previous layer. Your goals, personal problems, and fears and so on, all fall within this layer.

Underneath all the other layers, is our core. This is the layer that contains that part of ourselves that we don't share with anyone. It contains our deepest and darkest thoughts and secrets that we would rather not acknowledge. The fact that we are trying to come to terms with many of these things ourselves makes us not comfortable sharing them with others.

Section 4: Using your layers, to read others

The extent to which you can read a client is determined by how many of their layers you're able to get them to reveal. Generally speaking, a person will reveal their layers in direct proportion to you revealing yours.

The second part of preparing ourselves to read people involves removing the barriers that keep us from accurate people-reading. The two barriers are our own prejudices and projections.

When people think of prejudice, mostly the racial kind comes to mind. Although a part of it, this is not entirely what we are talking about here. Anytime you make an opinion, whether it is positive or negative, without knowledge or examination of the facts, you are being prejudiced.

Whenever you come up with some preconceived notion based on things such as race, color political alignment, or even the way people dress, it taints your ability to accurately read others. Our prejudices can be based on our fears, feeling threatened, upbringing or a myriad of other things.

Closely related to prejudice is projection. In the late 50's Leon Festinger coined a phrase called Cognitive Dissonance which can basically be described as the human tendency to close ones eyes and minds to things that are uncomfortable or disturbing. We tend to project our view onto a situation because it is easier to deal with.

For example, a parent noticing a child's slipping grades, lack of appetite, and tendency to come home late, might try to shrug it off as mere puberty or new-found love when it's clear to everyone else that it may be a drug problem - something that the parent is unwilling to accept.

When we are emotionally committed to someone or something it can blind us from the truth of a situation, leading us to an incorrect reading of someone.

The key to effectively reading people, and best aiding your clients, is by being completely objective. Overcoming our biases, prejudices and projections allows us to be completely objective.

The last important step is learning to be patient. Don't rush in drawing your conclusions. As you learn the techniques to interpret peoples body language and environment resist the urge to jump to conclusions. If you think for example that they are defensive because they have their arms folded - well maybe they're sitting under an a/c vent and they're simply cold. Are they lying because they're fidgeting and seem nervous? Well, possibly they need to go to the bathroom real bad. In other words, hold off until later to make your final decision.

Section 5: Reading people is as much a science as it is an art

The science deals with an understanding of the mechanics and principles involved in people reading; For example, you study all the cold, hard facts about what a specific mannerism could mean, what a certain tone of voice might suggest, or how the context of a persons environment may influence their behavior.

Once the principles are understood, the best way is to start interperatation of the data in a liner manner. While using logic to deduce the possible meanings behind the words, we have to take in the whole picture if we are to successfully read a client. This is the art of reading.

Those who are successful at combining the two become amazing people readers. There is no replacement for practice. While this document is a good starting point, you should read some specialist volumes on body language, vocal interpretation, lie detection etc. I can give you the tools, but you must come up with the passion to put them to work.

Section 6: The 4 Principles of Reading People

There are generally 4 principles of reading people. Like layers, they are inter-cultural and most people use them daily.

They are:

Establish the Baseline

Recognize Patterns

Challenge and Refine Your Assumptions

Make a Decision

All areas of people reading rely on your ability to put these principles into practice. You begin by establishing a general baseline. From that baseline you look for specific patterns and consistencies whereupon you make your assumptions. Then comes the cyclical aspect of constantly challenging and refining those assumptions by observing new patterns and using the art of questioning. Then, backed by experience and intuition, you make a decision.

Section 6.1: Establish the Baseline

When you are starting to read someone, begin by studying their behavior. Ask yourself if how they are acting at this moment reflects their typical way of being. This can be difficult with a brand new client, but you can use previous knowledge of their language patterns that you will be familiar with from e-mails and phone calls made, which ultimately led you to being in their home. If a person is in a comfortable, familiar environment and surrounded by those who know them intimately, it's safe to assume that they are in a baseline state. This will become your standard from which you will make your assumptions.

If you're in a situation where it doesn't offer this opportunity, then you need to wait it out. Time will help you notice what the person's average behavior is.

Section 6.2: Recognize Patterns

Because our minds can only consciously process a limited amount of data at one time (some studies suggest only about 5-9 bits), it becomes very selective in what it brings to our attention. As you begin analyzing people, look for groups of related signals, patterns, trends and themes that coincide with a specific behavior or state of mind. Single traits by themselves, rarely tell the whole story of what a person is thinking. It's not until you broaden your view to include the whole picture, will you begin to correctly analyze someone. When you discover these consistencies, it is likely that you are onto something that will reveal the person to you.

Patterns begin with the first impression and continue onward. As you combine the first impression with specific tells, behavior, vocal attributes, and their environment, you are well on your way to reading them correctly.

Section 6.3: Reading the first impression

Malcolm Gladwell wrote a book called *Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking*. In it he observed our ability to make snap judgments about a person in the blink of an eye.

Snap judgments are, first of all, enormously quick: they rely on the thinnest slices of experience...they are also unconscious. We thin-slice because we have to, and we come to rely on that ability because there are lots of hidden fists out there, lots of situations where careful attention to the details of a very thin slice, even for no more than a second or two, can tell us an awful lot.

However Malcolm explains that in many cases, these 'thin-slices' of experience from which we draw our conclusions are many times incorrect. What you must do is control this blink response and retrain your brain, consciously at first, to look for meaning behind the impression. Through experience, this blink response will become very accurate. Notice the small details about the person: their hair, their walk, their fingernails, their body language, the clothes they wear. Always ask yourself, "what is this telling me?".

6.3.1: Appearance

Hair can tell a lot about a person. In women, short stylish hair could denote someone who is creative, artistic, or expressive. Because maintaining perfectly styled hair is expensive, it may signify wealth. If that isn't the case, then their willingness to spend a lot of their money to maintain their hair may show vanity, or a need for acceptance, even insecurity. Less styled short hair on the other hand could mean practicality.

For men, professionally styled hair usually goes hand in hand with the desire to show status and power. If combined with expensive clothing and accessories, this is usually a sure bet. Most men do not have the time or desire to regularly have their hair styled at a professional salon. Because it deviates from the norm, this is a good example of something to look out for.

Every detail of a person's appearance can offer further clues into their interests, beliefs, emotions and values. There are too many variables to list here, so I will share with you some of the things you should be looking out for, as well as questions you should ask.

As explained earlier, any trait that stands out from the baseline, needs to be noted. Note that a deviation from the baseline is not only things that stand out on the individual, but how that person stands out as a whole compared to what the norm is around them. With extremes in appearance you might ask yourself: are they seeking attention? trying to imitate someone they look up to? being rebellious? are they self-centered and are insensitive to others? have they just not been taught how to dress and act in an appropriate way? or do they just lack common sense?

Be aware of things like physical characteristics, jewelery, makeup, clothing, accessories, hygiene, and piercings/tattoos etc. Again ask yourself, "what is this telling me?".

6.3.2: *Body Language*

Since the publication of Julius Fast's *Body Language* in 1970, hordes of people began to see crossed legs, folded arms, facial tics, specific behavioral traits, in a whole new light. Even in our time, a generation later, many people are still conscious about crossing their arms in a meeting so as not to appear 'closed'.

Body language, like appearance, can only be correctly analyzed when viewed against the first two principles of reading people: finding the baseline and recognizing patterns. Thinking that you will be able to make someone, off of one or two bodily quirks, is not realistic. You want to look for consistency. Body language is only effective as you begin to observe more of the person's character, and to know their character you must recognize patterns, not just in their body language, but in everything that has to do with them.

6.3.3 Noticing the patterns of action

A good determinate of a person's core personality is how they act when they don't have to act. Take the workplace for example. Is he polite and charming to his subordinates when the boss is around, only to show his true colors when she leaves? Seeing how a person behaves in different situations will help you to further understand what they are all about. Study their interaction with different people, such as with children, co-workers, normal day-to-day people, their family and friends. This will tell you a lot about them.

People behave a certain way based on their wants, needs, or values. We tend to project these values and wants on others because it is a source of validation. Athletes value those with strength and stamina. Artists value the creativity in others. If your way of showing love is buying others gifts, then I would bet when people buy you gifts you feel loved too. What someone consistently does for others or seeks out in them can be a big help in determining what they desire or value.

Realize that sometimes, because of fear, anger, or duress a person will act out of character.

Section 7: What people are really saying

Vocal attributes play an important role in determining what someone is really saying. These traits in many cases contain hidden messages that require you to pay attention.

Someone with a loud voice may indicate a need to control their environment. Like a drill sergeant, they use their voice to intimidate and dominate. Sometimes it can be for reasons of trying to compensate for something they think they're lacking. Realize that a loud voice could also mean a loss of hearing or that they're inebriated. Remember to take everything into consideration.

A soft voice also could have different meanings. Don't immediately dismiss the person as someone who lacks confidence. It may mean they're tired or depressed. It may show that they have a calm-assurance about them. It may also show their arrogance in the sense that they feel you need to listen more if you want to know what they're saying.

Think about all the possible reasons for rapid or slow speech, mumbling, different intonations and emphasis, an unemotional, pretentious or whining tone of voice. Each of these may reveal something deeper than what was first expected.

Look for the matching of one's vocal attributes, with their body language and words. Beyond vocal attributes, understanding verbal gymnastics is the other half of what people are communicating in their speech patterns. For example, always question why someone is leading you towards or away from a topic of conversation. Are they showing conceit by trying to find an opportunity to brag? Are they showing compassion through their leading away from gossiping about someone?

The way someone answers can also be used to control or direct a conversation. Try to interpret why they could be rambling, changing the subject, giving a long drawn-out or a short answer, or not simply not responding at all.

As always, question deviations from the norm. Someone who rarely uses profanity might, with specific people, use it frequently. This could indicate they're seeking acceptance, or trying to present themselves as someone they're not.

Section 8: Interpreting their Environment

One of the best sources of people reading is the person's environment. So many clues can be discovered here, such as hints about their job, education, religion, culture, hobbies, marital and family status, political alignment, friends, and wealth.

Because most of our time is spent at home or at work, these areas provide an accurate source of reading into peoples lives. If you can get exposed to both of these areas, and compare the two, very precise conclusions can be made about them. For example, noticing a discrepancy between their work and home environment, shows that their public image is quite different from their private one.

8.1: The Workplace

Reading the workplace environment starts with the geographical location of someone's home in relation to their work. A father who moves his family downtown to be close to work could indicate that he's a workaholic, is self-centered, or ambitious. However the close proximity might also show that the parents are interested in providing their children easy exposure to cultural opportunities or that the shorter commute means more time with his family. It is through studying both the home and workplace that a more telling story will develop.

Now begin to study the job itself. Why do you think they've chosen it? What does it tell about the person? Their education or drive? The fact that they're a medical doctor may show a desire to help others, indicating someone who's compassionate. However, they might only be interested in the status of such a job. I even know someone who became a doctor because of pressure from their father, this tells a whole other story.

The items at the workplace that people surround themselves with are also very telling. In many ways, these items are a microcosm of the person's life. To give you an idea, consider some of these items:

- **Plants:** Do they keep fresh flowers or plants? This indicates a person who loves nature or is sensitive to beauty. It may also show that they're health conscious.
- **Calendars:** These are good indicators of hobbies, interests, or sense of humor.
- **Books and Reading Material:** Having novels or magazines not connected to the job do show personal interests, but beyond that, it also can show that their mind is not on the job. Leaving them lying on the desk can where the boss will surely notice, may show a lack of judgment.
- **Desktop Items:** What a person keeps in their immediate view also provides answers. Having multiple pictures of his children in different stages of their lives shows his love for family. However, if there's not one of his wife, it may indicate a divorce, a strained relationship, or that he's are embarrassed about her looks.

8.2: The Home

Because the home is where the heart is, a person's living area reveals volumes about them. As with the workplace, consider the location, the neighborhood, and the items within and without. What are they telling you? Some important items to consider are books and reading material, items on the refrigerator, collections, photos, artwork, children's toys. Take note of the layout and decorations of the home.

Someone who wears very expensive clothes, but has a very humble home, may reveal a desire to appear differently to others. Look for things where a person's home is in contrast to their public persona. The bigger the gap the greater the desire to appear a certain way.

8.2: The Automobile

Like the home and workplace, a person's car will reveal a lot about them. But as always, take it in comparison to everything else. Like clothes, having an expensive well-maintained automobile may at first indicate wealth, but taken in context with a run-down home may again show a desire to maintain a certain public image.

A messy, disorganized car usually indicates a messy, disorganized person. I also tend to notice the little sticker that oil-change shops put on the upper left corner of the windshield. Seeing the actual car's mileage being much greater than the mileage indicated by the sticker may show a lack of awareness, complacency, or laziness.

8.3: The Social Environment

Where do they spend their free time and who with? Where a person tends to regularly 'hang out' as well as the company one keeps will tell you more details of their personality and interests.

8.4: The Socioeconomic Environment

A person's socioeconomic environment and background is a major key to determining one's behavior. Remember to be aware of your prejudice. As we saw earlier, prejudice may taint your ability to read someone successfully. As with everything else, the socioeconomic environment needs to be considered within the context of everything else.

Section 9: The art of questioning

Through the process of recognizing patterns and refining your assumptions, there comes a time where you need to delve deeper. If you are setting up a date with someone, at a job interview, or just trying to get to know the person better, learning the art of questioning is very handy.

The types of questions that should be asked are those which help confirm or contradict the assumptions that you've made throughout this process. Don't make it sound like an interrogation. Do however, make it a natural part of the conversation. Remember to 'seek first to understand, then to be understood'.

After all the cards are laid on the table, and you have established the baseline, recognized patterns, and challenged and refined your assumptions through questioning, then and only then should you make a final decision. It's the combination of many details pointing in the same direction that will remind you that you're on track. Being that reading people is a science and an art, use the facts that have presented themselves and couple it with your intuition. If you do this, you will rarely be wrong about someone.

Section 10: How to detect fabrications

While speaking, a person produces around 75-100 verbal and nonverbal cues per second. With the average person capable of only processing around 5-8 bits of information at one time, it's no wonder that so many of us can be deceived. Because of our apparent limitation in conscious processing, the average person can only detect lies with about 50% accuracy. With the skills that we have discussed it brings this level to around 65%. Through mastery of the techniques presented here, your ability can increase to 90% accuracy

10.1: The Principles of Lie Detection

The process of detecting lies is found in Behavior Analysis. For the purpose of lie detection, behavior analysis is the study of the verbal and nonverbal cues of truthfulness. Since lie detection is a subset of reading people, it follows the same 4 principles as discussed previously.

10.1.1: The Process

To understand how this works, let's study an example. Assume you are dealing with a used-car salesman and you want to make sure that he's not selling you a lemon. Begin by creating a framework of non-invasive questions to establish his normal, baseline behavior. Essentially you want to ask questions in which you're sure he'll tell the truth. It may go something like this:

YOU: Now, if I decide I want this car today, what are the steps I need to take?

HIM: explains to you...

YOU: So, how long have you been in business? (he's unlikely to lie since this can be confirmed, if he does then you already have your answer)

HIM: goes on to tell about the history of the place

YOU: Since I'm in the area today, what restaurants do you recommend? What kind of food do they serve?

HIM: tells you about his favorite place...

If you noticed, none of these questions were invasive. Also, he has no incentive to lie about these things. While you are listening to him, pay attention to his voice, eyes, body-language and facial expressions. Where does he look when he's describing his favorite dish? What are his hands doing as he's explaining? What's the general pitch and tone of his voice? Is he leaning toward or away from you? Does he tend to overly gesticulate?

When you feel pretty confident that you recognize his baseline, you can now ask him the questions that you really want to know. These will be questions about the quality and history of the car, it's maintenance record, etc. It's at this point that you want to look for those patterns that aren't in harmony with his baseline.

10.1.2: The Verbal Clusters of Deception

Verbal clusters are generally the least reliable of all the deception patterns. However, combined with the other clusters, they can improve detection accuracy. The main issue with verbal patterns is that they can be rehearsed, but this can be avoided through spontaneous questioning.

General Verbal Responses

- May take longer to start answering
- May answer too quickly or before the question is completed
- Often ask the questioner to repeat the question or they repeat it themselves
- Overly polite or apologetic dialog
- Persistent complaints
- Unnatural silence

10.1.3: The Behavioral Clusters of Deception

Deceptive people follow certain behavioral patterns. These can be viewed from the most apparent (macro-patterns) to the almost imperceptible (micro-patterns). Here's the progression from largest to smallest:

10.1.3.1: Macro Patterns

General Behaviors:

- Increased discomfort and anxiety
- Hostility
- Unmerited anger towards you
- Persistent evasiveness
- Resistance

Posture:

- Early signs of extreme rigidity followed by alternating stiffness and relaxation
- Hands, legs, objects put in front of body to form a barrier (folding arms, crossing legs, etc.)
- Feigned lack of interest
- Posture changes caused by topic changes
- Not facing you
- Distancing or leaning away from you

Gestures and Movements:

- Rubbing the forehead near the temple region
- Squeezing the face, rubbing the neck, or stroking the back of the head with the hand.
- Using fewer hand movements to illustrate their actions than usual
- Movement away from you
- Lip licking and hard swallowing
- Wringing hands
- Hiding the eyes

There are two psychological reasons behind the source of these macro patterns. The first is the brain's inability to differentiate a real physical threat from a perceived one. This awakens the 'fight or flight' instinct and explains the hostility, anger, evasiveness or physical attempts to move away from you.

The second reason is that psychological stress increases anxiety so much that we cannot store it internally anymore. This leads to an external overflow, explaining the fidgeting, hand rubbing, sweating, lip licking, leg bouncing etc. When you see 'stress overflow' try asking yourself what it may mean. If it arose as a result of your questioning, then it may point to deception.

10.1.3.2: Micro Patterns

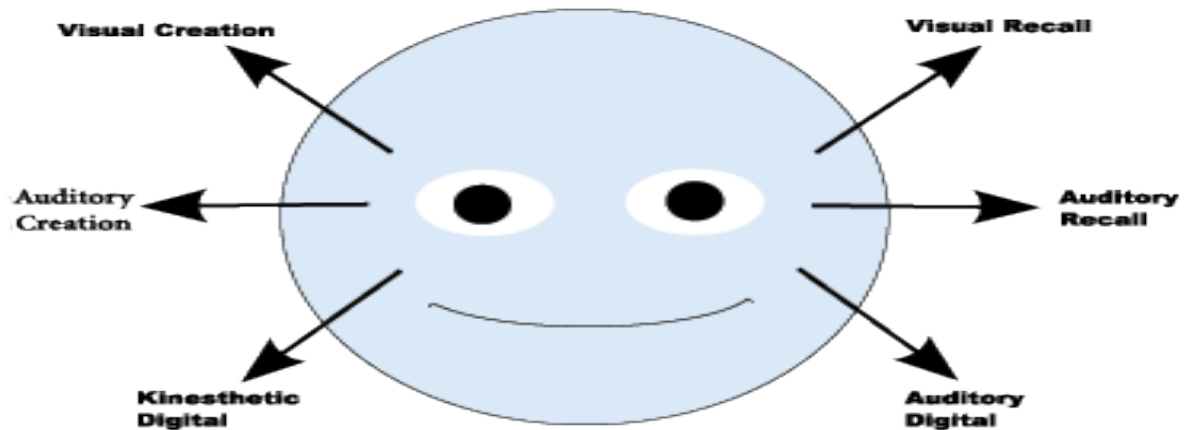
The micro patterns are all expressed on the face. And again there is a continuum from largest to smallest:

General Expressions:

- Averting the eyes
- Focusing the eyes - some will try to stare down to show control. (A truthful person stares only half the time on average)
- Face whitening (indicates fear)
- Face flushing (indicates anger or shame)

Eye-Accessing Cues

In the field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) they use the phenomenon of eye-accessing cues to help recognize patterns of thinking. By the direction of where the person's eyes are looking, you can determine whether they are using vision, sound or kinesthetic (feeling) to trigger their thinking.



If this represents a person facing you then when they look up and to the left (your upper right) they'll be accessing a visual memory. Up and to the right (again, your upper left) means that they're visually constructing (imagining) something. To your right, they're remembering a sound, to your left, they're creating a sound. Down right, the person is accessing a bodily feeling or emotion. Down left (your down right), they are accessing inner dialog (talking to themselves).

If, for example, you were asking your child where they got the candybar, and they look to their 'constructing' side, then you can be sure they're fabricating the story. Keep in mind that this is reversed for left-dominant people (left handers). So before you can use this, be aware of which of their sides is the dominant one.

Micro Expressions

Clearly the most difficult to master, however if you do, this can give you a 90% success rate at detecting lies. When people lie, they try to hide the fact through altering their voluntary facial expressions (macro expressions) and body language to appear in harmony with their words. Because of this, the face will hold accurate as well as misleading information.

Unfortunately, most people respond to the macro expressions and become deceived; However, a few keen observers can detect these micro expressions as well as other imperfections in the macro displays, and are correctly informed.

For example, distinguishing between a fake smile, one that can be performed at will, and a real smile, which is generated by the unconscious brain, comes down to awareness of the action units involved in a genuine smile.

Deception will most always show up in the face as an inconsistency between the micro and macro expressions. Even though most people are not attuned to the recognition of micro expressions, most can learn to become sensitive to them.

Section 11: Conclusion

As you learn to establish the baseline behavior of honesty, recognize deception clusters that deviate from this baseline, and progressively refine your assumptions through questioning and observations, you will be well on your way to becoming an amazing lie detector. Remember to look at things as a whole. The more patterns you can discover that seem to point in one direction, the more accurate your detection will be.