The RCMP Phased Interview Model For Suspects

PRTC

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Royal Canadian Gendarmerie royale
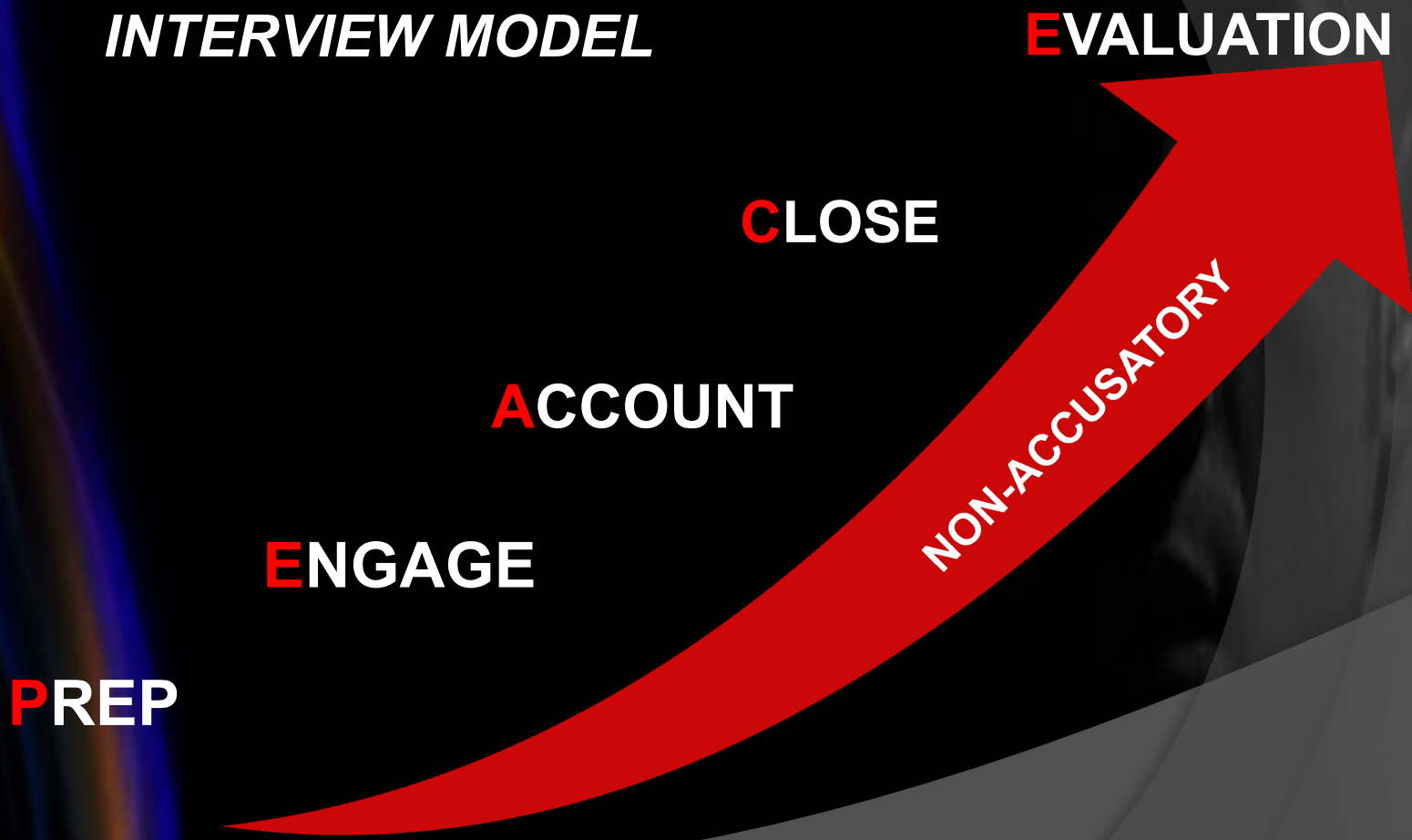Mounted Police du Canada

Rationale for Transformation

- Renewed attacks against the 'Reid Model':
  - *R vs. Chapple* (ABPC 2012).
  - *R vs. Armi*shaw (ONSC 2011).
- Academics/media focused on the 'perils' of Reid influenced / guilt presumptive models of interviewing.
- Concerns with false confessions, unreliable, and involuntary statements.
- Desire/pressure to push the 'PEACE' non-accusatory model of interviewing, despite a lack of full understanding of the model and its limitations (no persuasion).

The United Kingdom's 'PEACE' Model

NON-GUILT PRESUMPTIVE 'PEACE' INTERVIEW MODEL

EVALUATION

CLOSE

ACCOUNT

NON-ACCUSATORY

ENGAGE

PREP

Evolution of the Suspect Interview

- **In 2012, members of the RCMP spent a month with the London Metropolitan Police to examine the Tier 3 PEACE model (suspects):**
  - **Received training (3 weeks)**
  - **Met with:**
    - **Trainers**
    - **Practioners**
    - **Academics**
    - **Crown**
    - **Defence Lawyers**

Evolution of the Suspect Interview

- **A national RCMP focus group consisting of the following SME's was struck to objectively examine the force's approach to suspect interviews:**
  - **Interview team specialists**
  - **Polygraph examiners**
  - **Trainers (PRTC and CPC)**
  - **Learning and development**
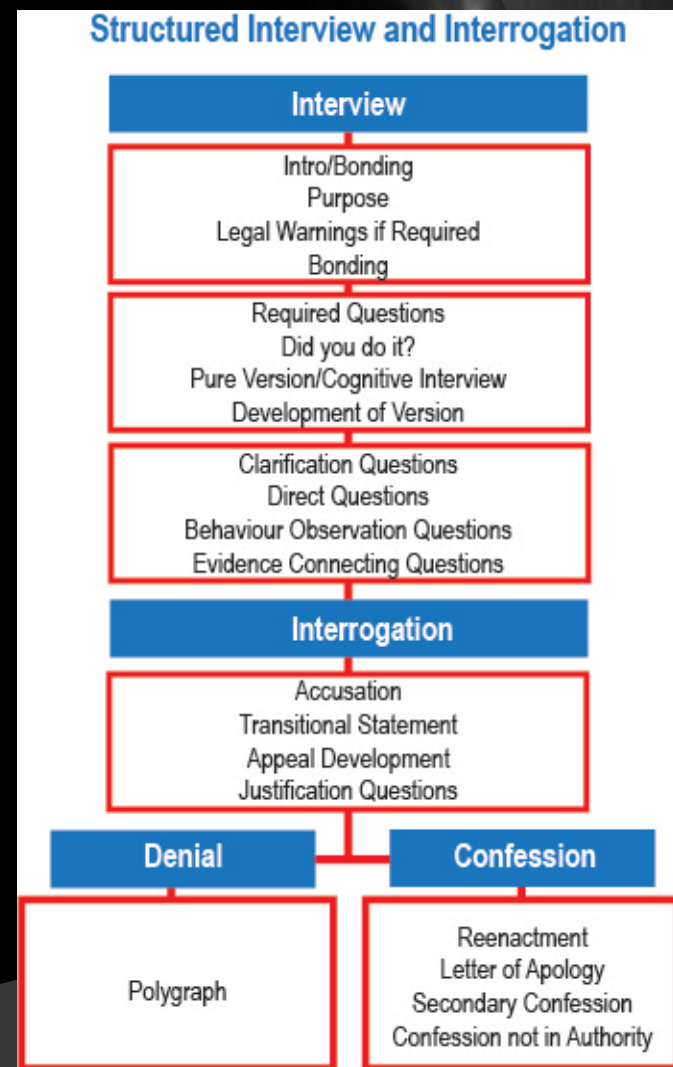
Evolution of the Suspect Interview

- **The group conducted extensive review of leading Canadian and international research into suspect interviews. Including the work of:**
  - **Richard Leo**
  - **Saul Kassin**
  - **Ron Fischer**
  - **Chris Meissner (HIG)**
  - **Snook & Eastwood**
  - **Par Anders Granhag**
  - **Ray Bull**
  - **Becky Milne**
  - **Eric Sheppard**

Evolution of the Suspect Interview

- **The group examined the existing suspect interview model - the RCMP Structured Interrogation Model.**

- **Reviewed Reid's and PEACE.**

- **Considered through the filter of leading Canadian case-law decisions (voluntariness), notably:**

  - **R vs. Oickle, R vs. Singh and R vs. Sinclair (the 'interrogation trilogy').**

Structured Interview and Interrogation

Interview

Intro/Bonding
Purpose
Legal Warnings if Required
Bonding

Required Questions
Did you do it?
Pure Version/Cognitive Interview
Development of Version

Clarification Questions
Direct Questions
Behaviour Observation Questions
Evidence Connecting Questions

Interrogation

Accusation
Transitional Statement
Appeal Development
Justification Questions

Denial

Polygraph

Confession

Reenactment
Letter of Apology
Secondary Confession
Confession not in Authority

FINDINGS – PEACE MODEL

PROS:

- **Non-Guilt Presumptive**
- **Not concerned with obtaining a confession – only information**
- **Well suited for voluntariness**
- **Objective veracity testing**
- **Scientifically validated**

CONS:

- **The adverse inference**
- **Impermissible inducements (the 'AI threat')**
- **No persuasion**
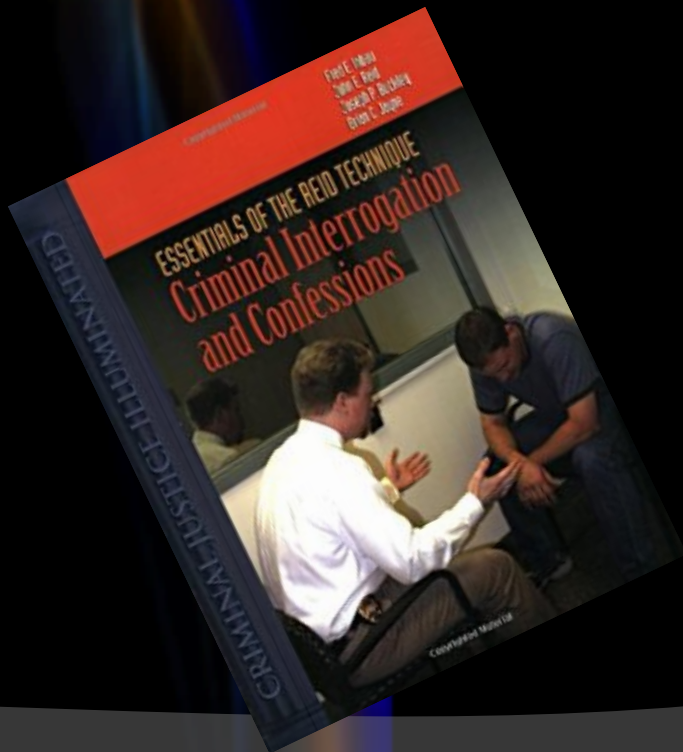- **Dependent on engaged suspect**

FINDINGS – REID TECHNIQUE

PROS:

- **Effective persuasion (theme based approach – moral inducements)**

CONS:

- **Guilt presumptive**
- **Subjective veracity testing (BAI)**
- **Stopping denials**
- **Maximization techniques**
- **Pragmatic implication**
- **Not in-line with the confessions rule**
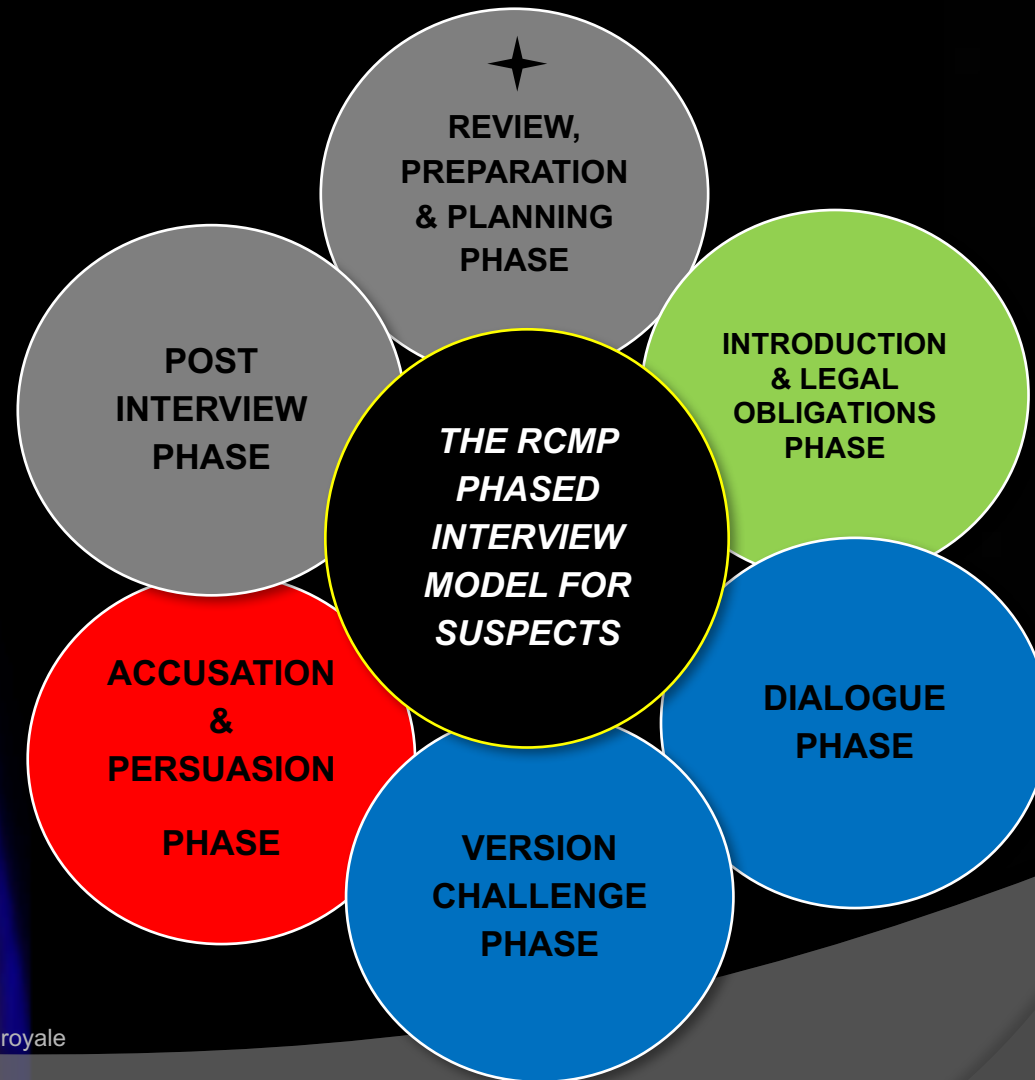- **Increased risk of false confessions**
- **Not scientifically validated**

Evolution of the Suspect Interview

- Over a 2.5 year period, the focus group considered the advantages of both PEACE and Reid's and concluded that:
    - Foundationally non-accusatory interviewing should form the central approach to suspect interviews (heavily PEACE influenced).
    - Persuasion and accusatory practises as supported under Canadian law were still relevant but only in specific contexts (lightly Reid's influenced).
    - Objective veracity testing over subjective veracity testing (no BAI).

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The RCMP Phased Interview Model

- Following adoption of 'PIM' in Dec, 2014, a training platform was developed through the assistance of curriculum designers in Ottawa.

- Starting in the Spring of 2015, pilot training courses were run through PRTC while the CTS was finalized.

- In late 2016 the CTS and course content were finalized.

- The course is now delivered across the country with 17 courses having been delivered in BC.

- Online components through IDP used as pre-requisite requirements.

Success with the Phased Interview Model

- The RCMP Phased Suspect Model has proven to be highly effective at gathering complete, accurate, reliable & voluntary information in, but not limited to:

  - Homicides including stranger on stranger homicides and serial homicides.

  - Organized crime investigations.

  - National Security investigations (HUMINT interviews).

  - Sexual crimes.

- Research project to examine the model currently being developed with BC academics Barry Cooper and Michael Woodworth.

The RCMP Phased Interview Model For Suspects

- **The RCMP Phased Suspect Model has been adopted by the following agencies:**
  - **Vancouver Police**
  - **Abbotsford Police**
  - **BC Transit Police**
  - **The RNC**
  - **Peel Regional Police**
  - **Greater Sudbury Police**
  - **Edmonton Police Service**
  - **Saskatchewan Police College**
  - **Canadian Police College**

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- **For further information, please contact:**

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