

# **Introduction: Conducting Serious Incident Investigations**

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# Incident Management

- \* **Collection**
- \* **Classification**
- \* **Use of Data**

**To better protect people from harm, and the organization from liability.**



# Relationship to Investigations

**An investigation is one tool available to the incident management function.**

## Other Tools?

- \* Root cause analysis
- \* Database development



# Investigation

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



# Relevant Facts

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



# Forms of Evidence

- Testimonial
- Documentary
- Physical
- Demonstrative



# Testimonial Evidence

What people:

- Communicate
- About their memories
- Of observations they made



# Documentary Evidence

The manner in which organizations preserve testimonial evidence: e.g., written witness statements; attendance records; work schedules; medical records.





# Physical Evidence

Things and the spatial relationship between and among things...themselves.



# Demonstrative Evidence

The manner in which we preserve physical evidence: e.g., a photograph; diagram; x-ray.



# Forms of Evidence (continued)

**So what?**

**Who cares?**

**Honestly, who cares?**



# Forms of Evidence (continued)

**We must**

**SYSTEMATICALLY collect**

**facts:**

**Rules for how we collect  
testimonial evidence, etc.**



# Questions



# Investigatory Values

- Speed
- Thoroughness
- Objectivity



# Speed

- Begin and continue without unnecessary delay.
- What would be a “necessary delay”?



# Speed

Common problems:

- Inadequate assignment process
- Conflict with other work





# Thoroughness

Collect all relevant facts & collect them properly.



# Thoroughness

## Common problems:

- Failure to interview individuals/residents
- Collect facts using improper methods
- Failure to require medical exam when no apparent injury



# Objectivity

Avoid making a conclusion of fact before collecting and considering all evidence.



# Objectivity

Common problems:

- Conflicts of interest
- Personal relationships
- Preconceived beliefs based on personal experience



# Questions



# Contact

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