COMPANION GUIDE TO ONLINE TRAINING

Use alongside the online lessons at fortunefavorsthepreprepared.com/mag-member-vetting/

SEC-01: MAG MEMBER VETTING STUDENT COMPANION GUIDE

The Investigator's Field Reference

EEI Planning, OSINT Protocol, Reference Elicitation, Structured Interview, Character Assessment, and Calibration

Collection | References | Interview | Character | Assessment | Calibration

Edition v1.0 | 2026

Semper Paratus, Semper Gumby

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SEC-01: MAG MEMBER VETTING — STUDENT COMPANION GUIDE

Companion Guide to Online Training

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This companion guide is designed to be used alongside the MAG Member Vetting online training series at fortunefavorstheprepared.com/mag-member-vetting/. The online lessons are the instruction. This guide contains quick-reference tables, field checklists, and decision frameworks only — it does not contain the instructional content. It cannot be used as a standalone document.

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How to Use This Companion Guide

THIS GUIDE IS A COMPANION TO THE ONLINE TRAINING This companion guide is designed to be used alongside the MAG Member Vetting online training series — the online lessons are the instruction. This guide contains quick-reference tables, field checklists, and decision frameworks only. It is not a standalone document.

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What this guide contains

For each of the nine online lessons: a condensed reference summary (key concepts only, not instruction), quick-lookup tables, decision frameworks, field checklists, and the question banks. The instruction is delivered online — this guide is what you carry during active investigations.

Instructor-Led Group Training

Instructor-led group sessions are also available. Contact fortunefavorstheprepared@protonmail.com for group scheduling and pricing.

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ORDER MATTERS Do not open any section of this guide until the corresponding online lesson has been completed. The condensed summaries here are reference material, not instruction. The sequence below is required, not suggested.

- ☐ Step 1 — Support the development and availability of these courses by subscribing to my Patreon: patreon.com/fortunefavorstheprepared
- ☐ Step 2 — Access the online lessons at fortunefavorstheprepared.com/mag-member-vetting/
- ☐ Step 3 — Complete all nine lessons including knowledge checks and calibration scenarios
- ☐ Step 4 — Use this guide during active investigations as a field reference

THIS GUIDE IS NOT STANDALONE The instruction for each lesson is delivered through the online training series. This guide contains condensed reference tables and checklists only. If you have not completed the online lessons, this guide will not teach you the material — it will give you tables whose meaning you do not yet understand.

Chapter Map — What to Open When

When you need...	Turn to...
The investigation sequence and EEI planning	Chapter 1 — Collection Plan Quick Reference
The 14 public records and where to find them	Chapter 2 — OSINT Quick Reference
Which social media platforms to check	Chapter 2 — Platform Protocol
How to elicit through social pressure	Chapter 3 — Reference Elicitation
Interview setup and phase timing	Chapter 4 — Interview Structure
Every question in the question bank	Chapter 4 — Question Bank
The 12 deceit indicators and responses	Chapter 4 — Deceit Indicator Reference
Baseline establishment and behavioral cluster reading	Chapter 4 — Baseline Establishment and Behavioral Reading
What to ask yourself after the interview	Chapter 4 — Post-Interview Self-Assessment
The motive sustainability framework	Chapter 5 — What Records Miss
The three character reference questions	Chapter 6 & 7 — Character References
Confidence language and prohibited phrases	Chapter 8 — Assessment Quick Reference
The four recommendation categories	Chapter 8 — Recommendation Decision Card
Probationary controlled testing protocol	Chapter 8 — Probation Reference
The full investigation master checklist	Appendix A

PART I — INVESTIGATOR FOUNDATIONS

Chapter 1: Collection Plan Quick Reference

Plan before you collect. Collect before you contact. Contact before you interview. Breaking the sequence costs you the investigation.

Investigation Sequence

Step	Phase	Before This Step...	Lesson
1	Write EEI collection plan	Do not open a single browser tab	L1
2	Public records OSINT	EEIs must be written	L2
3	Social media — standard platforms	Public records phase active	L2
4	Alternative platforms	Every platform, every candidate	L2
5	Threat indicator review	Social media sweep complete	L2
6	Pre-contact summary	All OSINT sections documented	L2
7	Reference conversations	Pre-contact summary done	L3,6
8	Structured interview	All reference conversations done	L4,7
9	Assessment report	Post-interview self-assessment done	L5,8

EEI Planning — Six Categories

EEI	Core Question	Primary Sources	Stop When...
Identity	Is this person who they say they are?	Voter records, property records, professional licensing, DD-214	Confirmed across 2+ independent sources
Background Consistency	Does stated history hold up independently?	Court records, PACER, LinkedIn, employer verification	All claimed items verified or gap documented
Behavioral Pattern	Does online presence match the person presented?	All social media platforms, forums	Full platform sweep complete; findings rated
Network	Do associations create risk?	Social media connections, reference network map	Network mapped; architecture assessed
Motivation	Why join? Is stated reason sustainable?	Interview, character references, V&J domain	Motive assessed for sustainability under pressure
Stability	Financial, legal, relational vulnerabilities?	PACER, court records, tax liens, character references	All records checked; vulnerabilities documented

Investigation OPSEC

- ☐ Vary your collection sequence — a predictable sequence is a stageable sequence
- ☐ Never telegraph sources in the interview — reveal the concern, not how you found it
- ☐ Control who knows the investigation is active — limit to operational need

- Secure worksheets and assessments — your documented methodology is an asset to a future adversary

PART II — COLLECTION

Chapter 2: OSINT Quick Reference

OSINT is documented, systematic collection. Every finding gets a URL, a date, and a reason it matters. Clean results are documented too — a blank row means the check was not done.

Public Records — 14-Category Checklist

Record Type	Source	What It Surfaces
Voter registration	State Secretary of State voter lookup	Identity, address history, residency length
Property records	County assessor / clerk website	Ownership, address history, liens
Professional license	State licensing board	Claimed occupation — disciplinary history
Business registrations	Secretary of State entity search	Claimed business ownership
UCC filings	Secretary of State UCC search	Secured debts, business loans — financial stability
State criminal court	State unified court public search	Criminal, civil, protective orders
Federal court / PACER	pacer.gov (per-page fee)	Federal criminal, civil, bankruptcy by name
Bankruptcy filings	PACER	Chapter 7/11/13; dates, discharge, recency
Sex offender registry	nsopw.gov	Multi-state — baseline check, every candidate
Tax liens	County recorder / IRS lien search	Financial distress — leverage point indicator
Civil judgments	County court records	Unsatisfied judgments, dispute patterns
Driving / DUI records	State DMV public lookup	Judgment and substance abuse indicators
Restraining / protective orders	State court domestic relations	Domestic conflict, violence history
Property liens	County recorder	Mortgage, contractor, HOA liens — financial pressure

Social Media — Standard Platforms

Platform	Key Focus
Facebook	Account creation date. Public posts, friends list, group memberships. Archive with archive.ph.
Instagram	Photo content reveals lifestyle, location, possessions. Geotags vs. claimed geography.
LinkedIn	Employment verification. Cross-reference every claimed employer/title/date verbatim. Zero connections from claimed senior role = thin history.
X / Twitter	Date-range filter for full history. Replies and quote-tweets more revealing than curated posts.
Reddit	reddit.com/user/[username] — full cross-subreddit post history. Durable and often candid.
YouTube, TikTok, Pinterest, Nextdoor	Community reputation, lifestyle, interest clustering.

Alternative and High-Risk Platforms — Every Candidate

Platform	Search Focus
Telegram	Name + all usernames. Channel memberships. Coded extremist language?
Gab	Association patterns matter as much as content.
SurvivalistBoards.com	Largest preparedness forum. Full post history.
AR15.com (Arfcom)	Subforum activity. Militia organizing content?
Patriots.win / successors	Explicit violence advocacy present?
Reddit high-risk	All subreddits via user profile — not just preparedness.
Truth Social / Rumble / Odysee	Channel ownership, comment history.
4chan /pol/, /k/ — 8kun	Search only for cross-referenced usernames. 8kun activity is a significant finding.

Prepared Source Counter-Techniques

Technique	How to Deploy	What It Surfaces
Probe pre-legend period	Ask detailed questions about the 5 years before verifiable history begins	Legend period is thin — genuine recall covers any life stage
Ask for incidental detail	'What was the weather?' 'Who else was there?' 'What did you eat?'	Prepared sources memorize facts, not peripheral texture
Interrupt and restart	Interrupt mid-account with a clarifying question	Memorized accounts require restart; genuine recall re-enters anywhere
Cold-call reference	Contact someone the candidate did not list and did not expect	Uncoordinated — cannot have been prepared
Separated interview	Second interview 3–4 weeks later, different framing	Prepared sources maintain perfect consistency; genuine memory varies

Chapter 3: Reference Elicitation

References are collection sources, not endorsements. The goal of every reference conversation is to surface what the candidate would not volunteer.

Four Elicitation Techniques

Technique	How It Works	What It Surfaces
Open-ended framing	'Tell me about a time when...' not 'Would you say he is reliable?'	Stories with texture, hesitations, qualifications
Deliberate false statement	State something inaccurate; observe whether reference corrects it	Correction = real knowledge. Acceptance = limited knowledge or coaching
Assumed knowledge probe	'Since you've known John since his contractor days...' then pause	Surfaces actual depth of reference's knowledge
Silence	Pause 3–5 seconds after an incomplete answer	References fill silence with what they were managing

Reference Coordination Detection

- ☐ Two or more references independently use identical phrasing
- ☐ All references choose the same specific incident as their primary positive example
- ☐ All references unable to speak to the same period — uniform gaps = uniform preparation
- ☐ Universal praise with no texture, friction, or qualified observations

Network Architecture Analysis

Feature	Organic Network	Inserted Network
Time distribution	Relationships across multiple life stages	Concentrated in legend construction window
Context distribution	Different activities and roles	Uniformly from same context
Depth distribution	Mix of deep long and casual relationships	Similar depth across all — no one across multiple stages
Pre-legend coverage	Some references predate verifiable history	No reference speaks to period before legend window

The Three Character Reference Questions

1. How do they behave when things go wrong? — 'Tell me about a time when something went significantly wrong for [candidate] and what you observed about how they handled it.'
2. How do they treat people who cannot benefit them? — 'What kind of person is [candidate] when they are not trying to impress anyone?'
3. Have they ever broken a commitment, and what happened? — 'Has there ever been a time when [candidate] was not able to follow through on something they committed to?'

Red Flag in Character References A reference who cannot describe a single specific incident when asked directly is either shallow in their actual knowledge, has been coached, or is actively deflecting. Universal praise with no texture is a signal, not a positive data point.

PART III — THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Chapter 4: Interview Structure and Reference

The interview is not a conversation. You know the answers to most of the questions you are asking. Your asymmetric knowledge is your primary tool. Do not give it away.

Pre-Interview Setup

Element	Standard	Why It Matters
Seating	Observe both hands and full face. Slight angle, not confrontational.	Behavioral data requires visibility.
Pre-interview buffer	10–15 min casual conversation before formal interview starts.	This is baseline calibration, not small talk.
Environment	Comfortable, private, quiet, neutral.	Stress produces false behavioral positives.
Note-taking	Content notes before and after sensitive topics. Not during behavioral observation.	Attention belongs on the candidate during probing.
Sensitive probe timing	Second and third thirds only — after baseline established.	No baseline before the first 15 minutes means no deviation data.
OSINT and references complete?	Yes — or do not conduct the interview.	Your asymmetric knowledge only works if you have it.

Four-Phase Structure

Phase	Duration	Purpose	Key Discipline
1. Rapport and Baseline	10–15 min	Calibrate normal behavior	Known-accurate low-stakes topics only. Do not probe yet.
2. Background Verification	20–30 min	Cross-check record vs. account	Open-ended questions. Sparse notes. Observe behavior.
3. Probing Phase	15–20 min	Surface inconsistencies, test legend	Address concerns without revealing sources. Repeat questions.
4. Motivation and Close	10–15 min	Assess commitment depth	Why join? Close warmly. Never signal conclusions.

Complete Question Bank

Identity and Background

- ☐ Walk me through where you have lived over the past ten years.
- ☐ Tell me about your work history — what were you doing before your current situation?
- ☐ Are there gaps in your employment history I should understand?
- ☐ Have you ever gone by any other names or nicknames?

Legal and Financial

- ☐ Have you ever been arrested or charged, even if dropped or not convicted?
- ☐ Have you ever been involved in a civil lawsuit — plaintiff or defendant?
- ☐ Have you ever had a restraining order issued against you?
- ☐ Have you ever filed for bankruptcy or had significant debt collection action taken against you?
- ☐ How would you describe your current financial situation?

Prior Group Memberships

- ☐ Tell me about any preparedness, militia, or similar groups you have been part of.
- ☐ Why did you leave your last group? How did that end?
- ☐ Were there any conflicts or falling-outs with people in that group?
- ☐ Is there anyone from prior involvement who would speak negatively about you? What would they say?
- ☐ Have you ever been asked to leave a group or organization?

Personal and Vulnerabilities

- ☐ Who else is at home with you?
- ☐ Any family situations — custody disputes, estrangements, domestic conflict — I should understand?
- ☐ Have you ever struggled with substance use?
- ☐ Is there anything in your background that could be used to pressure or embarrass you?

Motivation and Intent

- ☐ How did you hear about this group and why did you decide to reach out?
- ☐ What specifically do you want to contribute, and what do you expect to gain?
- ☐ Has anyone — law enforcement, journalist, or another organization — ever asked you about a preparedness group?
- ☐ Who outside this group knows you are trying to join?

Values and Judgment — Eight Scenario Questions

Distribute across the interview — not as a block. Assess reasoning quality, not answer content.

- You discover a fellow member has been significantly exaggerating a skill the group has been counting on. What do you do?
- The group makes a decision you believe is seriously wrong. You have raised your objection and been overruled. What do you do?
- A member asks you not to share something with leadership. What factors determine whether you honor that request?
- A family member asks detailed questions about what your group does, who is in it, and where you meet. How do you handle it?
- If you found out a member had concealed significant information during their own vetting, what would your expectation be about what happens next?
- Describe a time when doing the right thing cost you something. What did it cost you, and did you do it anyway?
- What would make you leave this group?
- Is there anything you have done that you would be embarrassed for this group to know about?

Chapter 4 (continued): Deceit Detection Reference

Complete FM 2-22.3 Deceit Indicator Reference

Indicator	What It Looks Like	Investigator Response
Timeline inconsistency	Too much detail on a short event; too little on a long important period	Note and return to compressed period with different framing
Body language mismatch	Emotional state does not match story being told	Note the topic; probe adjacent areas
Knowledge mismatch	Cannot answer what someone in that role would know	Ask increasingly specific technical questions in the claimed domain
Evasion	Truthful answer to a question that was not asked	Acknowledge; restate original question verbatim exactly once
Self-serving pattern	Every conflict ends with candidate blameless	Ask explicitly for the other party's perspective
Technical vocabulary failure	Claims expertise but does not use correct field terminology	Test without telegraphing; probe the technical domain
Inconsistency with record	Contradicts what OSINT shows	Note without confronting; return with different angle later
Repeat question inconsistency	Same question rephrased yields meaningfully different answer	Probe the inconsistency directly
Lack of extraneous detail	Cannot produce peripheral details around claimed memories on demand	Probe incidentals: 'Who else was there?' 'What time of day?'
Exact wording repetition	Same words verbatim across original and repeat questions	Interrupt mid-account; see if restart is required
Appearance mismatch	Physical indicators inconsistent with claimed background	'Walk me through a typical workday in that role'
Language mismatch	Vocabulary inconsistent with claimed background	Ask field-specific questions to expose the gap

Chapter 4 (continued): Baseline Establishment and Behavioral Reading

Behavioral observation only means something when it represents a deviation from that person’s established baseline. A candidate who avoids eye contact throughout the entire interview tells you nothing. A candidate who maintains eye contact throughout Phase 1 and breaks it on one specific question is showing you something. The deviation is the data. The baseline is the reference point.

Baseline Calibration Protocol — Five Channels to Observe in Phase 1

Channel	Observe in Phase 1	Deviation Signal in Phase 3
Eye contact	Pattern while speaking vs. listening. Direction of gaze during memory retrieval.	Sudden break or intensification on a specific topic

Hands and body	Position at rest. Gesture frequency and scale during normal speech.	Arms cross; hands still when previously gesturing; body turns away
Speech pace	Normal rate. Typical pause length before answering.	Pause significantly longer than baseline before a specific question
Composure	Visible breathing pattern. Muscle tension. How settled at rest.	Visible tension spike on one specific topic that was absent throughout Phase 1
Qualifier language	Natural hedging: 'I think,' 'roughly,' 'if I remember.'	Sudden hedging from a previously confident speaker on one topic

Behavioral Clusters — The Three-Channel Rule

Three or more indicators from different channels (physical, micro-behavioral, verbal), all occurring on the same topic or period, constitute a behavioral cluster. Document topic, indicators observed, and approximate timing. Address in Phase 3 with a different framing — never confront the observed behavior directly.

Counts as a cluster	Does NOT count
3+ indicators from different channels on the same topic	A single non-verbal behavior in isolation
Deviations from the established Phase 1 baseline	Behaviors present throughout Phase 1 that do not change by topic
Verbal and non-verbal indicators co-occurring on the same question	General nervousness about the interview from the start
Empty recall specifically on unverifiable or inconsistent periods	Memory difficulty on events 20+ years ago without selective pattern
Eye contact break + speech rate change + verbal evasion on same question	Cultural or individual variation in baseline expression style

Attention Management During the Interview

Technique	Application
Sparse notes	One or two words per topic during interview. Full behavioral documentation within one hour after.
Anchor phrases	When a cluster appears, note a short phrase ('2016 cluster') and continue. Return in Phase 3.
Slow your pace on a cluster	Do not probe immediately. Transition to a neutral topic. Return later with different framing. The gap makes repeat questions work.

Use silence	Pause 3–5 seconds after answers. Most candidates fill silence. What they add is often more informative than the prepared answer.
Phase 1 is measurement	Not small talk. Systematic observation. Asking sensitive questions in Phase 1 contaminates the baseline and destroys the reference point.

Post-Interview Self-Assessment

Failure Mode	What It Looks Like	Self-Check Question
Elicitation escalation	Softened probing to protect rapport	Did I pivot to hard probing when indicators appeared?
Attribution error	Explained behavioral indicators away	Did I document indicators or explain them away in the moment?
Premature closure	Stopped collecting when confirming data felt sufficient	Have I actively looked for disconfirming evidence?
Source capture	Assessment reads as an advocate's brief	Am I writing an analyst's assessment or an advocate's brief?

PART IV — CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Chapter 5: What Records Miss

A clean background investigation is not a character reference. Security vetting answers whether the candidate is who they say they are. Character assessment answers whether they will strengthen the group. Different questions. Different tools. Both required.

Operational Definitions

Value	What It Means Operationally in a MAG Context
Reliability	Shows up when committed, including when inconvenient. Communicates proactively when unable to fulfill. Does not treat commitments as optional.
Honesty within the group	Tells the truth about capabilities. Does not tell different versions to different members. Does not conceal information that affects group decisions.
Group interest over self-interest	Honors group decisions even when personally overruled. Does not use group resources for personal advantage. Small self-serving decisions — not dramatic betrayal — are what break groups.

SOE Motive Framework — Sustainability Assessment

Motive	Sustainability Under Pressure	Risk
Patriotism / Values alignment	High — internal conviction independent of external rewards	Low
Religious / Political ideology	Moderate — sustained if group stays aligned	Moderate
Material need / resource access	Low — disengages when needs met	Moderate-High
Love of adventure	Low — disengages when novelty wears off	Low-Moderate
Self-importance / status	Low — disengages when status is challenged	Moderate
External leverage / coercion	None — motive is not their own	Disqualifying

Chapter 6 & 7: Character References and Values Interview

Background references verify history. Character references surface how a person behaves under genuine pressure. The Values and Judgment domain reveals how they reason — not what they claim to believe.

The Three Character Reference Questions

1. How do they behave when things go wrong? Probe: 'Tell me about a time when something went significantly wrong for [candidate] and what you observed.'
2. How do they treat people who cannot benefit them? Probe: 'What kind of person is [candidate] when they're not trying to impress anyone?'
3. Have they ever broken a commitment, and what happened? Probe: 'Has there ever been a time when [candidate] was not able to follow through on something they committed to?'

Values and Judgment Assessment

You Are Assessing...	Red Flag Signal	Probe Response
Quality and honesty of reasoning	Clean, frictionless answer to every scenario — no acknowledged difficulty	'That was a clean answer — have you actually faced a situation like this? What happened?'
Relationship to group authority	Describes conditions under which they would override group decisions without process	'Walk me through how you'd handle the next step after being overruled.'
Response to genuine ethical difficulty	Abstract virtue claims with no specific incident evidence	'Give me an example of a time this actually happened in your life.'

The Too-Clean Answer A candidate whose every Values and Judgment response is perfectly clean — no difficulty, no ambiguity, fluent declaration of the right answer — is most likely performing. Follow up: 'That was a clean answer — have you actually faced a situation like this? What happened?' Genuine experience produces specificity. Performance produces generality.

PART V — DECISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Chapter 8: Assessment and Decision Reference

The investigation ends with a written document. Every claim sourced. Every confidence level stated. The recommendation is one of four categories. This record is what shows the process was principled if a decision is ever challenged.

Confidence Language — Correct and Prohibited

Level	Correct Phrasing	Evidence Basis
High	'Evidence strongly supports...' / 'It is likely that...'	Multiple independent sources corroborate. No significant contradiction.
Moderate	'Evidence suggests...' / 'It appears that...'	Partial corroboration or single strong source.
Low	'It is possible that...' / 'Limited evidence indicates...'	Single source, unverified, or inference only.
None	'No evidence was found to...'	Absence is itself documented — not a blank row.

PROHIBITED LANGUAGE 'Seems trustworthy' — 'appears to be a good fit' — 'probably fine' — 'seemed genuine' — 'I believe he is...' — 'I feel this candidate...' Any phrasing that expresses a conclusion without stating the evidence and confidence level will not survive scrutiny.

Four Recommendation Categories — Decision Card

ACCEPT	ACCEPT W/ CONDITIONS	EXTEND OBSERVATION	REJECT
Criteria Both tracks consistent. No material concerns. All EEIs satisfied.	**Criteria** Minor gaps manageable through probation with limited access.	**Criteria** Insufficient data on a specific concern. Decision premature.	**Criteria** Confirmed deception, disqualifying background, or unresolvable inconsistencies.
Must document Rationale stated. Onboarding conversation required.	**Must document** Conditions stated precisely and enforceably.	**Must document** State exactly what must be resolved. Define the timeline.	**Must document** Basis in Narrative Rationale. No specific findings to candidate.
Conditions None.	**Conditions** State exactly what access is limited and what must be resolved.	**Conditions** Defined pause with a specific endpoint — not a deferral.	**Conditions** Initiate post-rejection OPSEC immediately.

Probationary Controlled Testing Protocol

Test	Method	What It Reveals
Deliberate false statement	Disclose a plausible but false piece of group information. Monitor whether it surfaces outside the group.	Information security behavior before real information is at stake.
Commitment test	Assign a non-trivial responsibility. Observe proactive communication vs. silent failure.	Whether reliability under genuine inconvenience matches stated commitment.
Information behavior	Observe what the member seeks beyond what their current role requires.	Skills-seeking vs. resource-seeking vs. intelligence-seeking.

Post-Rejection OPSEC

1. Exposure inventory — Map every person they met, everything they were told, everything they observed.
2. Response assessment — Is this a candidate who moves on, or one whose investigation surfaced hostile intent?
3. Monitoring decision — For candidates rejected on significant security grounds: is counter-surveillance awareness warranted?

> **Separation Protocol** Do not explain specific findings to a rejected candidate. Explaining findings reveals your collection methodology. The clean separation that reveals nothing protects every future investigation.

Chapter 9: Calibration and Certification

The Lesson 9 calibration scenarios are on the online platform, not in this guide. Complete all four online before conducting a live investigation. Certification threshold: three of four correct with reasoning matching the ground truth analysis.

Why the Ground Truths Are Not Here This guide deliberately contains no knowledge check questions, no answers, and no calibration scenario ground truths. Those belong in the online platform where they can be gated correctly. Complete Lesson 9 online.

The Complete Training Program contains all four calibration scenarios with full ground truth analysis and gated physical page breaks.

Failure Modes — What Calibration Is Testing

Scenario	Failure Mode	What It Tests
A — Derek	Source capture	Whether you probed a sensitive gap or accepted a deflection to protect rapport
B — Sandra	Premature closure	Whether you ran disconfirmation checks after confirming data felt sufficient
C — Marcus	Prepared source bypass	Whether too-perfect consistency raised concern rather than reassurance
D — James	Attribution error	Whether you attributed a behavioral signal to its obvious explanation or a more alarming one

Appendix A: Investigation Master Checklist

Phase 1 — Pre-Collection

- ☐ EEIs written specifically for this candidate — not generic categories
- ☐ Stop rules defined before collection begins
- ☐ Investigation OPSEC assessed — who knows this investigation is active?
- ☐ Collection sequence confirmed: OSINT first, then references, then interview

Phase 2 — OSINT Collection (WS-1)

- ☐ All 14 public record categories checked or noted N/A
- ☐ All standard social media platforms reviewed — account creation dates noted
- ☐ All alternative and high-risk platforms reviewed — every candidate, no exceptions
- ☐ Threat indicator checklist completed (WS-1 Section 6)
- ☐ All findings documented with URL, date, and relevance note
- ☐ Clean results documented too — absence is a finding, not a blank row
- ☐ Public pages archived at archive.ph with timestamp
- ☐ OSINT findings summary complete with A-E / 1-5 reliability ratings
- ☐ No contact with candidate, sponsor, or references during OSINT phase

Phase 3 — References (WS-2 Section 1)

- ☐ Minimum 2 background references contacted using elicitation technique
- ☐ Minimum 1 character reference contacted — preferably uninstructed
- ☐ At least 1 uninstructed reference developed independently from OSINT
- ☐ Reference coordination indicators checked across all accounts
- ☐ Network architecture mapped — time, context, and depth distribution
- ☐ Behavioral observations recorded immediately after each conversation

Phase 4 — Interview (WS-2 Sections 2–4)

- ☐ OSINT and all references complete before interview is scheduled
- ☐ Interview environment set up correctly — seating, baseline buffer, note-taking
- ☐ All six standard domains covered
- ☐ Values and Judgment: minimum 5 of 8 scenario questions distributed
- ☐ Repeat questions used on every area of concern — different framing
- ☐ Sensitive probes in second and third thirds only
- ☐ Sources and OSINT findings not revealed during interview
- ☐ Behavioral observations recorded within 1 hour of interview completion
- ☐ Post-interview self-assessment completed before opening WS-3

Phase 5 — Assessment (WS-3)

- ☐ Both security track and character track integrated in one document
- ☐ BLUF stated in one sentence — one of the four categories, nothing else
- ☐ All claims have named sources
- ☐ Confidence language explicit on every finding — no prohibited language
- ☐ Gaps section identifies what could not be confirmed and why
- ☐ Narrative rationale reads as analyst's product — not advocate's brief

Phase 6 — Decision and Probation

- ☐ Onboarding conversation covers member agreement and expectations explicitly
- ☐ Probationary period defined with access limits, benchmarks, and decision timeline
- ☐ Three controlled tests defined before candidate begins probation
- ☐ Post-rejection OPSEC protocol initiated for rejected candidates

Appendix B: Doctrinal Sources

Topic	Primary Source
Human source screening framework	FM 2-22.3, Chapter 6
Deceit detection — full 12-indicator set	FM 2-22.3, Chapter 9
Source reliability rating (A-E / 1-5)	FM 2-22.3, Appendix B
OSINT collection planning and EEIs	OSINT Field Guide, Chapters 1–3
Recruitment security — initiative retention	Camp X SOE Manual STS 103, Lecture A.13
Agent handling and testing	Camp X SOE Manual STS 103, Lecture A.14
Motive framework	Camp X SOE Manual STS 103, Lecture A.12
OPSEC — critical information protection	AR 530-1
Counterintelligence indicators	CI for National Security (declassified)
Gang military infiltration	FBI NGIC Gang Threat Assessments (public)
Extremism and insider threat	DCSA Counterintelligence Best Practices

Appendix C: Glossary

Term	Definition
BLUF	Bottom Line Up Front — the recommendation stated in the first sentence of the assessment.
Cold-call reference	A reference the candidate did not list and did not know would be contacted. Highest value because uncoordinated.
EEI	Essential Element of Information — a specific question the investigation must answer.
Elicitation	Collection through indirect conversational means; the source does not know they are being used as a collection source.
Legend	A fabricated identity constructed in advance with corroborating elements placed where an investigator will find them.
OSINT	Open Source Intelligence — collection from publicly available sources.
Premature Closure	Investigator failure mode: collection stops when confirming data feels sufficient, before disconfirmation checks are run.
Prepared Source	A candidate who has anticipated the investigation and prepared their answers, references, and digital footprint accordingly.
Source Capture	Investigator failure mode: the investigator begins managing the candidate's feelings rather than collecting.
Stop Rule	A pre-defined condition that ends collection; prevents indefinite investigation without a decision.
Uninstructed reference	A reference the candidate did not suggest, who had no reason to expect the call.
Vetting Officer	The designated MAG member responsible for conducting structured investigations of prospective members.

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Appendix D: Candidate Profile Analysis Exercises

This appendix contains written analysis exercises corresponding to the candidate profiles introduced in each online lesson. Complete the online lesson before working these exercises. The online knowledge checks test recognition — these exercises test application. Write your answers before consulting any reference material. Answer keys are not included in this guide — the ground truth is in the online lesson knowledge checks.

These exercises are referenced in the online lessons. Cross-reference: the online knowledge check questions for each lesson correspond to the profile questions marked with an asterisk (*) below.

Lesson 0: Before You Begin

These exercises test your ability to identify red flags at the initial contact and referral stage — before any formal investigation begins.

Profile A — Raymond Holt, 51

Retired corrections officer. Referred by a founding member after meeting at a county emergency preparedness fair. Raymond reached out the same evening with a detailed email explaining his qualifications, his concerns about current events, and a list of skills he could contribute. He has already researched the group's general area of operations and suggests a first meeting within the week.

Orientation Red Flags

- Initiated contact immediately after a single public encounter
- Outreach is detailed, confident, and agenda-setting before any relationship exists
- Demonstrated advance research into the group's operations
- Pushes for rapid first meeting timeline

Written Exercise

1. Identify the specific SOE doctrine principle that Raymond's contact pattern triggers. Name the principle and explain why this pattern is a yellow flag even when the candidate's qualifications are strong.

2. What are three specific EEIs you would write for Raymond before beginning OSINT? Write them as specific questions, not categories.

Answer:

Profile B — Destiny Carr, 34

Freelance graphic designer, referred by a current member's spouse. Destiny was introduced socially at a cookout. The referring member describes her as 'exactly the kind of person we need.' She has been mentioned to two other members in casual conversation before any vetting decision was made.

Orientation Red Flags

- Candidate's identity is already circulating among members before vetting has begun
- Referral chain passes through a non-member (spouse)
- Social introduction has created informal membership impression
- Sponsor framing pressures the investigator toward a conclusion

Written Exercise

1. Explain the investigation OPSEC problem created by Destiny's social introduction before vetting began. What specifically is at risk, and what is the investigator's correct response?

2. The sponsor says Destiny is 'exactly the kind of person we need.' Write the follow-up question you would ask the sponsor to convert this endorsement into usable investigative data.

Answer:

Profile C — Thomas Wren, 44

Former military, now a high school history teacher. Self-referred through a publicly visible social media post. His initial message is measured, asks thoughtful questions about what the group is looking for, and explicitly states he understands vetting is required. He has not pressed for a timeline.

Orientation Observations

- Self-referral through public social media exposes the group's visibility
- Measured, appropriate initial contact — not disqualifying, but establishes a baseline
- No sponsor means no internal accountability anchor
- Military service claim requires DD-214 verification

Written Exercise

1. Thomas's initial contact is appropriate and measured. What is the one structural concern his self-referral creates for the group, regardless of his suitability as a candidate?

2. List the EEIs specific to Thomas's military service claim. What is the primary verification source and what does it confirm?

Answer:

Lesson 1: The Investigator Mindset and Collection Plan

These exercises test your ability to write specific EEIs and apply the SOE motive framework before any collection begins.

Profile A — Marcus Webb, 42

Referred by a current member who has known him two years through a local shooting range. Claims eight years as a military policeman, currently works as a general contractor. Stated motivation: 'I want a group with structure and discipline.'

EEI Planning Red Flags

- Military service claim requires DD-214 — verify before OSINT proceeds
- Sponsor knows candidate exclusively from range context — narrow and performance-oriented
- 'Structure and discipline' is a presentation-ready answer requiring motive sustainability assessment
- Two-year range relationship limits sponsor insight into financial stability and behavior under stress

Written Exercise

1. Write three specific EEIs for Marcus's military service claim. Each must be a specific question, name the primary verification source, and define what 'satisfied' looks like.

2. Using the SOE motive sustainability framework, assess Marcus's stated motivation. What follow-up question would you ask in the interview to test its depth?

Answer:

Profile B — Sandra Okonkwo, 38

Nurse practitioner. Self-referred via a preparedness forum post. Active LinkedIn, positive community presence. Stated motivation: 'I see what's coming and I don't want my family to be helpless.' She mentions having been part of two previous preparedness groups.

EEI Planning Red Flags

- Prior group memberships are a mandatory EEI — departure circumstances must be independently verified
- Self-referral through public post exposes the group
- Medical credentials require professional licensing board verification
- Ideological motivation requires sustainability assessment under the SOE framework

Written Exercise

1. Sandra mentions two prior groups. Write the EEIs for investigating her departure from each. What sources would you use, and what would a satisfactory result look like versus an unsatisfactory one?

2. Rate Sandra's stated motivation using the SOE sustainability framework and explain your rating. What factor would most likely cause this motivation to fail under pressure?

Answer:

Profile C — Derek Finch, 29

Recent college graduate, IT professional. Referred by a member's adult son from an online survivalist community. No prior group memberships. Motivation: 'I've always wanted to be part of something like this.'

EEI Planning Observations

- Referral through a non-member with unknown relationship reliability
- 'Always wanted to be part of something like this' is low-specificity — probe what 'this' means
- Online community origin makes digital footprint investigation especially important
- No prior groups means no departure circumstances, but also no track record

Written Exercise

1. Derek has no prior group memberships. How does this change your EEI planning? What sources will you rely on that you would normally supplement with prior-group investigation?

2. Derek's motivation is low-specificity. Write three interview questions you would use to probe what he actually expects from membership, and identify what answers would raise versus resolve concern.

Answer:

Lesson 2: Open Source Investigation

These exercises test your ability to correctly document, rate, and interpret OSINT findings across the three profile types.

Profile A — Victor Tran, 45

Claims 12 years as a licensed electrician and current business owner. LinkedIn shows a company page created 14 months ago with 3 connections. Voter registration shows four address changes in seven years. PACER returns two civil cases — one contract dispute as plaintiff, one unpaid invoice judgment against him as defendant.

OSINT Red Flags

- Business claim is recent — LinkedIn inconsistent with 12 years of professional history
- Four address changes in seven years — financial instability indicator
- Civil judgment as defendant for unpaid invoice — cash flow concern
- Facebook account created 2019 with sudden preparedness focus — note creation context

Written Exercise

1. Document Victor's unpaid invoice judgment using the OSINT traceability standard. Write the full documentation entry as it would appear in your investigation worksheet.

2. You find no professional license for Victor in the state licensing database despite his 12-year electrician claim. How do you document this absence, and what is your next step?

Answer:

Profile B — Carla Esteban, 52

Retired schoolteacher. Voter registration confirms 22 years at the same address. No PACER results. Professional license current and in good standing. Facebook from 2009 with organic growth. LinkedIn matches stated teaching history exactly. No alternative platform presence after full sweep.

OSINT Observations

- Clean OSINT is a finding — document each category with result, not just flags
- 22-year address stability and organic social history are positive corroborating signals
- Teaching license verification satisfies the professional claim EEI
- Absence of alternative platforms must be documented as checked, not assumed

Written Exercise

1. Carla's OSINT is entirely clean. Write the OSINT summary entry for her case. How do you document a clean result to meet the traceability standard?

2. During the alternative platform sweep, you find no presence on Gab, Parler, or MeWe. How is this documented in your worksheet and what A-E / 1-5 reliability rating applies to an absence finding?

Answer:

Profile C — Joel Mercer, 37

Claims six years Army infantry, honorable discharge. PACER returns a Chapter 7 bankruptcy discharge 18 months ago. State court: DUI conviction 3 years ago, pled to reckless driving. Instagram shows hunting and gym content. Gab account found with two 2021-2022 posts expressing support for political violence against named officials.

OSINT Red Flags

- Gab posts expressing support for political violence — legal liability finding, not political opinion
- Bankruptcy discharge 18 months ago — financial pressure may persist
- DUI plea to reckless driving — substance use pattern indicator
- Military service claim requires DD-214 — no LinkedIn, verification depends on official record

Written Exercise

1. Joel's Gab posts express support for political violence against named officials. Write this finding as it would appear in your investigation report. What section does it belong in, and what is the mandatory follow-up action?

2. Joel's DUI was pled down and probation is complete. How does this finding affect your recommendation, and what specific interview probe does it generate?

Answer:

Lesson 3: Reference Elicitation

These exercises test your ability to apply elicitation techniques and interpret reference coordination indicators.

Profile A — Brian Kowalski, 48

Machinist. Referred by a member who has known him 6 years through a local hunting club. The referring member has already spoken to others about Brian joining. Brian provided three references: his pastor, a coworker, and the referring member himself.

Reference Elicitation Red Flags

- Sponsor listed as reference — circular; their impression is the starting point, not a data point
- Referring member has already discussed Brian with others — coordination risk elevated
- All three references likely from same hunting club context — limited diversity
- No uninstructed reference developed from OSINT network

Written Exercise

1. Brian's sponsor is listed as one of his references. Write the conversation you would have with the sponsor reference, using open-ended framing and at least one elicitation technique from Lesson 3.

2. Your OSINT identified a former employer Brian did not mention. Write your opening statement for contacting this uninstructed reference without revealing that Brian didn't list them.

Answer:

Profile B — Alicia Drummond, 41

Veterinarian. Provided two references. OSINT surfaced a former business partner from a clinic she co-owned 2016-2020 — the partnership dissolved. The candidate did not mention this business. Neither provided reference overlaps with the 2016-2020 period.

Reference Elicitation Red Flags

- Undisclosed prior business partnership and dissolution
- Reference list appears to avoid the 2016-2020 period entirely
- Former business partner is an uninstructed reference with direct knowledge of a gap
- Deliberate false statement technique applicable to test the partner's account

Written Exercise

1. You are about to call Alicia's former business partner. Write your opening statement using open-ended professional framing. Then write the deliberate false statement you would use once rapport is established.

2. After the business partner call, you have information about a clinic dissolution Alicia never mentioned. How do you address this in the interview without revealing your source?

Answer:

Profile C — Garrett Hill, 55

Retired law enforcement (28 years). Provided four references — all former colleagues. Two independent references used the phrase 'salt of the earth' unprompted. All three references contacted gave similar deflections about a 2018 departmental investigation surfaced in OSINT.

Reference Elicitation Red Flags

- Verbatim phrase repetition across independent conversations — coordination indicator
- Uniform deflection on a specific verifiable event — coordinated talking points
- All references are former colleagues from the same institution — narrow context
- The departmental investigation requires direct address in the interview probing phase

Written Exercise

1. You have now heard 'salt of the earth' from two independent references. What is the investigative significance of this, and what does it change about how you weight these references going forward?

2. The 2018 departmental investigation is a documented public event. Write the interview probe you would use to address it without revealing which specific record surfaced it.

Answer:

Lesson 4: The Structured Interview and Assessment

These exercises test your ability to identify deceit indicators during interview and apply FM 2-22.3 doctrine correctly.

Profile A — Patrick Reilly, 50

Former firefighter. Talkative, expansive, strong eye contact in Phase 1. When asked about his bankruptcy in Phase 2, pauses four seconds, eye contact drops, gives one sentence, then pivots immediately to firefighting accomplishments.

Interview Red Flags

- Behavioral deviation from established baseline on bankruptcy question
- Pivot to accomplishments after sensitive topic — self-serving deflection
- Bankruptcy context not yet established — one-sentence answer is insufficient
- Employer civil dispute not yet addressed — schedule for Phase 3 probing

Written Exercise

1. Identify the FM 2-22.3 deceit indicators present in Patrick's response to the bankruptcy question. Name each indicator and describe exactly what produced it.

2. Write your Phase 3 probe for the bankruptcy topic. You will not reveal the PACER source. Write the question and the follow-up if Patrick gives another single-sentence answer.

Answer:

Profile B — Nadia Sobol, 33

IT security professional. Clean OSINT. In the interview, gives technically accurate employment account but cannot answer peripheral questions: what did her team talk about at lunch, what was her manager like as a person. She attributes this to being 'a private person.'

Interview Red Flags

- Inability to produce incidental, peripheral detail — FM 2-22.3 lack-of-extraneous-detail indicator
- Explanation ('private person') does not resolve the indicator
- Precision without texture is characteristic of prepared accounts
- Use repeat questions in Phase 3 with different framing — note verbatim repetition

Written Exercise

1. Name the FM 2-22.3 deceit indicator Nadia's interview performance illustrates. Explain what distinguishes genuine autobiographical memory from a prepared account in this context.

2. Write your Phase 3 repeat question for Nadia's employment period, framed differently from the Phase 2 question. What specifically would tell you the answer is constructed versus recalled?

Answer:

Profile C — Jerome Watts, 46

Landscape contractor. Rich, specific account of 2016. Empty account of 2011 (claimed operational year with no business registration). Same question rephrased 40 minutes later produced word-for-word identical empty account.

Interview Red Flags

- Period inconsistency — rich detail for verifiable period, empty for unregistered period
- Word-for-word repeat answer is exact wording repetition — FM 2-22.3 indicator
- Business registration gap not yet addressed directly
- Pattern of three indicators pointing at same period constitutes a finding, not a data point

Written Exercise

1. List all three FM 2-22.3 indicators present in Jerome's interview. Explain why their co-occurrence constitutes a pattern finding rather than three separate data points.

2. Write the Phase 3 probe you would use to address the 2011 gap without revealing the business registration OSINT. What answer from Jerome would partially resolve the concern versus deepen it?

Answer:

Lesson 5: What You Are Really Looking For

These exercises test your ability to distinguish security vetting findings from character assessment findings, and apply the SOE motive framework to real candidate profiles.

Profile A — Alan Prescott, 39

Security guard. Clean background. Cooperative and friendly in interview. Values and Judgment responses are fluent, perfectly aligned, and contain no acknowledged difficulty or ambiguity. No prior group memberships. Stated motivation: 'wanting to give back and contribute skills.'

Character Assessment Red Flags

- Too-clean, frictionless Values and Judgment responses — performance indicator
- Low-specificity motivation with no defined contribution
- No prior group memberships — all character data comes from self-report
- Agreed with every stated group value — social desirability bias

Written Exercise

1. Alan's security vetting is clean. What is missing from the character assessment track, and what specific follow-up would you use to test whether his Values and Judgment responses reflect genuine experience?

2. Rate Alan's stated motivation using the SOE framework. What specific interview question would reveal whether the motivation is sustainable under costly conditions?

Answer:

Profile B — Rosa Fuentes, 44

ER nurse. Clean security vetting. A character reference volunteered unprompted that Rosa 'can be difficult when she thinks she knows better than the team' with two specific incidents. Rosa's account of the same incidents positioned her as entirely correct both times.

Character Assessment Red Flags

- Self-serving pattern confirmed across reference and candidate self-report
- Uninstructed, specific negative observation is high-value character data
- Clean security vetting does not resolve a character finding
- MAG context makes authority conflict under pressure a material risk

Written Exercise

1. Rosa's security vetting is completely clean. Write the character assessment section of her report, correctly incorporating the reference observation and the self-serving pattern. Use the correct confidence language.

2. Which of the four recommendation categories applies to Rosa's case, and what conditions, if any, would you attach? Write the BLUF sentence for her assessment.

Answer:

Profile C — Dave Hollister, 51

Retired teacher. Clean background. During Values and Judgment, acknowledges difficulty honestly with specific concrete incidents, including one where he was wrong. Three independent character references with consistent reliability observations and no coordination indicators.

Character Assessment Observations

- Honest acknowledgment of difficulty with specific incidents — positive character signal
- Self-correcting account suggests reflective capacity, not instability
- Three independent references with consistent, specific observations
- This is what a positive character finding looks like — document with same rigor as a red flag

Written Exercise

1. Write the character assessment section of Dave's report. What does a positive character finding look like in assessment language? Apply the correct confidence level and evidence basis.

2. Dave's character data is strong. What, if anything, is still missing from his investigation file before a final recommendation can be made?

Answer:

Lesson 6: Character Reference Protocol

These exercises test your ability to elicit behavioral evidence from character references and interpret what is not said.

Profile A — Terrence Blake, 47

Former corrections officer. Three character references: pastor, brother-in-law, and former coworker. When asked about a time something went significantly wrong, the coworker responds: 'Nothing really goes wrong for Terrence — he just handles everything.' Pressed, they say: 'He's just that kind of guy.'

Character Reference Red Flags

- Response produces no specific incident — endorsement, not behavioral evidence
- Two of three references are relationship-based with high loyalty pressure
- Coworker context is structured and performance-visible — limited generalizability
- No reference has seen Terrence when honoring a commitment was genuinely costly

Written Exercise

1. The coworker reference produced only an endorsement. Write your follow-up probes — at least two — to attempt to surface a specific behavioral incident. At what point do you document the EEI as unsatisfied by this source?

2. Terrence's references are his pastor, brother-in-law, and one coworker. Identify what character reference source type is missing entirely, and describe how you would develop it.

Answer:

Profile B — Irene Cho, 36

Accountant. A nine-year neighbor reference volunteered unprompted that Irene dropped a four-month neighborhood emergency coordination commitment without communicating, citing work overwhelm when later asked.

Character Reference Red Flags

- Uninstructed, specific reliability failure from a long-term observer
- Four-month silence without communication is the exact MAG-relevant failure mode
- Candidate did not surface this episode — either not significant to her, or omitted
- Follow up in Values domain: ask about a time she dropped a commitment

Written Exercise

1. Document the neighbor's observation as it would appear in your investigation worksheet. Include source type, reliability rating, and the EEI it addresses.

2. Write the Values and Judgment interview question you would use to address this without revealing the neighbor's specific account.

Answer:

Profile C — Sam Delacroix, 58

General contractor, 30 years. Cannot provide character references outside his professional network. Explanation: 'I'm a pretty private person.' All references are business contacts from the past five years. No social media except a LinkedIn from two years ago. No community involvement found.

Character Reference Red Flags

- Cannot provide character references outside professional context — doctrine red flag
- No social network outside work for a 58-year-old is unusual
- References limited to 5 years — no one has seen him across a full arc
- 'Private person' explanation does not resolve the absence

Written Exercise

1. Per the character reference doctrine, what is the investigative significance of Sam's inability to provide references outside his professional network? Is this disqualifying?

2. Given Sam's limited reference network, what is your strategy for completing the character reference EEI? What alternative sources would you develop, and what question would you put directly to Sam?

Answer:

Lesson 7: Values and Judgment Interview

These exercises test your ability to interpret Values and Judgment responses and identify discrepancies between OSINT findings and interview performance.

Profile A — Chris Fontaine, 40

Paramedic. When asked what he would do if the group made a decision he believed was seriously wrong after he had been overruled, responded: 'I'd comply, but I'd make sure leadership knew I was on record disagreeing.' Provides a specific incident from EMS work when pressed.

Values and Judgment Observations

- Response acknowledges genuine difficulty — not a clean declaration
- Specific incident with named outcome indicates genuine experience
- Protocol-following with documented dissent is group-functional
- Edge case probe still warranted: at what point would he refuse?

Written Exercise

1. Chris's response to the overrule scenario is strong. Write the edge-case follow-up probe: what would push him past documented dissent to unilateral action? What answer would raise versus resolve concern?

2. Compare Chris's Values and Judgment performance to what a performance response would look like for the same question. What specifically distinguishes his answer as genuine experience rather than prepared declaration?

Answer:

Profile B — Neil Stouffer, 35

Software developer. Responds immediately and smoothly to the embarrassment question: 'Honestly, no — I live a pretty clean life.' Earlier described a prior group conflict where leadership was corrupt. His account positioned him as entirely blameless.

Values and Judgment Red Flags

- Immediate, unreflective denial to embarrassment question
- Self-serving pattern in prior group conflict account
- Smooth delivery suggests rehearsal, not honest self-assessment
- Follow-up probe required: 'Take a moment — most people can find something'

Written Exercise

1. Write the follow-up probe for Neil's embarrassment question response. What specific content from his answer tells you whether the follow-up produced genuine reflection or a better-prepared denial?

2. Neil describes a prior group where leadership was corrupt and he was entirely blameless. Write the follow-up question that tests whether this account is accurate self-perception or a self-serving construction.

Answer:

Profile C — Wendy Forsythe, 49

Registered nurse. OSINT found posts expressing that 'people like us' may need to 'take matters into our own hands.' In the interview, Values and Judgment responses on authority compliance are fluent and appropriate. She makes no reference to the views expressed online.

Values and Judgment Red Flags

- Discrepancy between OSINT content and interview performance
- Political violence-adjacent language in OSINT requires direct probe
- Fluent interview answers may reflect understanding of what investigator wants to hear
- Probe must address the substance without revealing the exact source

Written Exercise

1. Write the interview probe you would use to address Wendy's online posts without revealing exactly how you found them. What answer would contextualize and resolve the concern versus deepen it?

2. Wendy's interview performance on authority questions is entirely appropriate. Does this supersede the OSINT finding? Explain your reasoning using the doctrine from Lesson 7.

Answer:

Lesson 8: The Complete Decision and Ongoing Accountability

These exercises test your ability to synthesize both vetting tracks into a defensible assessment and apply the correct recommendation category.

Profile A — Tom Briggs, 53

Retired Army NCO. Clean security vetting. Strong character references with specific incidents, no coordination. Honest, textured Values and Judgment with concrete examples. Chapter 13 bankruptcy 6 years ago, now discharged. Current financials stable. Values-alignment motivation.

Decision Synthesis — Accept

- Both tracks corroborate — this is an Accept case
- Bankruptcy must be explicitly addressed in the assessment with context and current status
- Values-alignment is the highest-sustainability SOE motivation category
- Strong independent character data sets the evidentiary standard

Written Exercise

1. Write Tom's BLUF sentence and recommendation category. Then write the bankruptcy paragraph as it would appear in his Narrative Rationale — addressing the finding, its context, and why it does not change the recommendation.

2. Write the onboarding conversation agenda for Tom. What specific expectations, from both vetting tracks, would you establish in writing before he begins the probationary period?

Answer:

Profile B — Donna Marsh, 45

Healthcare administrator. Clean security. Generic references with no specific incidents despite probing. Too-clean, fluent Values and Judgment responses. Motivation: 'contribute organizational skills.' Probationary task completed on time but with no proactive communication when a complication arose.

Decision Synthesis — Accept with Conditions / Extend Observation

- Clean security + weak character indicators — most commonly mishandled case
- No specific incident data from references despite probing = EEI not satisfied
- Too-clean Values and Judgment is documented performance indicator
- Probationary communication failure under low-stakes conditions

Written Exercise

1. Write Donna's BLUF sentence and recommendation category. State explicitly what character data is missing and what the probationary period must establish before the recommendation can move to Accept.

2. Write the three controlled probationary tests you would use for Donna, selected specifically to test the character indicators that are weak in her case.

Answer:

Profile C — Ray Colton, 41

Electrician. 2019 arrest for disorderly conduct (charges dropped). 2021 DUI conviction (probation complete). References positive pre- and post-DUI. Ray addresses both incidents unprompted in the interview with accurate accounts. Character references from the post-DUI period show strong reliability with specific incidents.

Decision Synthesis — Security Concern + Strong Character

- Security finding is not automatically disqualifying — context matters
- Unprompted, accurate self-disclosure is a positive credibility signal
- Post-DUI character data is more relevant than pre-DUI data
- Assessment must address DUI explicitly with reasoning — no vague language

Written Exercise

1. Write the DUI paragraph as it would appear in Ray's Narrative Rationale. Address the finding, the character evidence from afterward, and your reasoning for the recommendation. Apply correct confidence language.

2. Write Ray's BLUF sentence and recommendation category. If you recommend Accept with Conditions, state the conditions precisely and enforceably. If you recommend Accept, state what the onboarding conversation must address.

Answer:

_____

_____

_____