

Human Resource Exploitation Training Manual - 1983

Prohibition Against Using Force

The use of force, mental torture, threats, insults, or exposure to unpleasant and inhumane treatment of any kind as an aid to interrogation is prohibited by law, both international and domestic; it is neither authorized nor condoned. The interrogator must never take advantage of the source's weaknesses to the extent that the interrogation involves threats, insults, torture or exposure to unpleasant or inhumane treatment of any kind. Experience indicates that the use of force is not necessary to gain cooperation of sources. Use of force is a poor technique, yields unreliable results, may damage subsequent collection efforts, and can induce the source to say what he thinks the interrogator wants to hear. Additionally, the use of force will probably result in adverse publicity and/or legal action against the interrogator (et. al) when the source is released. However, the use of force is not to be confused with psychological ploys, verbal trickery, or other nonviolent and non-coercive ruses employed by the interrogator in the successful interrogation of reticent or uncooperative sources.

Introduction

Opening Remarks

A. There is nothing mysterious about "questioning". It is no more than obtaining needed information from subjects. These may be prisoners of war, defectors, refugees, illegal immigrants, agents or suspected intelligence agents attempting to operate in your country.

B. The art of "questioning" has become controversial in many parts of the world. The is because in many countries, the term "questioning" has been identified with the use of torture to obtain information.

Every manual I have read on "questioning" states that information obtained from a suspect under torture is not reliable, that the subject will say whatever he thinks you want to hear just to avoid further punishment.

During the Battle of Algiers, the French army used torture to neutralize a terrorist group within a matter of months. Unfortunately, along with the hundreds of terrorists that were arrested and tortured, so were hundreds of innocent civilians. Society simply will not condone this.

C. The routine use of torture lowers the moral caliber of the organization that uses it and corrupts those that rely on it as the quick and easy way out. We strongly disagree with this approach and instead emphasize the use of phsychological techniques designed to persuade the subject to want to furnish us with the information we desire.

D. Successful "questioning" is based upon a knowledge of the subject matter and upon the use of psychological techniques which are not difficult to understand. We will be discussing two types of techniques, coercive and non-coercive. While we do not stress deplore the use of coercive techniques, we do want to make you aware of them and the proper way to use so that you may avoid them.

E. Psychologists have conducted considerable research in many areas that are closely related to coercive "questioning". During this course we will discuss the following topics as they relate to "questioning":

1. Reactions to pain and fear.
2. The effects of debility and isolation
3. Hypnosis and narcosis.

Coercive Techniques

The Theory of Coercion

A. The purpose of all coercive techniques is to induce psychological regression in the subject by bringing a superior outside force to bear on his will to resist. Regression is basically a loss of autonomy, a reversion to an earlier behavior level. As the subject regresses, his learned personality traits fall away in reverse chronological order. He begins to lose the capacity to carry out the highest creative activities, to deal with complex situations, to cope with stressful interpersonal relationships, or to cope with repeated frustrations. The use of most coercive techniques is improper and violates laws.

B. There are three major principles involved in the successful application of coercive techniques:

Debility (Physical Weakness)

For centuries "questioners" have employed various methods of inducing physical weaknesses: prolonged constraint; prolonged exertion; extremes of heat, cold, or moisture; and deprivation of sleep. The assumption is that lowering the subject's physiological resistance will lower his psychological capacity for resistance; however, there has been no scientific investigation of this assumption.

Many psychologists consider the threat of inducing debility to be more effective than debility itself. Prolonged constraint or exertion, sustained deprivation of food or sleep, etc. often become patterns to which a subject adjusts by becoming apathetic and withdrawing into himself, in search of escape from the discomfort and tension. In this case debility would be counter-productive.

The questioner should be careful. Another coercive technique is to manipulate the subject's environment to disrupt patterns, not to create them, such as arranging meals and sleep should be granted irregularly, in more than abundance or less than adequacy, on no discernable time pattern. This will be done to disorient the subject and by destroying his capacity to resist.

Dependency

He is helplessly dependent upon the "questioner" for the satisfaction of all basic needs.

Dread (Intense Fear and Anxiety)

Sustained long enough, a strong fear of anything vague or unknown induces regression. On the other hand, materialization of the fear is likely to come as a relief. The subject finds that he can hold out and his resistance is strengthened.

A word of caution: If the debility-dependency-dread state is unduly prolonged, the subject may sink into a defensive apathy from which it is hard to arouse him. It is advisable to have a psychologist available whenever regression is induced. This illustrates why this coercive techniques may produce torture.

Objections to Coercion

A. There is a profound moral objection to applying duress beyond the point of irreversible psychological damage such as occurs during brainwashing. Brainwashing involves the conditioning of a subject's "stimulus-response bond" through the use of these same techniques, but the objective of brainwashing is directed primarily towards the subject's acceptance and adoption of beliefs, behavior, or doctrine alien to his native cultural environment for propaganda rather than intelligence collection purposes. Aside from this extreme, we will not judge the validity of other ethical arguments. This technique is illegal and may not be used.

B. Moreover Some psychologists feel that the subject's ability to recall and communicate information accurately is as impaired as his will to resist. This objection has some validity but the use of coercive techniques will rarely confuse a resistant subject so completely that he does not know whether his own confession is true or false. He does need mastery of all his mental and physical powers to know whether he is a spy or not.

Once a confession is obtained, the classic cautions apply. The pressures are lifted enough so that the subject can provide information as accurately as possible. In fact, the relief granted the subject at this time fits neatly into the "questioning" plan. He is told that the changed treatment is a reward for truthfulness and evidence that friendly handling will continue as long as he cooperates.

Justification for Coercive Techniques

These techniques should be reserved for those subjects who have been trained or who have developed the ability to resist non-coercive techniques.

Coercive Techniques

A. Arrest

The manner and timing of arrest should be planned to achieve surprise and the maximum amount of mental discomfort. He should therefore be arrested at a moment when he least expects it and his mental and physical resistance is at its lowest, ideally in the early hours of the morning. When arrested at this time, most subjects experience intense feelings of shock, insecurity, and psychological stress and for the most part have great difficulty adjusting to the situation. It is also important that the arresting party behave in such a manner as to impress the subject with their efficiency.

B. Detention

A person's sense of identity depends upon a continuity in his surroundings, habits, appearance, actions, relations with others, etc. Detention permits the "questioner" to cut through these links and throw the subject back upon his own unaided internal resources. Detention should be planned to enhance the subject's feelings of being cut off from anything known and reassuring.

Little is gained if confinement merely replaces one routine with another. The subject should not be provided with any routine to which he can adapt. Neither should detention become monotonous to the point where the subject becomes apathetic. Apathy is a very effective defense against "questioning". Constantly disrupting patterns will cause him to become disoriented and to experience feelings of fear and helplessness.

It is important to determine if the subject has been detained previously, how often, how long, under what circumstances, and whether he was subjected to "questioning". Familiarity with detention or even with isolation reduces the effect.

C. Deprivation of Sensory Stimuli

Solitary confinement acts on most persons as a powerful stress. A person cut off from external sensory stimuli turns his awareness inward and projects his unconscious outward. The symptoms most commonly produced by solitary confinement are superstition, intense love of any other living thing, perceiving inanimate objects as alive, hallucinations, and delusions. Deliberately causing these symptoms is a serious impropriety and to use prolonged solitary confinement for the purpose of extracting information in questioning violates policy.

Although conditions identical to those of solitary confinement for the purpose of "questioning" have not been duplicated for scientific experimentation, a number of experiments have been conducted with subjects who volunteered to be placed in "sensory deprivation tanks". They were suspended in water and wore black-out masks, which enclosed the entire head and only allowed breathing. They heard only their own breathing and some faint sounds of water from the piping.

Summarize the Results of These Experiments:

1. Extreme Deprivation of sensory stimuli induces unbearable stress and anxiety and is a form of torture. Its use constitutes a serious impropriety and violates policy. The more complete the deprivation, the more rapidly and deeply the subject is affected.
2. The stress and anxiety become unbearable for most subjects. They have a growing need for physical and social stimuli. How much they are able to stand depends upon the psychological characteristics of the individual. Now let me relate this to the "questioning" situation. As the "questioner" becomes linked in the subject's mind with human contact and meaningful activity, the anxiety lessens. The "questioner" can take advantage of this relationship by assuming a benevolent role.
3. Some subjects progressively lose touch with reality, focus inwardly, and produce delusions, hallucinations and other pathological effects. In general, the more well-adjusted a subject is, the more he is affected by deprivation. Neurotic and psychotic subjects are comparatively unaffected or show decreases in anxiety.

D. Threats and Fear

The threat of coercion usually weakens or destroys resistance more effectively than coercion itself. For example, the threat to inflict pain can trigger fears more damaging than the immediate sensation of pain. In fact, most people underestimate their capacity to withstand pain. In general, direct physical brutality creates only resentment, hostility, and further defiance.

The effectiveness of a threat depends on the personality of the subject, whether he believes the "questioner" can and will carry out the threat, and on what he believes to be the reason for the threat. A threat should be delivered coldly, not shouted in anger, or made in response to the

subject's own expressions of hostility. Expressions of anger by the "questioner" are often interpreted by the subject as a fear of failure, which strengthens his resolve to resist.

A threat should grant the subject time for compliance and is most effective when joined with a suggested rationalization for compliance. It is not enough that a subject be placed under the tension of fear; he must also discern an acceptable escape route.

The threat of death has been found to be worse than useless. The principal reason is that it often induces sheer hopelessness; the subject feels that he is as likely to be condemned after compliance as before. Some subjects recognize that the threat is a bluff and that silencing them forever would defeat the "questioner's" purpose.

If a subject refuses to comply once a threat has been made, it must be carried out. If it is not carried out, then subsequent threats will also prove ineffective. The principal drawback to using threats of physical coercion or torture is that the subject may call the bluff. If he does, and since such threats cannot be carried out, the use of empty threats could result in subject's gaining rather than losing confidence.

E. Pain

Everyone is aware that people react very differently to pain but the reason is not because of a difference in the intensity of the sensation itself. All people have approximately the same threshold at which they begin to feel pain and their estimates of severity are roughly the same. The wide range of individual reactions is based primarily on early conditioning to pain.

The torture situation is an external conflict, a contest between the subject and his tormentor. The pain which is being inflicted upon him from outside himself may actually intensify his will to resist. On the other hand, pain which he feels he is inflicting upon himself is more likely to sap his resistance.

For example, if he is required to maintain rigid positions such as standing at attention or sitting on a stool for long periods of time. The immediate source of pain discomfort is not the "questioner" but the subject himself. His conflict is then an internal struggle. As long as he maintains this position, he is attributing to the "questioner" the ability to do something worse. But there is never a showdown where the "questioner" demonstrates this ability. After a period of time, the subject is likely to may exhaust his internal emotional strength. This technique may only be used for periods of time that are not long enough to induce pain or physical damage.

Intense pain is quite likely to produce false confessions, fabricated to avoid additional punishment. This results in a time consuming delay while investigation is conducted and the admissions are proven untrue. During this respite, the subject can pull himself together and may even use the time to devise a more complex confession that takes still longer to disprove.

Some subject actually enjoy pain and withhold information they might otherwise have divulged in order to be punished.

If pain is not used until late in the "questioning" process and after all other tactics have failed, the subject is likely to conclude that the "questioner" is becoming desperate. He will feel that if he can hold out just a little longer, he will win the struggle and his freedom. Once a subject has successfully withstood pain, he is extremely difficult to "question" using more subdued methods.

F. Hypnosis and Heightened Suggestibility

The reliability of answers obtained from a subject actually under the influence of hypnotism is highly doubtful. His answers are often based upon the suggestions of the "questioner" and are distorted or fabricated.

However, the subject's strong desire to escape the stress of the situation can create a state of mind which is called Heightened Suggestibility. The "questioner" can take advantage of this state of mind by creating a "hypnotic situation", as distinguished from hypnosis itself. This hypnotic situation can be created by the "magic room" technique.

For example, the subject is given an hypnotic suggestion that his hand is growing warm. However, his hand actually does become warm with the aid of a concealed diathermy machine. He may be given the suggestion that a cigarette will taste bitter and he could be given a cigarette prepared to have a slight but noticeably bitter taste.

A psychologically immature subject, or one who has been regressed, could adopt a suggestion that he has been hypnotised, which has rendered him incapable of resistance. This relieves him of the feeling of responsibility for his actions and allows him to reveal information.

H. Narcosis

There is no drug which can force every subject to divulge all the information he has, but just as it is possible to create a mistaken belief that a subject has been hypnotized using the "magic room" technique, it is possible to create a mistaken belief that a subject has been drugged using the "placebo" technique.

Studies indicate that as high as 30 to 50 percent of individuals are placebo reactors. In this technique the subject is given a placebo (a harmless sugar pill) and later is told he was given a truth serum, which will make him want to talk and which will also prevent his lying. His desire to find an excuse for compliance, which is his only avenue of escape from his depressing situation, may make him want to believe that he has been drugged and that no one could blame him for telling his story now. This provides him with a rationalization that he needs for cooperating.

The function of both the "placebo" technique and the "magic room" technique is to cause capitulation by the subject, to cause him to shift from resistance to cooperation. Once this shift has been accomplished, these techniques are no longer necessary and should not be used persistently to facilitate the "questioning" that follows capitulation.

Regression

As I said at the beginning of our discussion of coercive techniques, the purpose of all coercive techniques is to induce regression. How successful these techniques are in inducing regression depends upon an accurate psychological assessment of the subject and a proper matching of method to source. There are a few non-coercive techniques which can also be used to induce regression, but to a lesser degree than can be obtained with coercive techniques. The effectiveness of these techniques depends upon the "questioner's" control of the environment. For example: it is illegal and against policy to use them to produce regression. Following is a list of these non-coercive techniques which require great care because of their susceptibility to abuse:

- A. Persistent manipulation of time
- B. Retarding and advancing clocks
- C. Serving meals at odd times
- D. Disrupting sleep schedules
- E. Disorientation regarding day and night
- F. Unpatterned "questioning" sessions
- G. Nonsensical questioning
- H. Ignoring half-hearted attempts to cooperate
- I. Rewarding non-cooperation

In general, thwarting any attempt by the subject to relate to his new environment will reinforce the effects of regression and drive him deeper and deeper into himself, until he is no longer able to control his responses in an adult fashion.

Whether regression occurs spontaneously under detention or is inadvertently induced by the "questioner", it should not be allowed to continue beyond the point necessary to obtain compliance. calls for remedial treatment as soon as it is noticed. In some cases A psychiatrist should be present if severe techniques are to be employed, to insure full reversal later. As soon as possible, the "questioner" should provide the subject with the rationalization that he needs for giving in and cooperating. This rationalization is likely to be elementary, an adult version of a childhood excuse such as: called.

1. "They made you do it."
2. "All the other boys are doing it."
3. "You're really a good boy at heart."