

The FTER Method

Practical Application

- Be prepared by proper planning.
- Develop rapport via proper introduction and focused inquiry. Maintain the initiative – ask questions as opposed to answering them.
- Establish the subject's base-line of cooperative communication and practice kinesic techniques.
- Encourage the witness to revisit their state of mind at the time of the event. Facilitate recall regarding any external factors (e.g., weather/lighting), Internal factors (e.g., emotional factors - feelings of fear), and cognitive factors (e.g., relevant thoughts) that were present at the time of the interview.
- Identify biases and prejudices that may influence interpretation of observations and experience.
- Assist the witness to remain in a state of focused concentration to avoid disruption that may impair the memory recovery process.
- Encourage the witnesses' participation, using open-ended questions followed up by detailed time-line oriented reconstruction of events questions. Develop the time-line with facts.
- Utilize feedback as a correction tool to ensure that the information being collected is accurate and the intent is correct.
- The series of events witnessed will be stored differently for each participant. Make every effort to tailor the interview to each witness. Be flexible and alter the approach to meet the needs of each witness rather than use a rigid, uniform style of questioning, forcing witnesses to adjust their mental representations to the interviewer's questioning.