

# DATA COLLECTION INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES

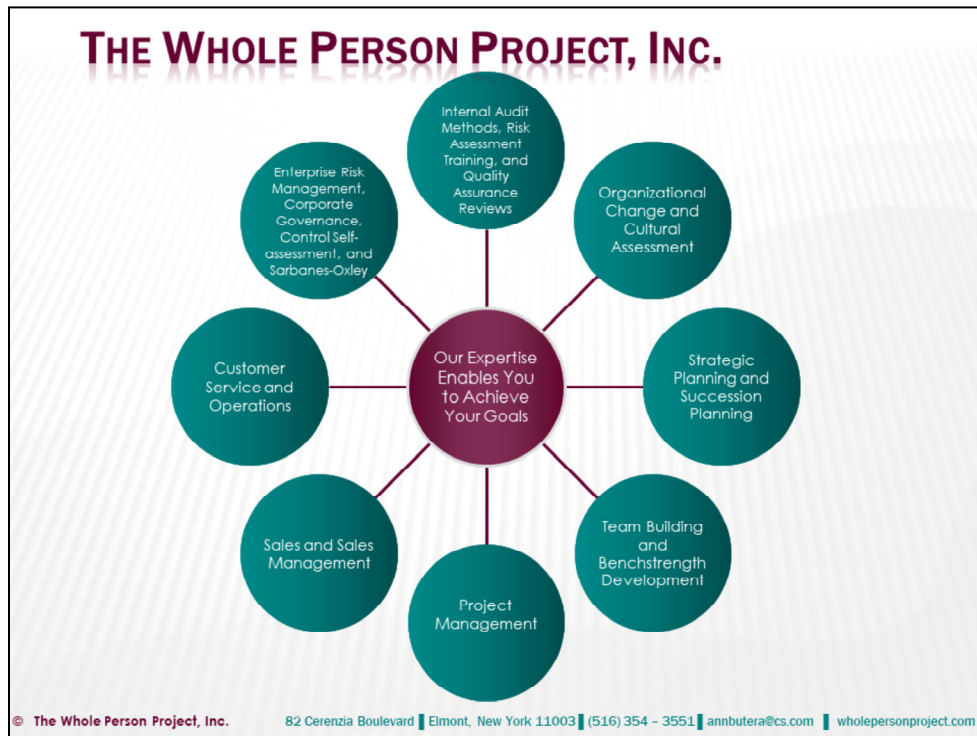
**TCTC 2021**



**Presenter: Ann M. Butera, CRP President**

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We're an organizational development consulting and training firm --- which is quite mouthful.

Essentially, we profile to figure out why one team is performing better than another. We figure out whether it's the skill, the process or some other cause and then we come up with tools and training programs to help others do what's needed to optimize their performance.

Essentially, we're helping individuals be better managers, professionals, and auditors. Our training addresses technical, inter-personal, and leadership skills.

## SOME THINGS WE WILL TALK ABOUT.....

- TWO MENTAL MODELS FOR PLANNING INTERVIEWS
- HOW TO GET INTERVIEWEES TALKING
- A THREE-STEP APPROACH TO INTERVIEWING
- HOW TO OPTIMIZE NOTE-TAKING AND TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS
- WAYS TO OVERCOME TYPICAL INTERVIEWING BARRIERS

**What would you like to cover during this session?**

## **POLLING QUESTION: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TALK ABOUT?**

- **PLANNING INTERVIEWS**
- **HOW TO GET INTERVIEWEES TALKING**
- **A THREE-STEP APPROACH TO INTERVIEWING**
- **HOW TO OPTIMIZE NOTE-TAKING AND TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS**
- **WAYS TO OVERCOME TYPICAL INTERVIEWING BARRIERS**

## INTERVIEWING . . .

...communication in which an individual obtains information from another person(s).



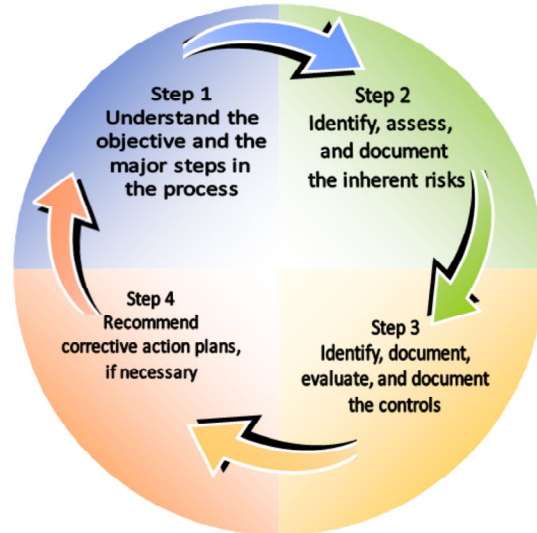
## THE PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWING

- Obtain background information (facts, opinions, perspectives) from the interviewee concerning the department's operation, risks, controls, and procedures.
- Provide you with an opportunity to obtain the information needed to conduct and complete audits.
- Provide an opportunity for the interviewee to openly discuss emerging trends, issues, and concerns.
- Obtain cooperation from all individuals involved in the audit to verify the free flow of pertinent information.
- Clarify information received from the interviewee.
- Acquire an understanding of the interviewee's control consciousness.

**POLLING QUESTION: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF INTERVIEWING?**

- Obtain background information (facts, opinions, perspectives) from the interviewee concerning the department's operation, risks, controls, and procedures.
- Provide you with an opportunity to obtain the information needed to conduct and complete audits.
- Provide an opportunity for the interviewee to openly discuss emerging trends, issues, and concerns.
- All of the above
- None of the above

## THE CRITICAL LINKAGE™: A FRAMEWORK FOR DATA COLLECTION INTERVIEWS





**POLLING QUESTION: ON WHAT MODEL IS THE CRITICAL LINKAGE™ BASED?**

- The Internal Control Maturity Model
- The COSO Framework of Internal Control
- The COSO ERM Model
- All of the above
- None of the above

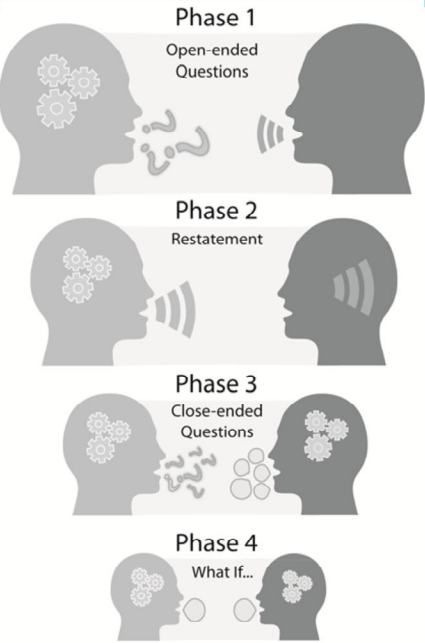
## SIPOC

An acronym that stands for:

- Suppliers
- Inputs
- Process
- Outputs
- Customers



# THE FUNNEL APPROACH



## THE THREE-STEP INTERVIEWING PROCESS

**Step 1: Planning for The Interview  
Doing Your Homework First**



**Step 2: Setting The Interview Climate  
and Posing The Questions**



**Step 3: Closing The Interview and  
Verifying Mutual Understanding**



**STEP 1:**  
**PLANNING FOR THE INTERVIEW:**  
**DO YOUR HOMEWORK FIRST**

- Determine your objectives
- Understand your interviewee's organization, organizational role, and communication style by reviewing existing material
- Formulate the areas you wish to cover
- Reality check your questions to make sure they will accomplish your interview objective
- Create an agenda

## SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES FOR STEP 2 - CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW

- Break the ice and establish rapport
- Create a framework for the interview by explaining the purpose of the interview as it relates to the audit, using terms that the interviewee understands
- Verify that the interviewee understands the interview's purpose
- Use the appropriate combination of interviewing tools (e.g., The Funnel Approach and probes)
- Listen to what the interviewee has to say
- Take notes to record key information
- Stay on schedule – watch the time!



## HANDLING NOTE-TAKING

When taking notes, choose brief and concise words.

Listen to the interviewee's responses before you make notes. If you are writing as the interviewee is speaking you are NOT listening.

Write just the facts.

Do **not** try to write every word that is spoken.

If more than one auditor is involved in an interview, one should listen and the other should take notes. This enables one auditor to maintain the conversational flow while the other concentrates on recording the interviewee's responses.



## HANDLING TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

Send interviewees an agenda in advance so that they can prepare for your call. Additionally, the agenda will act as a framework for the conversation.

At the start of the conversation, state your objectives. Verify that the interviewee's understanding of the conversation is the same or similar to yours.

Speak slowly, clearly, and confidently.

Pause more frequently than you would in face-to-face communications to summarize the discussion and to verify that the interviewee agrees with your understanding of the discussion.





## SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES FOR STEP 3: CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

- Use restatement to confirm your understanding of the interviewee's responses and key points
- Ask interviewees to restate or summarize their responses
- Provide feedback to the interviewee concerning how the interview went
- Review the open items and reach agreement on the steps needed to resolve them
- Wrap up the interview by recapping your understanding of what's been communicated

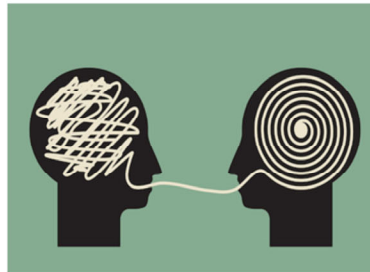


**POLLING QUESTION: THE THREE STEPS IN THE INTERVIEW PROCESS ARE PLANNING THE INTERVIEW, CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW, CLOSING THE INTERVIEW**

- True
- False

## OVERCOMING INTERVIEW BARRIERS

- ❑ Do the math when estimating time requirements.
- ❑ Once the interviewee answers your question, pause for 5-10 seconds to think about the response and ask follow-up questions.
- ❑ Walk the talk and model the behavior you want the interviewee to demonstrate.
- ❑ Provide context for your questions so the interviewee understands the rationale for your questions.
- ❑ Identify and expand on commonalities that you share with the interviewee to help the interviewee perceive you as a three-dimensional, whole person and not just the auditor.



*“What the mind can conceive,  
the body can achieve.”*

What habits do you want  
to start, stop or continue  
to make you a more  
effective interviewer?



## Questions?

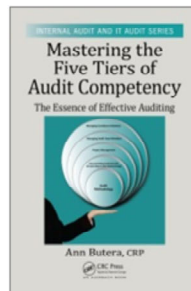
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- Over **30 years of experience speaking at internal audit conferences and consulting** with audit departments of all sizes to provide auditors with the **tools and techniques needed to improve** risk management practices within their organizations.
- Former **Audit Committee Chair**.
- Columnist and webinar leader for **Protiviti's KnowledgeLeader**.
- **MBA in Organizational Development** from Adelphi University. Summa Cum Laude graduate of Long Island University/C.W. Post College.



*Ask me about my new book!*  
*"Mastering the Five Tiers of Audit Competency:  
The Essence of Effective Auditing"*