

The PICA Investigative Reporter

The Official Publication of Professional Investigators of California



Henry DeVries to Speak at November Annual Conference

Henry DeVries, best-selling author, adjunct professor of Web marketing at the University of California San Diego and president of Henry DeVries Communications, Inc., a Web marketing for non-profits firm, will be teaching a seminar at the annual conference in November. Mr. DeVries is past president of San Diego's High-Tech Marketing Alliance, a trade association he co-founded in 1985. He has a master's degree in business from SDSU and a BA degree in communications from UCSD.

“Winning Through Clientology for Private Investigators: How To Use The Science of Clients”

The seminar provides detailed instructions on how the most successful small business owners and professionals handle four conversations that increase revenues:

1. How to attract more potential clients to contact you (how to get more at bats).
 2. How to get to yes with more clients (how to raise your batting average).
 3. How to talk about money in non-manipulative yet persuasive ways (how to make more money per client).
- How to up sell, cross sell and help sell existing and past clients (how to increase the lifetime value of clients).

Overall, seminar attendees walk away with more knowledge of how to bring in more business, grow the business with current clients and smooth over the rough spots.


- 2007 ANNUAL PICA CONFERENCE -

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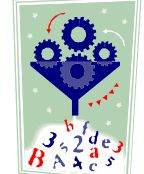
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INTERVIEWING SOURCE DOCUMENTS

Investigators worth their salt would never consider conducting an interview where they only asked one question. They'll do the equivalent, however, when they pull a public record document, jot down that important piece of information and then shove the piece of paper into a file folder. The most successful investigators gently squeeze as much information as they can out of documents — just as they do with the people they interview.

The trick is to interview the document. Here are 25 questions you can ask:

Who's your daddy? People create forms for a purpose. When you know who created it and why, its information will take on more meaning.

When were you born? The date of issue reflects the needs at that time. Someone may have updated the information when policies or requirements changed.

What language do you speak? Bureaucrats love acronyms, nicknames and even secret codes. A perfect example is the U.S. military's use of the SPN (Separation Program Numbers) codes many veterans never noticed on their discharge papers. They contain information that could be damaging to service personnel who may have been suspected of being homosexuals or mentally unstable, among other situations (to translate yours, go to <http://usmilitary.about.com/od/theorderlyroom/l/blcode1.htm>). If you don't know what something means, ask someone.

Where do you live? You might need to make another visit.

Who else is in your family? Wherever there's a grant deed, it's

likely there's a trust deed nearby. Find out what other documents might be associated with this one.

Are you married? Some documents have partners from the very beginning. Make certain you're requesting both.

Why are you here? Figure out what the creators of the document wanted it to accomplish. A divorce decree could not exist if there wasn't a marriage certificate on file somewhere.

What is your job anyway? How are people using the information contained in the document today?

What information do you have? Be sure to ask about every entry in every block, box or line.

Who told you this stuff? The information came from someone. Determine who might have provided it and make sure that person had the information right.

With whom are you allowed to talk? Find out if it's public record and if it will hold up in court.

Did anyone verify your information? People can write whatever they want on a form. Find out if it's likely that the information is correct.

How so I know you're telling me the truth? Yes, documents can also lie to you — or maybe they're misinformed. Don't fall into the "because I saw it in writing, it must be true" trap.

What other secrets are you keeping? Read every word on a document. Read the fine print. If you don't understand something on the document, ask someone who knows.

Who else have you been talking with? Check to see if there's a log of who's seen the file.

If you don't know the information I'm looking for, who might? Even a document that's seemingly void of valuable information may have indicators embedded within it that give clues to people or other files that might have the answers.

Are you legal? Make sure you don't have a fake or altered document. If someone else provides you with a public record document, check it against the one on file with the government agency that issued it.

How did you get here? Find out the normal flow of that particular type of document. For example, in Los Angeles County, death certificates spend a few days at the Los Angeles County Health Department before they go into "no man's land" and eventually find a permanent home at the office of the County Recorder.

Are you retired? Some documents have become obsolete. Find out if there's an updated version or if the document is no longer valid for one purpose or another.

What's your life expectancy? Check the records retention policy. Grab a copy of it while you can — before it walks "The Green Mile" to the shredder.

With whom have you been intimate? Look on the document, in the files or on some other register to find out who may have processed it or handled it.

Are you really a blonde? Make certain that nobody has altered the document.

(...continued on page 5)

Educational Seminars Offered at the November Conference

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Analytic Interviewing

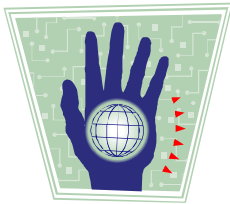
Improve your interviewing and investigative techniques



- Better establish and maintain rapport with others.
- Better understand and read another person's non-verbal communication.
- Identify and recognize signs of deception.
- Obtain an accurate recall of events from witnesses and victims.
- Learn how to better formulate questions and when to ask them.

Forensic DNA Identification

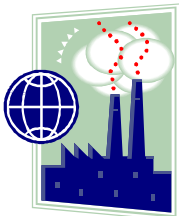
Applications for forensic DNA identification



- Testing collected evidence for analysis or retesting for accuracy.
- Auto or motorcycle accident or product tampering, investigations.
- Identification of human remains for insurance fraud or tragic events.
- Paternity and drug confirmation for criminal and consumer matters.
- The importance of the chain-of-custody for all collected samples.

Environmental Investigations

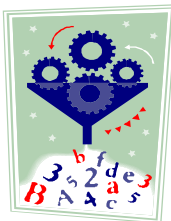
Conducting a comprehensive environmental source investigation



- Locate and investigate additional potentially responsible parties.
- Determine the chronology of ownership and or corporate succession.
- Uncover any Government contract information related to the site.
- Obtain and examine company business records, public or in private archives.
- Obtain information from interviews with employees and former employees.

New Client Marketing

The most cost-effective, time-efficient way to attract clients



- How to create more business with qualified prospects.
- How to grow your business with your current client base.
- How to generate more revenue from current and past clients.
- How to earn a better return on your investment of time and money.
- How to produce leads and convert them into clients.

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Presented by Mike Dores, Licensed PI and owner of Merlin Information Services

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INTERVIEWING SOURCE DOCUMENTS

(...continued from page 2)

Do you have any twin brothers or sisters? There may be copies of that same document in other offices or other agencies. For example, death certificates have twins in the state capital. Many people re-file discharge papers or UCC filings at the county recorder to make it easier to obtain certified copies in the future.

Would you be willing to testify in court? If there's even a chance you'll need it in an "under oath" situation, make sure you buy a certified copy.

You're not planning on leaving town, are you? Put your copies in a safe place — a fire safe is best. It never hurts to scan copies and store them on CDs or DVDs or on another computer. Be sure you don't store them in the same building as your original copy.

The more questions you ask of a document, the more information you'll have today. In addition, when you encounter that kind of document in the future, you'll be miles ahead. It's a good idea to investigate yourself and gather copies of all of the public records documents that you have generated in your lifetime. Because you know the answers to many of the questions one might ask of the document, the entries will make more sense.



Don Ray was the speaker at PICA's Orange County District's May 16th meeting.

Don Ray is the author of "Diggin' Up Gold on the Old Paper Trail; A Workbook for Investigatin' Folks."

You can reach him at donray@donray.com.

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Bust Stress Before It Busts You

Joanie Gillispie, Ph.D.



Stress is an inevitable part of life. But it's how you deal with stress that makes a difference...between a life well-lived and a life that just gets by or topples over the edge one way or another. As private investigators, you experience *more* than your share of stress. Why? Because not only do most of you come from careers in law enforcement (where many of your trauma issues were not treated adequately enough) but in your work now you deal with people who suck you into *their stressful lives*, thus adding to your own.

As we get older, stress, especially the chronic kind that we usually ignore, takes more of a toll on our overall health. Here are some tips to help you maintain your well-being when so much of your day alternates between endless paperwork and high stakes chasing after others who are doing harmful things.

Stress Tips 101

Stress is cumulative. Your body, brain, and emotions remember. So a current event tends to reactivate the thoughts and emotions from prior ones, whether you realize it or not. Whether you experience a sudden major trauma, like 9-11 or a car accident, or a series of minor ones, like relationship conflict, illness, or family turmoil, the effects of stress show up in your body, with elevated stress hormones, clogged arteries, or psychologically like isolating, making excuses about why you can't exercise, using substances or activities (T.V., computer gaming, alcohol, food) to numb feelings of distress rather than explore them.

What's a P. I. to Do?

Get a grip on your health. Get enough sleep, proper nutrition, exercise 1 hour per day, and grow a sustainable social support network of diverse people who make you feel good. This is the only life you get and most of it is supposed to be happy!

Look out for each other. Reach out often and ask "how are you doing?" And then listen. Stay connected in person, in professional groups, even via email. There's nothing like real, empathic understanding of a colleague to make you feel that all the effort you put into your job is worth it.

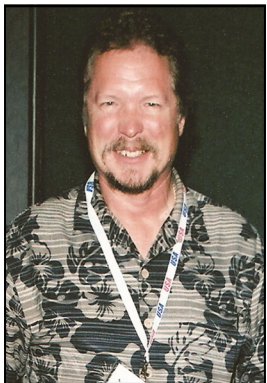
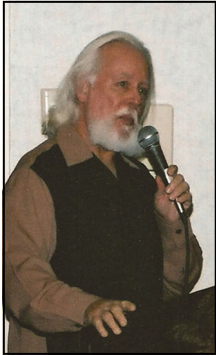
Private Investigators are part of a specialized group of professionals who have very unique occupational stress. Much of what you do deals with the criminal underbelly of our society and is undercover so you can't even talk about it with colleagues. Others who are not in your line of work cannot understand your stressors and often you may bring the stressors home without really being able to unburden yourselves to loved ones.

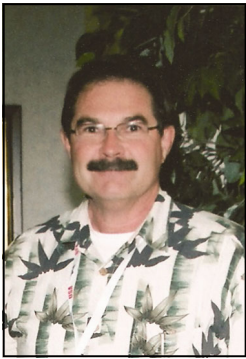
But wait! It's not all bad. You may actually like what you do (or at least some of it). It's not boring and you are doing a real service to society, albeit unacknowledged. However this kind of stress does take its toll and we know that stress that is not managed well reduces your well-being. Sometimes your mood may become so incrementally less happy that you hardly notice but nothing is very much fun anymore. This low level depression is called dysthymia. Or perhaps you deal with heightened anxiety by knocking back a few every night or waking up in the middle of the night worrying. If this sounds like you, get help and change what you're doing!

Yes, you can teach an old dog new tricks. Keep learning and have more fun. Brain research is pretty clear that we have the capacity to grow new neurons until the day we die which protects against age-related cognitive decline, helps us manage day-to-day frustrations better (including the kind that crops up in the daily life of a P.I.). Taking time for fun sounds simple but it gives us an emotional boost and makes us more resilient to the harmful effects of stress. It's simple. When you're having fun, *you're* more fun to be around! Is there anything cuter than a 50-something P.I. who salsa dances or is learning Italian?

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A Look Back at Last Years Annual Conference in Pomona





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(...continued from page 7)

Bust Stress Before It Busts You

How To Know When You (or someone you love) Needs Help

If there has been a recent trauma (defined as real or perceived life-threatening event that affects you or someone close to you) get support immediately. I work with too many patients who experienced a sudden trauma or experienced a clinical depression and did not get the help they needed right away. The health websites listed below have much helpful information and resources to teach you how to cope more effectively with stress. Most importantly these organizations list the symptoms and warning signs of psychological conditions that may require professional assistance.

Three Steps To Get The Help You Need When You Need It

STEP 1:

Try 3 sources and three different therapists and ask them the same 3 questions. Your county psychological association, a referral from a trusted friend, and perhaps your physician are good places to ask for referrals.

STEP 2:

Then call three mental health clinicians and ask them:

What kind of therapy do you do? (If they cannot explain this so you understand it, you probably won't get much from therapy with this person).

How do you structure the sessions? (A 45-minute hour? Double sessions? weekly sessions at the same time? Open to bringing in a family member if you need to or individual only? You are paying for this service and you have the right to know what an actual session would look and feel like. The fit here is important).

How would I know therapy is helpful? (This is central. Do you set goals together and measure them? Do you evaluate each session or not? Do you see the notes? Do you get a road map of where you've been and where you're going?)

STEP 3:

Based on steps 1 and 2, choose a therapist and stick with it for 3 sessions. Good therapy can really help you achieve a higher level of well-being through the authenticity and support within the interpersonal, therapeutic relationship itself, through learning skills and interpreting what's in your noggin', and finally to generate insight that allows you to manage your emotions, behavior, and relationships more effectively. You're worth it!



Dr. Joanie Gillispie teaches at Dominican University and Alliant International University and is a psychologist in private practice in the Bay Area. She is currently the President of the Marin County Psychological Association and is also the author, with Jayne Gackenbach of [Cyber.rules: What You Really Need To Know About The Internet](#).

Working from both individual and systems theories, she employs a collaborative model of treatment, consulting, and teaching that fosters authentic relationships that then become the foundation for growth, learning, and change.

Resources

HYPERLINK "<http://www.apa.org>" www.apa.org American Psychological Association has stress questionnaires and is a wealth of information. Try their help line: HYPERLINK "<http://www.apahelpcenter.org>" www.apahelpcenter.org or for death of a co-worker go to this web site: www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=120 for Six Myths About Stress www.apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=17

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