



I Know You Are Lying:

Detecting Deception Through Statement Analysis

Several years ago, the National Internal Affairs Investigators' Association invited retired law man Mark McClish to talk about statement analysis during a seminar hosted by the Lexington Division of Police.

This approach, statement analysis, was brought home recently when I was asked to review several old cases being reviewed by my former agency's Cold Case Unit. Many of the subjects and witnesses were no longer available for re-interviews, and we only had typed or recorded statements and, in some cases, only interview notes.

These events led me to recall McClish and his presentation on statement analysis. Through a quick search on the Internet, I found he had authored a book on his area of expertise titled, "I Know You Are Lying."

McClish started his career in law enforcement with the Uniform Division of the United States Secret Service in 1983. In 1985, he switched to the United States Marshal's Service. The USSS and the USMS both have training academies at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Ga. After serving five years with USMS, Mark returned to FLETC as an inspector/instructor at the academy.

It was during this nine-year assignment that McClish began teaching interview techniques and researching word or response analysis. McClish prefers to call it statement analysis, which includes his research plus the research of many experts in the interviewing field. He is now a consultant, trainer, author and Web site host.

McClish has been consulted by many law enforcement agencies to

analyze statements in high-profile cases. In his book, he discusses his analyses of these statements, which are and have been highly publicized cases in the news. His analyses help examine how statement analysis works and shows who is being truthful and who is deceptive in the following cases:

- Oklahoma City Bombing
- O.J. Simpson Murder Trial
- Michael Jackson Sexual Molestation Allegations
- Dr. Martin Luther King Murder
- The Clinton and Lewinsky Scandal
- Lindberg Kidnapping
- The Dr. Sam Sheppard Case
- The JonBenet Ramsey Murder

In the book, McClish points out that statement analysis is the process developed to analyze a person's words to determine if he is truthful or deceptive. By following this process, the analysis will provide additional information by identifying exactly what the interviewee is saying. This can be done by systematically examining the interviewee's language and the manner in which he uses pronouns, verb tense and unique words, among other factors. Statement analysis looks at three basic areas — word definitions, rules of grammar and research and observation.

Statement analysis is not the same as non-verbal communication, where an attempt is made to detect deception through the monitoring of body language. One of the key aspects of statement analysis is that the investigator does not need to see, hear or know anything about the subject in order to determine if he is truthful. This makes the technique especially suited for investigators who are reviewing past statements or recorded conversations.

By applying the techniques of statement analysis, it can be determined if a person is being deceptive. Additional information can be obtained from a person's statement because during an interview or when giving a statement, a person's words will betray them. They word their statement based on all the knowledge they possess.

There usually are several ways the subject can phrase his statement. He may include knowledge he did not intend to share. The key to analyzing the statement is to listen to what they are telling us and to know what to look for in a statement.

"What a person does not want to tell us will influence what he tells," McClish said of why the technique works.

A deceptive person usually will circumvent guilty knowledge by using words to prevent the information he doesn't want the interviewer to discover.

The book identifies the things one should remember in preparing for the interview. Further details about how to obtain a statement and the crucial role of using open-ended questions are discussed. The more the subject talks, the more information you gain and the easier it becomes to determine if the subject is truthful.

"I Know You Are Lying" is a wealth of knowledge about investigative interviewing and statement analysis and should be a reference resource for recruits as well as investigators. J



If you don't read the book, visit McClish's Web site at www.statementanalysis.com.

