

ACCURATE DESCRIPTION

BASIC INTERROGATION FOR AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION



ACCURATE DESCRIPTION

In the world of 911, accuracy is of the utmost importance. Responding units rely on an accurate description of people, places and things in order to formulate an effective response to every call for service. It is imperative that responders know who they are meeting with or are looking for and can differentiate between a victim, witness and a suspect.



ACCURATE DESCRIPTION

There are four basic pieces of information that must be obtained when trying to ascertain the description of a person (race, gender, age and clothing). Based on the nature of the call, additional information may be necessary.

To obtain an accurate description, each caller must be carefully interrogated. Each question must be phrased to solicit the specific information needed. The descriptors required for a missing person will defer from the descriptors needed for a drunk driver, interrogate accordingly.

ACCURATE DESCRIPTION

It is recommended that the call taker solicit clothing description from head to toe or top to bottom.



- Hat/cap
- Shirt/blouse
- Pants/skirt
- Shoes



Clothing Description

Layered clothing must be solicited from the outside in, e.g. jacket then shirt.

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A vague or generic question may be answered with useless (adds no value to the call or alters response) information depending on the state of mind or emotions of the caller. The call taker is then left to either ask the question again or rephrase the question which could potentially cause a delay in call processing.

The ability of a call taker to obtain an accurate valid description is based on how each question is phrased.


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Scenario

A male caller was assaulted by his roommate, the subject just left on foot headed towards the McDonalds.

Generic - "What is he wearing or do you remember what he has on?" 

Response - "Clothes...he has clothes on, like a pants and jersey"

Suggested specific - "What color is his shirt?".  Start at the top and work your way down. (P.S. note the word color).

Always phrase the question to solicit a specific answer.

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Scenario

A hysterical female is reporting her purse was taken from her shopping cart in the parking lot of Walmart.

Generic - "What does he look like?" 

Response - "He looks like a thief, hurry up just send the police" 

Suggested specific - "Is he white, black or hispanic?"

Always phrase the question to solicit a specific answer.

ACCURATE DESCRIPTION

Additional Descriptors

BODY STYLE

- Built (thin, etc.)
- Height
- Weight

HAIR

- Color
- Length
- Style

DEMEANOR

- Disoriented
- Angry/Upset
- Emotional

AGE

- 15,65 etc.
- Older/Younger
- Teenage

Ethnicity or country of birth (American) is not an accurate description of a person.
Each caller must be interrogated for specifics as previously mentioned.

ACCURATE DESCRIPTION



- Facial hair
- Date of birth
- Glasses
- Tattoo
- Piercing
- Accent
- Skin complexion/tone
- Walks with a limp
- Physical/Mental disability, etc.

Miscellaneous / Additional Descriptors

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It is impossible for a responder to make an accurate and informed decision without accurate information. It is vitally important to thoroughly interrogate every caller with carefully phrased questions to solicit the specific information needed. The examples given in this presentation are mere suggestions and does not supersede your agency policies.





THANK YOU



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