

The Defensible Narrative

Turning a mountain of technical evidence into a clear, compelling story that is legally sound, easy to understand, and resistant to challenge.

The Structure of Irrefutability

A defensible narrative is built to preemptively dismantle the two most common adversarial challenges: "I didn't know" and "It's all coincidence."



Countering "I Didn't Know"

Establish what the subject knew and when they knew it to dismantle claims of ignorance.

- Establish the Rule:** State the exact policy or law that was violated.
- Establish Communication:** Cite proof that the subject was aware of the rule (e.g., training records, signed forms).

Example: "Subject completed the mandatory 2024 Fraud Prevention training on May 15, confirming knowledge of the policy."



Countering "Coincidence"

Connect individual facts into an undeniable pattern of behavior that demonstrates intent.

- Use Sequential Evidence:** Structure the narrative chronologically to show a clear progression of actions.
- Use Corroboration:** Never rely on one source. Combine interview statements, access logs, and financial records to create an irrefutable fact pattern.

Example: "The subject's claim of being 'out of town' is contradicted by access logs (Ex. 2) and expense reports (Ex. 3)."

The Evidence-Led Conclusion (ELC)

For busy decision-makers, state your finding first, then immediately present the cited evidence that proves it. This format prevents challenges to your conclusion without directly challenging the source material.



Weak Finding (Traditional)

"A review of the logs suggests that the subject may have breached the 'No Secondary Accounts' policy by creating an external account."



Strong Finding (ELC Format)

"The subject breached the 'No Secondary Accounts' policy (Policy 304). Evidence: Audit Log 452 shows Account ID SMT-450 was created from the subject's unique IP address at 10:04 AM on June 1, 2024."

Integrating Visual Proof

Never assume a chart speaks for itself. Guide the reader through your visual evidence with a clear, three-step process.

1

Reference as an Exhibit

Formally introduce every visual with a number (e.g., "Exhibit 1: Forensic Timeline").



2

Explicitly Interpret

Tell the reader exactly what they should see and what it means.



3

Use a Technical Appendix

Place all raw data (logs, spreadsheets) in an appendix to keep the main narrative clean and focused.

Anatomy of a Perfect Report

A defensible report is a balanced document. The bulk of the space is dedicated to presenting the hard evidence, with less emphasis on subjective interpretation or lengthy background.

Key Findings: The largest section, focused on ELC statements.

Introduction & Impact: Concise and to the point.

Recommendation: A single, clear directive.

Ideal Report Section Proportions

