

Breaking the Bias

A Guide to Objective Field Interviews: Recognizing and resisting the powerful pull of Confirmation Bias during suspect interactions.

What is Confirmation Bias?

It's the natural human tendency to search for, interpret, favor, and recall information in a way that confirms or supports one's pre-existing beliefs or hypotheses. In investigations, it's a silent threat to objectivity.

"Once you form a theory, your imagination sees in every object only the traits which favor that theory." - Charles Darwin

Why It's Dangerous in Interviews

Confirmation bias during an interview doesn't just skew your perception; it actively shapes the conversation, leading you away from the truth.



Leading Questions

You subconsciously phrase questions to elicit answers confirming your theory ("You were angry, weren't you?").



Selective Listening

You focus only on statements that fit your narrative and dismiss contradictory information.



Premature Conclusions

You stop probing once you hear something that confirms your initial suspicion, missing crucial details.

The Objectivity Protocol: 3 Steps to Neutrality

Actively counter confirmation bias by implementing these structured techniques in every interview.

1. Identify Signs

Constantly monitor yourself: Are you asking leading questions? Are you interrupting denials? Recognize your own bias triggers.



2. Use Open-Ended Questions

Force yourself to ask broad, neutral questions ("Tell me what happened next," "Describe...") that allow the subject to lead the narrative.



3. Seek Disconfirming Evidence

Actively look for information that **contradicts** your working theory. Use AI feedback (like Obie Obscura) to challenge your assumptions.

Training Personas

In CaseBunker Play, these personas help simulate real-world interview dynamics and bias challenges.

PERSONA	ROLE IN MODULE
ellie_evidence	Represents the objective evidence analyst, providing factual counterpoints.
benny_bias	Represents the common pitfalls of a biased investigator, asking leading questions.
sammy_suspect	The subject whose testimony must be objectively evaluated without prejudgment.