

THE DARK ARTS OF BUSINESS

The Lessons Not Taught in the
Classroom or Boardroom

ELICITATION

Wayne N. Taylor

Copyright Page

The Dark Arts of Business, The Lessons Not Taught in the
Classroom or Boardroom: Elicitation

By Wayne N. Taylor

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Preface

I spent the majority of my career as a Strategic Counterintelligence officer and then the course director for the Advanced Source Operations Course at the Human Intelligence Training Joint Center of Excellence. During this time, I realized that many of the skills employed and taught there could be extremely beneficial for those involved in commercial and corporate enterprise. Though some of the actual tradecraft employed is considered secret, there are some unclassified aspects of the Human Intelligence (HUMINT) field that may be employed in the daily lives of individuals no matter in which career field they may find themselves. In the *Dark Arts of Business Series*, I intend to share with you certain aspects of a career field that most have the opportunity to see only in the theaters. The information shared may seem simplistic, common practice, or readily available through other means. The twist is that I am willing to compile the information in one collective writing with simple-to-follow instructions and examples.

Often, I have discussed the HUMINT side of competitive intelligence. During these conversations, subjects, such as elicitation, have come up time and again. I have read postings and listened to conversations of individuals who are looking for a guide to help reinforce, fine tune, or develop their own elicitation skills hidden deep inside their proverbial quivers. After receiving multiple comments on one site discussing competitive intelligence, I decided to take action on the suggestions developed during these discussions. Elicitation leads the series as many individuals realize neither how much information they share on a regular basis nor how easily it is to acquire information.

When going out to dinner, my family endured the elicitation approaches I used on the restaurant staff and management for practice. Of course, moving to better seats,

being seated without reservations, or even receiving discounts on the check would always bring a smile to their faces. My daughters always marveled at how easy it appeared I could make friends with complete strangers and have them share details of their personal lives. Although this example should not be your goal, these are just additional benefits that come with mastering the art of elicitation.

By studying and fine tuning this art, you should be able to meet with prospective clients and elicit a desired response. Additionally, through elicitation, you can assess where clients are in the decision-making process, so you may readily address their needs and concerns. If employed correctly, you will find people wondering why they opened up and revealed certain information, which they probably should not have said. In this modern day of technology, I have found that the lack of face-to-face interaction has created an opportune environment for an individual to employ elicitation techniques and acquire vast amounts of information. This information will provide you with an opportunistic edge over your competition. So whether your goal is a competitive edge, understanding a prospective client, or fine tuning the skills that you may already possess, I urge you to turn the page and begin reading with an open mind.

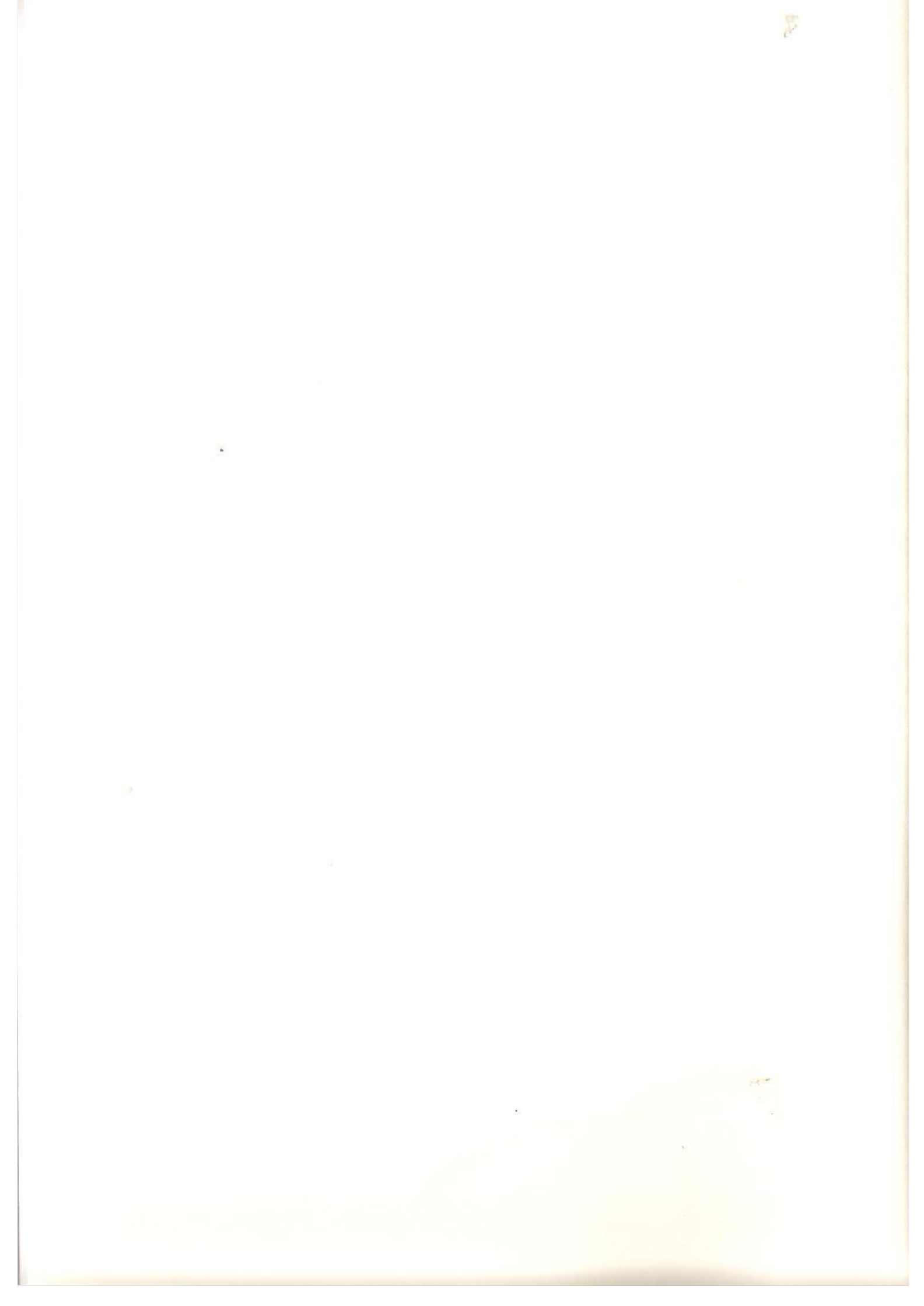
What this book is and what this book is not. This book is a quick reference to elicitation and the techniques you can employ and how to employ them. This book does not explore the psychology behind elicitation, or analyze why the techniques work. What I have been asked to create is a no-nonsense, easy-to-read guide that teaches you various elicitation techniques and how to employ them successfully.

Acknowledgments

Writing this book was a project that I undertook based upon the comments and recommendations of multiple people. Anyone who has written a book can acknowledge that although you may be the one writing, you need a team supporting you. First, I want to thank my wife, Christy, for the patience, support and confidence she has demonstrated as she continues to encourage me and be my inspiration. Thank you to my daughters, Elizabeth and Jessica, for allowing me to steal some precious time away from them while I wrote this book.

Thank you Denis Proulx for taking the suggestions I had and creating a unique cover which stands out from other business books and lures the reader by capturing the books intent.

Special thanks to the staff at the Office of Security Review for the Department of Defense for working with me as they worked in conducting the official review of this book in such a timely manner.

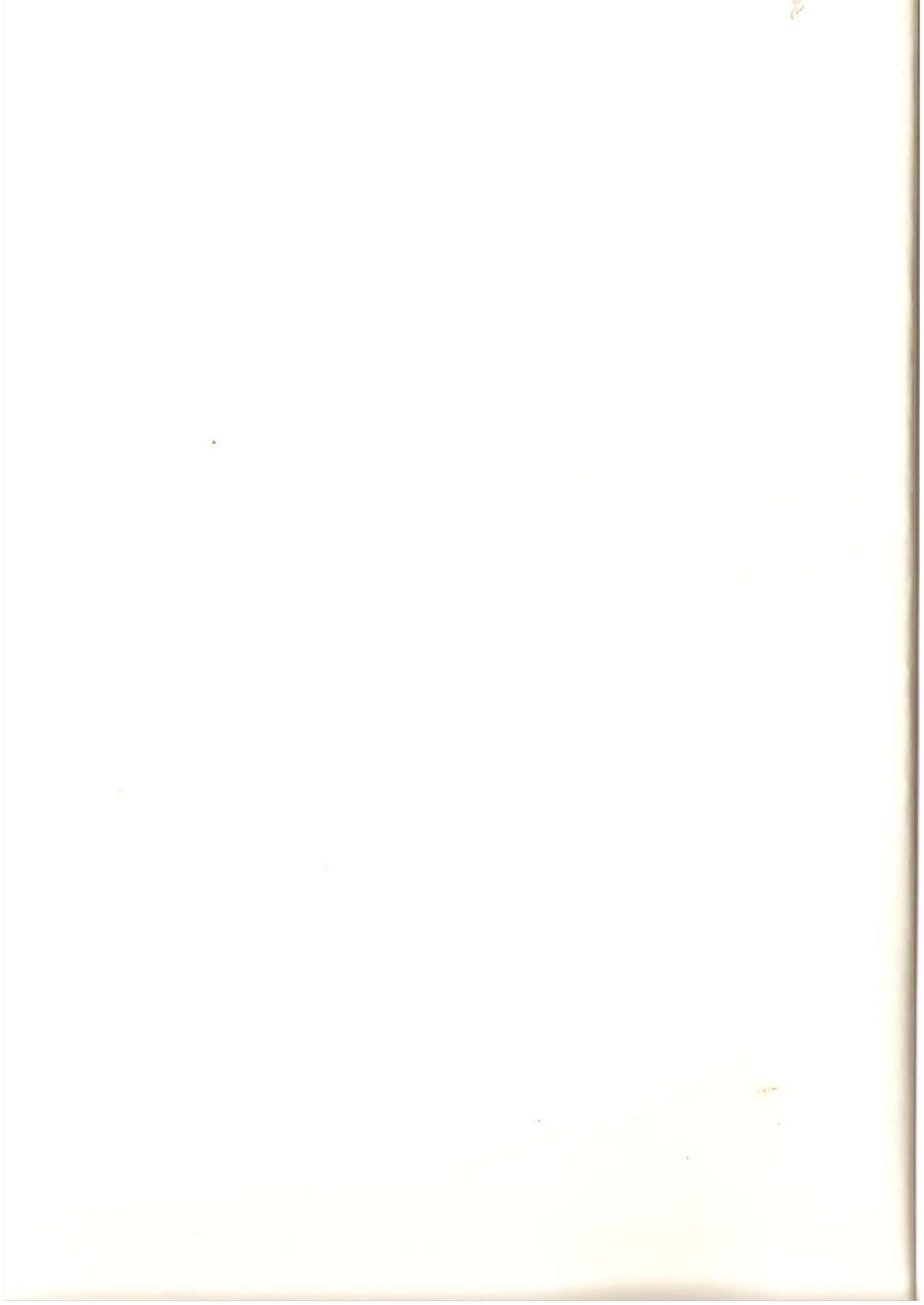


Introduction

There are lessons that go untaught while in school, inheriting the family business, accepting that new promotion, or starting your own business. Through time and experience some individuals begin to understand and realize that they are not the be-all and end-all of every aspect in their business lives. Once this occurs, individuals will begin seeking out others to assist them in perfecting their skills, while others will seek seminars or books. Then, there are those who will continue to try to do it all on their own and eventually quit.

While reading this book, you will begin to learn or be aware of techniques and practices that must be continued throughout your entire life. The "Dark Arts" of business aren't a science; this is an art that is painted on the canvas of life and must be touched up and perfected on a continuous basis.

Throughout this book you will have the opportunity to gain an understanding and appreciation for proven techniques that must be practiced and mastered in your own personal, social, and business life. The chapters in this book are filled with principles that have been proven time and again from the boardroom, to the sales call, to discussions amongst government officials. This information, if used correctly, will provide you with the opportunity to increase both your personal and professional success, leaving others envious and wondering how to emulate you.



What Is Elicitation?

I understand what the dictionary says, but what is this really?

Elicitation is only offered to those who are willing to pay some company to teach them.

What can I do with elicitation?

One of the first questions that people ask is, "What is elicitation?" Before learning to employ elicitation, one must understand its definition. Looking up the definition in a dictionary is fairly simple, and one would question why they bought this book to provide them with the same answer. So, for this reason, it is important to not just understand what the dictionary holds, but also what the goal or the intent of elicitation is. One must understand that elicitation is used on a regular basis by others in your life. Therefore, elicitation is a skill and art form that must be practiced on a regular basis to achieve mastery of it.

The art of elicitation is just that, an art. Now you may question how elicitation could be an art. Most art is often thought of as a painting, a sculpture, or even a musical piece. If I asked you to take the next few moments and draw a detailed picture of the place you are currently located, some of you may end up drawing an office, a home, an airplane, or a myriad of other locations. Drawing an outline takes less time than the detailed picture, just as the topics you wish to discuss equal the outline, and the conversation is the detailed picture. Elicitation uses broad strokes against a canvas, and, as you refine your technique, you use smaller brushes to attain the most intricate of details. After time, your picture comes to fruition, and a sense of pride develops knowing you were able to create a piece of art that is one of a kind. Most individuals can conduct elicitation at

some level, although the techniques may be similar, the personal touch that you contribute makes your efforts unique.

Though performed regularly, the use of elicitation in business is not taught at most business schools. Instead, one must use trial-and-error, attempt to find websites that share some subtleties, or find a course in which elicitation is specifically offered. Often, one is left as frustrated, if not more so, than when they first arrived. This book will serve as a refresher for some and an introduction for others. One would be remiss in thinking a person can learn everything he or she needs to know about elicitation from a book without conducting any field tests or continuous practice to fine tune this skill set. Therefore, I encourage you to tackle this knowledge and practice it in your daily life. This introduction to the world of elicitation will be exciting as you undertake new challenges and practice the variety of techniques as you travel to the grocery store, the airport, or the office.

Unfortunately, a few who read this book will realize that, although they understand the ideas and techniques, the implementation is not something that comes naturally. Elicitation is something that must be practiced daily to fine tune the techniques required to elicit specific responses. For those who find themselves in this category, you have two paths before you: (1) Practice elicitation often and continuously until it becomes a natural response or part of your daily conversations; or (2) Choose to use the information to understand when a person is attempting to elicit a specific response or emotion from you.

Understanding when a person chooses to employ elicitation techniques against you is just as valuable, if not more so, than understanding how to use these techniques. At one point in my career, I was looking at leaving the service when a large auto corporation proposed an opportunity that seemed intriguing. The company queried if I would be interested in traveling with certain executives, researchers, and developers. The job was twofold: First, identify who amongst their employees were

targeted by the competition to violate certain corporate ethics and conduct corporate espionage; the second was to identify the individuals amongst the competition who were responsible for recruiting employees to commit corporate espionage. Of course, with this position there would be many sub-tasks that would need to be conducted as well. These ranged from creating an awareness program to thwart corporate espionage to teaching the employees to recognize elicitation ploys and how to counter these with counter-elicitation techniques to creating profiles of who would be susceptible to a recruitment pitch from another company to developing assessments of positions that would be targeted by either elicitation or corporate espionage. With all this talk of corporate espionage, I must clarify that elicitation *is not* corporate espionage. Elicitation may seem like this when you look at a conversational mapping diagram, but elicitation is not corporate espionage. Corporate espionage crosses both the legal and ethical boundaries that exist in the world of competitive intelligence. Corporate or industrial espionage refers to the stealing of trade secrets or information, blackmail activities, bribery, and even surveillance of equipment and computer media through various technological surveillance and collection activities.

All who interact with another human being either physically or virtually are subject to elicitation daily. Originally, many of us were taught forms of elicitation by our parents or in school. This was explained as polite conversations and demonstrating interest in what the other person may be speaking about. While doing this, most realize that an honest exchange of information and feelings demonstrates sincerity and evokes a certain type of response. Yet, as the hustle and bustle of daily life continues, time is of the essence and choosing whom to speak with becomes a deliberate decision-making process. Many individuals choose not to engage strangers in conversation. This mind-set can be traced back to a common saying that most remember hearing while growing up, "Don't talk to strangers!" Though excellent advice, if children are

ingrained with this mind-set by the age of ten, the child may have difficulty starting conversations with complete strangers in college and the workforce. Today, I teach my children that every social event they attend, they should converse with a minimum of five separate individuals with whom they are not familiar. When teaching courses on elicitation, I challenge students to spend time in various locations where people publicly congregate so that they can practice. Later in this book I will discuss some exercises that you may conduct alone or with friends and colleagues so that you may improve your elicitation skills.

As stated earlier, everyone experiences elicitation throughout their lives. Very early on, parents begin eliciting specific responses from their children. Many of you who are parents agree this is easily done, but as children move into their teenage years, or go off to college, the same elicitation techniques don't always work. Teachers are known to apply basic elicitation when speaking with students about assignments and testing. As everyone is aware, elicitation, no matter how basic it may be, is used when one is involved in dating. As you move away from your parents, leave school, and find yourself with a significant other, how often is elicitation used? Daily, remains the answer.

Let us examine the last time that you bought a vehicle. Many can relate to the first time they walked into a car dealership with the desire to purchase a new car. Of course, you knew that you didn't want to spend over a certain amount and were determined that the salesperson would not get the best of you. As you approached the car that you were interested, you attempted to play it calm, cool, and collected. You attempted to show dominance by indicating you could walk away from the car at any moment. The salesperson eyed you carefully and began sizing you up before saying one word. This person took a quick moment to assess the way you were dressed, whether or not you were married, and what nervous traits or ticks you were displaying. Some would compare this moment to that of a high-stakes card game or the sizing up of an individual before a gunfight in the Old West.

As the salesperson approached, you attempted to take a more confident pose ready to spout out the line that you had been rehearsing over and over in your mind. Like a lion waiting to pounce on its prey, you wait for the opportunity to launch your diatribe of why you should buy the vehicle at the price that you want. Instead, the salesperson takes you off guard and begins explaining why this particular car may not be best suited for you. Confused, you begin to wonder why this person thinks that this vehicle is not suited for you. They begin explaining that the cost may be a little higher than what is marked on the sticker price when all is said and done, and that they would rather have you in a vehicle that you would be happy with when you leave the lot. Agitated that the salesperson would think you could not afford the vehicle, you immediately answer back that your credit is fine and prepare to launch into your "not a penny more" speech.

Before you are able to go on, they mention that they were only concerned that you would want a vehicle that is safer for children and that would allow you some flexibility for growth. Is this person psychic? How do they know you have a child at home? Have they been watching me this whole time? No, that can't be it. They had no idea you were coming here today.

The salesperson immediately continues, stating the safety aspects that this specific vehicle is lacking, but that this one over here is a little safer. They finally ask the name and age of your child. You reply and find the salesperson speaking of their child or a friend's child. You're still confused as to how the conversation changed so rapidly. At such a young age, safety should be a consideration for any good parent. Is this person implying that you're not a good parent? Of course not, you are concerned with safety and the room for all the activity equipment for ballet, Little League, and school science projects that your child needs. You're making an investment not only in safety, but also in the future. This wasn't the car that you first wanted, but it is safer and must be less expensive.

Now, they say you have two options. You can choose the treated, stain-resistant seats, but it doesn't help when you're speaking of children playing with markers or ballpoint pens. The other option is that you could choose the leather seats. These would be easier to clean and hide any markings or juice spills that a young child may

accidentally make. Of course, you know that driving to the store with the children can be a hassle as they attempt to distract you. Did you know that for a minimal fee they can throw in a video package that will help keep the children distracted?

Before you know it, you're sitting down discussing financing and how you could go with your own bank, but if you went with their financing they could cut you a better deal. When the day is done, you find yourself driving off the lot in an overpriced car that you originally did not want, with all the extras that you did not intend to pay for, and at a higher rate than that which you had originally planned. Where did you go wrong?

The example above is one that most can relate to. Though this may be to the extreme, and for some it might not have been a salesperson at a car dealership, the experience remains the same. The salesperson applied some of the "How" that I will discuss in a later chapter of this book. So for now, what do you know? You know that this is not magic, but an art that must be refined through daily practice. You know that everyone may use elicitation, but not everyone understands the essence and subtle techniques of this master-level chess game.

So what is elicitation?

Elicitation is the subtle art of extracting information from another individual during an apparently normal and innocent conversation. Further defined, elicitation is the subtle acquisition of information from an individual whom you believe

- Probably has the information you desire
- May or may not admit to having the information
- May or may not be willing to share the information
- Should not know that you're even interested in the information

When dissecting the aforementioned statement, you return to the fact that elicitation is an art. When performed correctly,

the information is obtained so fluidly that the individual with whom you are conversing has no idea of your true intentions or why they are sharing the information so freely. Properly crafted elicitation ploys cover a myriad of approaches that allow you to gain a thorough understanding of how this individual interacts with others and makes decisions, and why they leave their bed in the morning. Again, this is all done through what appears to be normal and innocent conversations. Many individuals don't realize how much information is shared throughout their normal day. Take a moment and replay a few of the conversations you have had before picking up this book. You may have spoken about what you did last night, what restaurant you visited, or your plans for the weekend. You may have spoken about sports, recounted your latest sale, or commented on your children's activities. All these conversations reveal something about you, your colleagues, your friends, or your clientele.

You can't go your entire life being skeptical about talking to individuals, but you can choose what information you want to provide to others and limit the amount of information another person may elicit from you. This will be shared with you later in the book, but first you need to understand why you share information with others or why they have the urge to share information with you. Some of you may already know the answers to these questions, either from formal training or from practical experience. One thing that I have found is that, though you may have this practical knowledge and know-how, confirming your knowledge is reassuring.

Everyone understands that people have certain comforts. This is often why people act or react in a certain way. These individuals rely upon what they feel is comfortable, from the foods they eat, to the activities they conduct, to the conversations that they have with others. Although food and activities may be extremely important when developing rapport, your focus will be on the conversation that these individuals choose to have and how, with elicitation, you can

manipulate a person to reveal more. How is this so? The secret is this: the faster a person feels comfortable with you, the more likely you will be to develop a rapport.

Take a moment and think about the last time you were introduced to a person and learned that you share a common interest. This interest could have been work related, hobbies, sports, wine, or children. Whatever the commonality, you were able to connect, legitimately connect, with that person for a brief moment. Should you have continued exploring conversations with that individual, you may have found other factors that you had in common, some new and of interest to you. The give and take of the conversation began establishing a commonality or mutual bond between you and the other individual. This commonality, however subtle it may be, began raising the level of comfort and allowed both parties to begin opening up to each other. Think of a good friend of yours. Why is that person a friend? Are there common activities you share, experiences that you have undergone, or interests that exist? How did you come to know these commonalities? Was it by mere chance, or did one of you share something that opened up this common opportunity? How do you find this opportunity?

One discovery that has been made time and again is that people often tend to speak about themselves. Some of you may look at this and say that they only like to hear the sound of their own voice. Although this may be true, this self-talk is something that you desire of the person from whom you are attempting to elicit a response. (Of course, this could be a two-edged sword. Because of this I will discuss how to control both the tempo and the conversation in the section of techniques and conversational mapping.) People have a tendency to speak about themselves and their work. These people want to believe they are important and that they are making a contribution and wow-you with their activities and abilities. Your job, however challenging this may be, is to remain interested. Allowing people to speak about themselves provides you with all sorts of information. Information that people may not believe is significant or that

they are attempting to impress you with. Unfortunately, many individuals (some reading this book) fail to realize that this is a gift in disguise. Because of this you see the one-up contest begin and, before you know it, the conversation ends with you feeling that you were able to best the other. This is not your goal. You need to take the time and do the one thing that many hate passionately. You must actively listen to the other individual so that you may find key conversational gates to explore at a later point. One thing that is extremely important to recognize is that everyone says something for a reason. Every word that comes out of a person's mouth comes out for a reason. Earlier I mentioned that an individual may be trying to impress you. This person may want to share what they know, or they may have allowed their amygdala to slip and respond before their brain realized what was said. Whether it is a conscious move or an unconscious move, everything is said for a purpose. You would probably prefer it if everyone slipped up and spoke their feelings. You could save time in relationships, time in the boardroom, or time on a sales call when the person has no interest at all in the product that you are selling. Because this is not the case, you must rely on actively listening to what the person says and identify how you can use this for your benefit. The information that is shared becomes the golden nuggets that you desire in order to make a sale or convince another to do what you want them to do. The active listening approach further allows an individual to open up and share additional information that they may not have originally intended to share when you began speaking. One area where this approach is utilized is discussions about work or business. Many individuals believe they are experts in their field, and, with very little prompting, they are willing to share all sorts of information with you.

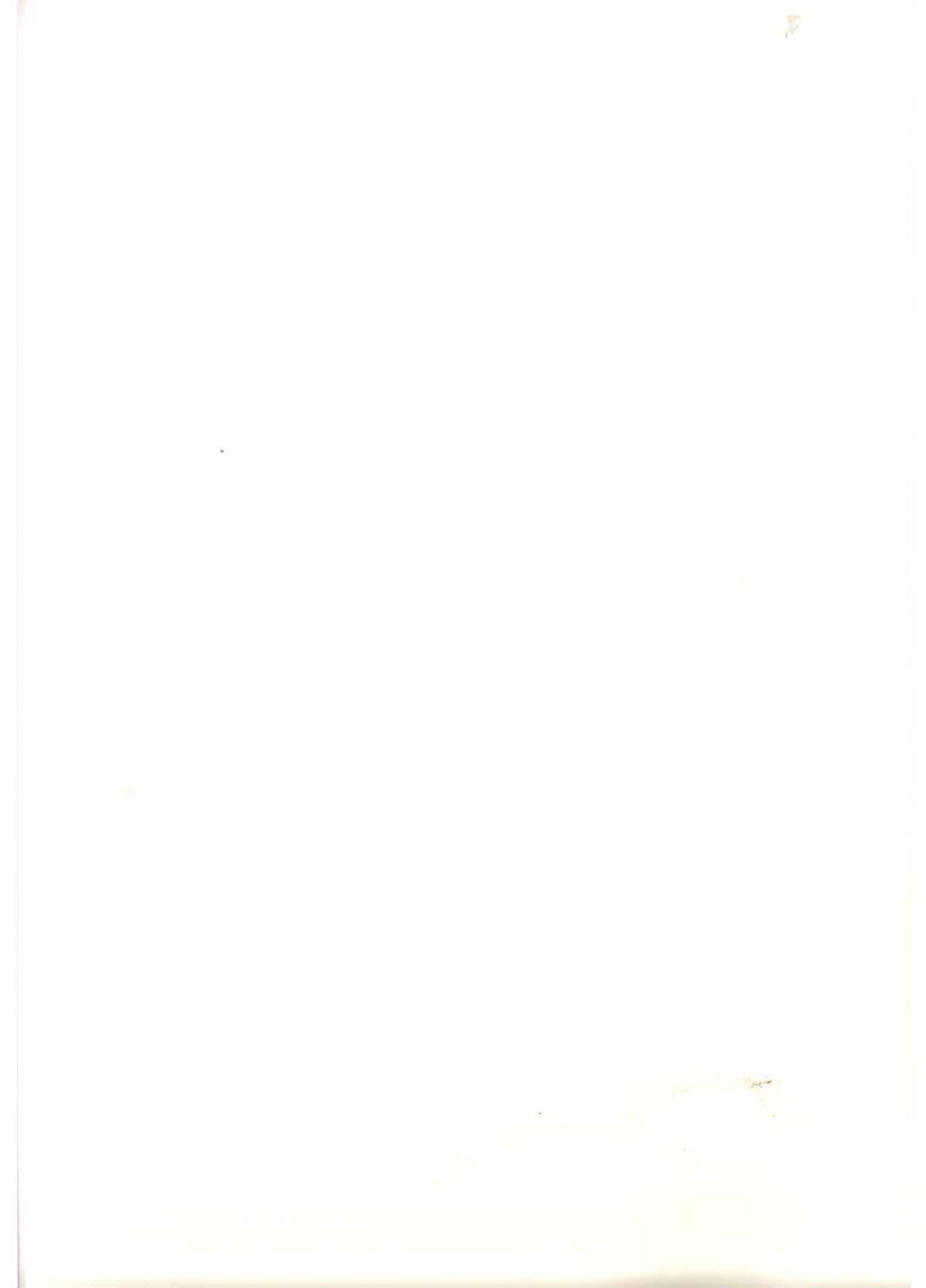
During one of my business trips, I was on a flight seated next to a gentleman who appeared to be rehearsing a presentation. As I glanced over, I noticed that the material in front of him was on nanotechnology. Although not an expert in the field, I was aware of

the terminology from a magazine article and a research project my daughter had to conduct in elementary school. After a quick comment that I recognized he was rehearsing his speech, I asked if he wanted to practice on me as I had nothing but free time, and I was a captive audience at 30,000 feet. The gentlemen graciously accepted my offer and provided his entire capabilities brief and the sales pitch of his company. When he asked if there were any questions, I graciously indulged him by querying further facts and figures and who he thought was his greatest competition and why. We further discussed what set his company apart and the cutting-edge advancements in technology that this company was making. He shared his other clients, from whom references could be obtained, and how he beat out the competition. After two and a half hours, the presentation and questions were complete, and he turned and asked what I did for a living.

This example is one of many in which individuals are willing to sit and talk to a complete stranger and share information that they normally may not be willing to share. My limited knowledge from my daughter's science project provided me with just enough information to be dangerous. The active listening that I employed and the elicitation techniques further allowed me to acquire detailed information, which he normally would not have shared.

Now, this may not happen to each of you who read this book. Some of you may have already experienced something similar to this in the past, but when you're finished reading you will see the various techniques that you may employ, which may lead to some of the same information. You can say that this was a fluke, or that maybe the information which the individual shared was not true. The question to you is: What if everything said is true? With a little bit of time behind a computer, I was able to discover that the information obtained was true and that the company for who he had developed the pitch was in the market for nanotechnology to be incorporated into their production process. The example above is only one of numerous conversations in which I have had the pleasure of

engaging people. They have shared everything from hopes and dreams to fears to business information that will remain between them and me. The truth is that people are willing to talk; you just have to find the appropriate way to allow a person to open up and share what they hold. The fact that people are willing to speak about themselves is not enough. What makes a person willing to share?



It's Natural!

How natural is natural, you say? You have already read that people have a natural tendency to speak about themselves. Of course, there is more to it than that. People share a natural tendency to discuss items that are not necessarily their direct concern. These individuals are not sharing information about the latest project that they might be working on or the sales pitch that they are preparing. They're not sharing the latest acquisition that their company conducted, the change in manufacturers, or what the final selling or purchase price that a company is willing to commit to. These individuals are not sharing this information, or are they? Listening to a few executives whom I know, they have complained repeatedly that they wish their employees would be mindful of what they say when they are out and about. These individuals are concerned when their employees are eating at restaurants, having a cocktail in a bar, sipping coffee at a conference, or seated at the airport speaking on their cell phone. The executives' venting further convinced me that not only does the need for awareness exist, but the need for other tools, such as counter elicitation and elicitation, exists as well.

When visiting the office of a senior executive with whom I had an appointment, I was greeted by an older secretary who appeared to be having a frustrating day. After providing my name and informing her that I was present for my 2:00 PM meeting, she immediately mentioned that the executive to whom I was to meet was running behind schedule, but that she would send him a quick note via e-mail. As she answered the phone, she continued to send emails back and forth to her employer. Moments later, she looked up shaking her head. Seeing her frustration, I mentioned that hopefully the whole day was not this frustrating. She looked at me and immediately shared the frustrating

note that came across the internal chat from the accounting department who was going to be late on a report that the executive had requested. After optimistically mentioning that this would not be an inconvenience to the executive, she shared that this report would have all the numbers for a new project the company was planning to undertake and that company "ABC" (one of the contracted elements) would not be able to provide the requested material as previously agreed upon.

None of us want to be the reason that a business deal failed or why you did not make the sale. You want to be the individual who has the edge and can remain one step ahead of your competition and build rapport with your prospective clients. The information a person shares may not be directly related to your business or sale, but may provide you further insight to opportunities that you may exploit another time. The individual may share some information that you can pass on to another department, which could save your company time, money, and resources. Even if the information shared does not appear valuable, the fact that you have the individual speaking places you on the right track. Think about the last time you went out to eat and started a light conversation with a waiter or waitress or spoke to the cab driver who you met at the airport or the receptionist at an office. All these conversations may seem unimportant because these individuals are sharing information that is not a direct concern or of importance to them. When you apply some basic elicitation, along with active listening skills, all these individuals will share information that you will be able to use later. Of the many techniques that will be discussed in chapter 5, a few of these will allow you to prepare an individual to capitalize on yet another natural tendency; the tendency to correct others.

Correcting

Being corrected is something that all have experienced, whether sitting in a boardroom and your rival corrects your presentation or a client believes the need to demonstrate more

knowledge of a specific topic. You have come across individuals who feel the need to correct you or others on a whim. Although annoying, these individuals can actually be an unexpected benefit. Earlier I mentioned that people enjoy being the subject matter expert; they enjoy the ability to share information with others, thus boosting their own self-esteem. Some of the same individuals are also those who will correct you should you make a wrong presumption about their work or their field. Of course, there are those who will feel the urge to correct you even if they are not the subject matter expert. Be aware of the opportunities available when you come across this type of individual; you can capitalize on this tendency by employing certain techniques. The techniques used will allow an individual to make a correction to an item or subject, thus allowing you to elicit further information. These people will often believe that since they have already shared a little information, they might as well continue. So, is the goal really encouraging the person to correct you?

Simply stated, no. The goal is that once you have discovered the tendencies of the person you are speaking with, then you may use certain conversational gates to move the conversation to an area that you wish to discuss. (Conversational mapping and gates will be discussed in chapter 7.) Your goal is to either elicit a specific response, a distinct reaction, or additional information that you desire. Your goal with this person is to have them feel good about correcting a misconception, thus allowing you to further extract more information from the individual. This will allow you to exploit another natural tendency many individuals hold; the desire or need for recognition.

Recognition

Everyone, no matter how much they may deny it, desires some sort of recognition. They desire others to recognize that they are important, special, knowledgeable, or have something to contribute. Although all individuals have this tendency, not all can be exploited for their desire to be recognized. The

individuals who are susceptible to this tendency are those who have the urge to tell you about everything they are doing and why it is important. These individuals are seeking external confirmation that the activities that they engage in are of interest and are noteworthy. You have run across individuals whom you could label as desirous of tooting their own horns; these are those people. The individuals desire you to recognize their questions and listen to what they have to say about themselves. Of course, the individuals who desire this attention often do not realize how susceptible this makes them to elicitation approaches.

One quick example of recognition: My daughters are always interested in how people dress. When asked why someone would wear a specific item that stands out and makes you take notice, I tell them that this is the way that person peacocks. Just like a peacock shows its feathers, a person might do the same, depending on the way they dress or if they received new jewelry or clothing that they wish to show off. Of course, my daughters wanted to know if it is permissible to comment on how the person looks. My girls have learned that most people don't wear something unless they desire some type of comment. Often they have found when they comment on something another person is wearing, they receive a quick response about how the person received the item or why they are wearing it. Basic elicitation can never start too young, and understanding how to elicit appropriately is just as important.

Before you begin your elicitation on this individual, you must be cognizant not to get caught in the one-up game. Often at a cocktail party you can listen to spouses speak about their children, and another parent is quick to tell how her child is exceeding even further. Conversations during a golf game have one person constantly discussing how their shot is much better today. These trivial games of one-upmanship should not be something that you stoop to, but, instead, you should seize the opportunity to show sincere interest and elicit additional information. This person believes they have you captivated with their story and must keep you entertained. They're quick to

share additional stories that may eventually lead into stories that you are interested in (e.g. work, family, relationships, and networks). This subtle extraction would not have occurred if you took the straightforward approach and asked the individual about your specific interest. By spending the time listening to the story, you can continue showing interest by changing the conversation to a subject that you are more interested in. People tend to accept this practice as most people have a natural tendency to be curious.

Curiosity

People are naturally curious. People are interested in items that are unfamiliar and are willing to speculate regarding subjects that they may not be fully acquainted with. People may also be curious about you and your hidden agenda. These people must be treated carefully and are best used as a third party, which may allow the individual you are interested in to open up. Although the person may not want to answer the specific questions, they usually feel obligated when there are two people (the curious person and you) standing in front of them awaiting a response. By not asking the questions yourself and only making comments, questioned individual feels less threatened by you and possibly willing to speak with you at a later time without the additional curious individual. Of course there are draw backs; if the curious individual becomes a nuisance with the questions, the individual may associate you with the nuisance. For this reason, you must know when to remove yourself from the conversation so that you are not identified in this manner.

Gossip

While I was growing up, my mother was quick to tell me not to gossip and not to associate with gossipers. As time went by, I understood why she provided this lesson for me, but it wasn't until my formal training in and practicing of elicitation

that I realized how much fun and rewarding speaking with a gossip can be. I am not encouraging you to pursue the approach of a gossip, but I am telling you that there are benefits to eliciting information from this person. I am sure you have come across the person who has the natural tendency to gossip to even a complete stranger about his or her opinions and what he or she thinks is occurring. These people are extremely beneficial to you and can be a joy to interact with. The first thing you should remember is that if they are willing to gossip about others and their activities, then they will probably gossip about you. In this aspect you must be consciously aware of what you say and do while in the company of this type of individual. At the same time, you may discover some valuable information because this person (1) always wants to share something, and (2) has the inability to keep secrets.

Inability to Keep a Secret

How many times have you come across a person with whom you shared some information that was just between the two of you? Later, you discover that many others know this information, and it is because this friend just had to share the information with someone else. You would be surprised by how many individuals have a difficult time keeping information to themselves. It would appear that if you tell someone not to share this information, they interpret this as permission to share with at least two or three other individuals. Understanding who these individuals are and how you can use them could be beneficial to you. The catch is learning who they are without compromising your secrets. These individuals are similar to the aforementioned people who desire recognition. The secret that they share will put them in the good graces of others and allow them to believe they are important and accepted by others. These individuals are easy to work with as you can use certain elicitation techniques that will allow them not only to share information with you, but to also offer additional information without you requesting it.

A certain motor company had this concern as some of their new engineers had a problem with revealing what they were working on in postings on social media websites. It was amazing how what should have been a company secret ended up all over the Internet. Some people may not be directly connected to the information, but, like the gossipers' need to share, they also have the tendency to underestimate the value of information or your ability to understand to understand its benefits.

Underestimating

Previously I mentioned the secretary having a bad day who shared some information that wasn't her direct concern. This individual both underestimated the value of the information that she shared and my ability to understand how this could be beneficial to me. Fortunately for her and the company, I was not a rival competitor or an individual conducting competitive intelligence against her employer. Everyone understands and acknowledges that people underestimate what they share. Earlier in this chapter I discussed how both employers and employees are not cognizant of the information they share when they are speaking with others or in earshot of other persons. A friend at a software development company discussed how frustrated he was when he realized that his employees were openly discussing their newest contract in a hotel bar. This wouldn't be too terrible except that these individuals were at the hotel for a trade show where many of their competition were attending and residing in the same establishment. This friend was so frustrated that he asked if I could develop a program or a tool to help his company with their corporate and operational security. His frustration is common amongst managers and executives. Employees underestimating the value of information that they come across during their daily activities is, unfortunately, all too common. Many of these individuals use the excuse that most people don't understand what the person may be speaking about.

People often find themselves in situations in which they are underestimated by those with whom they do business. In the techniques section I will discuss how you can use the fact that people underestimate you to your advantage, though the goal is not to be naive when walking into a situation. One thing, which I consciously recognize, is to never underestimate another human being. This is so important that I want to repeat this one more time: Never ever underestimate another human being. Whether it is the mail clerk, the secretary, the waiter at a cocktail party, or the person standing in line at the counter, don't underestimate them. I am not saying that you shouldn't trust anyone, but you should be consciously aware of your surroundings and the people existing in these surroundings. I have often been underestimated as just a casual person at the coffee counter or seated outside the doors of a seminar. As people approach carrying on conversations, they ignore the fact that I am there as they presume I would not understand what they are speaking about. In the same manner, I have had individuals speak to me at a party or even in a business meeting thinking that I did not understand the importance of the information shared. For this reason some people believe they need to take advantage of the last of the human tendencies spoken of in this book; the tendency, or habit, of teaching, advising, and correcting others.

Occupational Challenges

The last section spoke of how people often underestimate others. By using this elicitation technique you will persuade others to teach you or expound on the information that they provide. Individuals who are professional educators, mentors, and trainers have a natural tendency to teach, advise, or correct the information that is being discussed without a second thought. These individuals are extremely easy to elicit information from as you apply certain techniques that encourage them to perform what is natural. In the corporate world, many individuals want to be heard; they want to share

their information, especially as this provides additional recognition as an expert in that specific area.

During my career in the military, I was presented the opportunity to work with many private contracting companies with program managers who were under the impression that, because I was a career military man, I would not understand the basics of program management and contractual dealings. These individuals would only share the information they wanted me to know and not provide the real answers that were needed to make an informed decision. During these meetings, I would ask questions providing them the opportunity to teach me about aspects of business and the contracting world. While doing this, I would use the conversational gate method to guide these individuals in to teach me to ask them about information that they did not want to share. You can imagine how many of these individuals kicked themselves after they taught me to ask the questions they did not want to answer.

Working alongside many educators and trainers I have found that these individuals must be consciously aware of what they say and how they say it. For this reason you must understand the layers that a person wishes to portray, so you can use elicitation techniques properly.



Onion Theory

While watching an animated movie about a green ogre with my children, truths about people were thoroughly explained by one of the characters. The character explained that everyone is like an onion, and they consist of multiple layers. It was interesting how a children's movie can define such a complex point that assists in the understanding of elicitation. Though many books, blogs, and web pages define the various layers of this onion, for our purposes I will divide the perception of a person into four distinct layers. Friction between an individual and others occurs when the layers are not synchronized with the person whom they are speaking to. The four layers of perception:

- Broadcast
- Approval
- Acceptance
- Self Image

Broadcast

Broadcast is the first level of perception and is how individuals desire the world to see them. An individual begins shaping this perception by taking various physical, mental, and emotional actions. This individual is either well versed in controlling their statements, actions, and appearance, or is constantly practicing this control. Think of the last time you noticed a person who appeared uncomfortable in their skin. This is usually the result of a person creating a facade with which they may not be comfortable. Whether a person is comfortable with the broadcast layer or not, this is usually the first layer you see

when you meet an individual for the first time. As you are attempting to engage this person, you must focus your elicitation on issues that the individual can control, e.g.:

- What is your view of ...?
- What is your opinion of ...?
- What do you think the company should do about ...?

The general questions posed during this initial meet and greet allow you to demonstrate interest in the opinions, ideas, and suggestions that the individual is desirous for others to see. The appearance of sincere interest allows you to move closer to the individual. Each person is different and will require a judgment call on whether they are ready to move forward to the next layer. One key factor that will assist you with judging if they are ready to move forward is the stoplight principle.

Stoplight Principle

The stoplight principle is based on, you guessed it, a stoplight. As children, many have played some version of a game called Red Light, Green Light. It is amazing that when eliciting information for the United States Government or teaching others how to elicit information, the principles of this childhood game are still relevant. You are the best judge of the person you are speaking with. Although there are many telltale signs that you may be losing the interest of an individual, you must determine if you are losing the interest of the person or if you are the one who appears uninterested. A basic rule of thumb when speaking or eliciting information is that you should be listening 80 percent of the time and speaking, at most, 20 percent of the time. This may be challenging for many of you, but you need to use your nonverbal skills to keep the person interested in speaking to you. Your eye contact, your gestures, your subtle agreements are all necessary to keep the individual speaking. If you determine that you are losing a person, then you should come up with a reason to transition out of the conversation so that you may reengage the person later. By

transitioning out, you maintain friendly relations without over extending the welcome so the individual may be interested in reengaging at a later time. (In another book, I will show you how to maintain the person's interest while still only doing 20 percent of the talking.) Your goal is to maintain the green lights during the conversation so that you may transition to the next layer, approval.

Approval

The approval layer is the second layer of perception. An individual seeks approval from those who control an individual's success. In this layer, the person is seeking approval from the following individuals:

- Supervisors
- Colleagues
- Coworkers
- Classmates
- Competitors
- Mentors
- Teachers

As you look at the list, conduct a self examination and consider whether you are seeking the approval of the aforementioned individuals. Stop for a moment and think again. Do you want that promotion? Do you want to be the one with the best idea at the board meeting? Do you want your competition to know that you are better than them? Approval is the measuring of oneself against the list above and being measured by them in turn. When applying elicitation at this layer, there is all sorts of fun that you can have depending on the outcome that you desire. During this elicitation stage, you allow the individual to begin thinking about their position in a hierarchy:

- What does your boss think about that?
- Your boss must have been proud/appreciative of you.
- Your supervisor must have been disappointed with you.
- Your director must have been angry with you.
- Your coworkers must have been jealous.
- Who had the greatest influence on your decision?

I say this is fun because, with a few of the sample questions above, you can make a person feel really good about him or herself or really bad. When using these types of questions, or any question that refers to the list of individuals previously mentioned, you must have a predetermined plan of what you wish to accomplish. When speaking to classes or others whom I instruct on elicitation, I state that if I am planning a one-hour meeting with a certain type of individual, then I spend roughly eight hours planning for it. I am not asking you to do the same, but I am asking you to spend a short amount of time constructing an agenda of your intentions for this individual. If you are looking at this person as a prospective client, you may want to gear the conversation in a more upbeat manner so that the person is flattered. If you are speaking to a member of your competition who you are hoping to hire for your company, you may want to take the opposite approach so that the individual believes that their current company doesn't think they are significant. This will enable you to move in and potentially hire the individual since you and your company are more appreciative of their efforts, contributions, and potential.

A personnel director at a medical supply company and I had a brief conversation about a top-notch sales representative that he was trying to entice to come over to their company. The challenge was that he knew they could not match the salary or some of the perks that the other company offered. The only additional information he knew was that the sales representative wasn't happy at the company he was working hence his looking for employment elsewhere. After a short

conversation about crafting the interview questions around decisions with which the representative's company was not pleased, the personnel director demonstrated frustration that a company would not rely upon the judgment calls and the recommendations that this representative offered. The personnel director voiced how he wished he had a person like that in the ranks of the company, who could lead by example and teach the other sales representatives to take charge and make decisions. Before the personnel director knew what was happening the sales representative was telling him how not only could he help motivate the other sales representatives, but he would increase the revenue of the company by sparking excitement amongst the sales force.

Simple in theory and simple when read, but this type of elicitation requires a well-crafted approach that appears sincere to the recipient. As you slowly transition away from the approval layer, you reach the personal layer of acceptance.

Acceptance

The third layer, acceptance, is one of the more intricate layers that you come across. This layer is filled with intricacies since you are examining how the individuals who control or influence the values and standards of this person view them. Although eliciting a few of these responses may be appropriate during an initial meeting, this will all be gauged by how the conversation continues to flow. This layer transitions you from the relationship of peer, colleague, client, or vendor to that of one that borders friendship. This layer develops increased rapport with an individual and focuses on their comfort level. Although rapport may be established using elicitation, this is only one aspect of rapport and it is an art within itself. Now you say, "Wayne, everything is an art to you." Well, rapport is one of those skills that you develop slowly, and, if it makes you feel better, you can call it a garden that must be cultivated. I will save the cultivation of rapport for another book if enough of you are interested in how to establish instant rapport as those trained by Uncle Sam have been.

Similar to the approval layer, there is a list of individuals who are the controlling factors in the acceptance layer as viewed by the individual:

- Spouse
- Parents
- Children
- Close Confidants

When discussing the list of individuals considered in the acceptance layer, your goal is to have the individual focus and think about the quality of their personal relationships. You can either focus on a specific individual mentioned above, or create a group of them and focus on the influence that group has over the person in whom you are interested. Separately, you may develop various responses. When you look at the group, they may collectively place blame or sing the individual's praises depending on the actions of the individual and the views of the group. The following examples focus on the acceptance of this individual:

- What did your wife think of that decision?
- What did your parents think?
- Where did your parents want you to go to school?
- Where did your wife want to buy a house?
- Did your parents want grandchildren?

In this layer, your goal should be eliciting a response of acceptance by those whom the individual views important enough to control or influence their values. The views of this layer have the greatest affect on the last and remaining layer, self image.

Self Image

The last layer of the onion of perception is the layer of self image. In this layer you look at how the individual honestly thinks of him or herself. Because this layer is about the

individual's true opinion of themselves, the individual is limited in their ability to manipulate how he or she may view themselves. You will not reach this phase until you have established rapport with the individual. In the other layers, you focused on their opinions, their status, and their acceptance by others. In this layer you focus on internal feelings, hopes, and dreams that they may not share with others, such as:

- Shame
- Self-doubt
- Self-worth
- Fear
- Fantasies
- Goals

The challenge you face is extracting these emotions from an individual without angering him or her. Although some people may be willing to speak about their emotions, there are those who automatically shut down when the topic is broached. When you are eliciting information from this person, you must allow the individual to reflect upon certain aspects of personal life that foster an emotional response.

- What motivated you to ...?
- How happy were you when you decided to ...?
- How concerned are you that you don't have a job?
- If you were king for a day, what would you do?

This last question is used to determine how the individual would live their life again, thus allowing you to identify any potential regrets that the individual might have. These regrets open up a new means of communication and allow you to explore the following areas of an individual's life:

- Work
- Money

- Education
- Religion
- Success
- Politics
- Family

These areas, combined with the previously-discussed layers, will determine how the individual wants to be seen as compared to how others may view them. All too often, the two are not synchronized and create a disconnect between the layers. This disconnect is a valuable area to identify and acknowledge. Once you can recognize the disconnect of the individual, you may begin your elicitation ploys to further exploit the specific response you desire. Your goal while looking for the disconnect and using elicitation ploys is to determine what makes this person tick. What is the driving force that makes the person jump up out of bed in the morning? When you can determine this, half of your job is done. The other half is maintaining this level of rapport so that the individual will share his or her thoughts, hopes, and dreams whenever you meet. Remember, everything a person says is said for a reason.

Basic Techniques

This is the holy grail: the moment you have been waiting for to help fine tune your elicitation capabilities. Some desire the opportunity to learn the techniques that will help you build rapport or develop closer ties to certain individuals. Others want the chance to speak with the competition and elicit what their next strategy may be. Alternatively, some may want to use this at work so that they can remain one step ahead of their peers or rivals. Everyone has their own intentions as to how they will use the skills mentioned in the remaining chapters. As you begin this chapter, remember that I have stated time and again that words have meanings. Here is the horrible truth to that fact.

Words Have Meanings

At one point during my career, I made a comment to a friend regarding a student whose integrity we questioned. What the student said doesn't matter, but when my friend asked me what I thought, I told him, "Words have meanings." Since then, we have worked together on multiple occasions, and he is one of the individuals whom I can speak with and always receive an objective opinion. He reminds me that I know the answer: I just may need help every now and then to bat away the distractions and realize it. As we listen to others engage us in conversation, make excuses for one thing or another, attempt to sell us an idea, or even elicit information, we wait until they are gone and remind each other with a chuckle that words have meanings.

The lesson to take away from this is to take heed of what you are saying, how you are saying it, and what the intended delivery and reception is supposed to be. I'm not saying that you should calculate every conversation and potential response,

unless you are in my old line of work. This is why a one-hour conversation would take eight hours of preparation. What I am saying, is that you should think through what response you want, how you're going to transition there (more in conversational mapping), and what type of elicitation technique or combination of techniques will help you transition. "Techniques, Wayne! That is what I want, that is why I have read three chapters to arrive here." All right, here you go.

Setting the Stage

Setting the stage is what you will do, because the basic techniques of elicitation are used during every conversation and require you to develop the scene. While preparing, focus on the specific situation you are in and what is occurring around you and the other person. When you mutually experience an event or activity together you discover common ground, which opens up an opportunity for you two to meet and begin speaking. The opportunity permits a tit-for-tat conversation that allows you to enter the first layer (broadcast) with the individual. During this time, determine the person's opinions toward the activity or event and apply elicitation techniques to keep the person speaking. Keeping the conversation rolling with a balanced exchange of information is important to ensure that the other person realizes that you are interested in what they have to say. With this, the nonverbal cues of interest, such as a head nod or an agreement, should occur.

One area that you should attempt to focus on as you set the stage is how receptive you appear. Previously, the onion philosophy was discussed, and you must determine which layer is being presented so that you may elicit information. The same applies to you. You need to ensure the layer that you are broadcasting is the layer in which everyone sees you as receptive. The importance of a friendly smile and a warm sincere greeting can transcend many boundaries so that people are willing to share information with you.

As you practice appearing warm and receptive, you must be willing to take a chance and begin talking with people. I advise that you begin talking to those who are not in control of your career or during an important sales call as the techniques of elicitation should be practiced regularly. During your practice, you should work on developing conversations that are not closed, but are open ended. The closed conversation is one that you are all familiar with as you receive short one-word answers. The open-ended conversation allows the individual to elaborate on his or her opinions, experiences, and interests. As you develop this conversation, you should begin focusing on other common interests or experiences you have both shared. This exchange of information will help to develop your rapport as you continue to show legitimate interest in what the other person is saying. Should you be able to keep the conversation rolling with legitimate interest, and you don't appear to be a stalker or someone trying to date them, you will find that the conversation will often reveal at least one major event in the person's life. If you are this fortunate, then you are beginning to reach the individual's other layers of perception.

The ever-present question is: Once you open your mouth, how do you say what you want to say next? The selection of what to say will help you to decide on the proper elicitation technique or the combination of techniques to use during your conversation. Here is a secret truth about elicitation, and, yes, you had to read this far to reach it; your goal is to plant a suggestion in the person's mind and advance your conversation. Although you may ask questions here and there, you should be planting thoughts and suggestions into the other person's head. When you plant the comment, statement, or thought the other person, if allowed to, will respond. Your task after they provide that response is to continue eliciting by using any of the multiple techniques listed in the following pages.

Flattery

One of the most common forms of elicitation is flattery. This type of elicitation was taught to most of us at a young age. Do you remember when your parents told you that if you don't have anything nice to say, then don't say anything at all? What about when you first started dating and you might have made a comment on how nice your date looked or you laughed at their jokes? What about at work, when you complimented your boss's presentation or how valuable the advice was they provided? When you use flattery appropriately, the recipient is often compelled to provide an explanation or deflect the credit that they receive. During the next presentation you attend, make sure to compliment a specific point that was discussed and see what happens. The person will normally thank you and may either elaborate on why they included the point in the presentation or pass the credit on to another. Either way, you have elicited a response. One thing to remember, most people enjoy receiving a small amount of flattery. The key is knowing how to use this technique sparingly and at just the right moment.

Quid Pro Quo

Although flattery is one of the most common techniques used, quid pro quo may be one of the easiest techniques for you to use and master. The reason that this may be the easiest technique to use is the fact that you are speaking about yourself. Simply put, *quid pro quo* means "this for that". This works by way of one party sharing information with another and the other party sharing similar information as part of the exchange. Another reason that this is so easy to use is the fact that you probably already do this without conscious thought.

One of the challenges you will face is learning to share only a small portion of information and allowing the other person to speak more. This returns to the 80/20 rule that was mentioned previously. Although this challenge exists, you do have an

additional benefit: when you use quid pro quo you can arrange the conversation around a specific topic. When doing this, you can have multiple conversations that all stem from one specific topic. What you must do when this occurs is plan in advance what you are willing to say to the individual and what you may want to discuss. During the planning phase (further discussed in Conversational Mapping) you need to consider how you will transition between topics or the subjects within the specific topic. A key to remember during your planning phase of a conversation: You don't plan to get lucky; you get lucky because you plan.

Secret Knowledge

Have you ever had a person lean in and, in a hushed, conspiratorial tone, share some information with you? How did this make you feel? When this is done to most people, they believe they have been made privy to something important, something that they probably shouldn't have been told. When you apply this technique, the goal is to plant a suggestion to the receiver that they should share a secret with you. You're not going to share something and then ask the person to share a secret with you in return. Instead, you're going to share something and maybe take a moment to think about what you have just done. Depending on the person, and how far along you are in building rapport, this person may respond to you. You might want to consider pondering for a brief moment and allow the other person to think that you are thinking that you shouldn't have said anything. Again, you are setting the stage for the individual with whom you are speaking. The individual will see you thinking this through and may desire to console you by sharing their secret. Of course, you must know the person well or they may not want to speak with you because they will think that you can't maintain a secret. This technique, as you may realize, is a double-edged sword and must be used carefully and with considerable planning.

Provocative Statement

The provocative statement is a technique that may be used with either an individual whom you recently met or one whom you have known for a while. I mention this specifically as there are certain situations that you may want to consider when selecting this technique. One purpose of the provocative statement is to draw out a reaction from the recipient. This response, either verbal or nonverbal, will allow you an opportunity to gauge the direction in which to take a conversation or sales pitch.

The provocative statement may alienate the individual with whom you're speaking, and, depending on the predetermined desired response, the individual may choose not to speak with you again. For this reason, you must be careful how you use this technique. The provocative statement is a short sentence that is used at the outset of conversation or in the middle of the conversation. This statement is used to encourage a question or allow you to set the stage for the following techniques:

- Criticism
- Disbelief
- Naiveté
- Quid Pro Quo

Knowing your audience will allow you to use the provocative statement as a stage setter to draw out an additional response. The response will help you select which of the aforementioned techniques will allow you to continue eliciting information and keep the conversation at a steady and deliberate pace. Again, I recommend that you take caution with this specific technique.

Repeat-a-Word

Repeat-a-word is a technique that is often taught and reinforced during lectures about active listening. When seeking

to use this technique you make a conscious effort to repeat and even use the core words or the last words of an individual in a sentence. This technique encourages the individual you are speaking with to expound upon the information provided. When you use the core word or the last word you should allow your voice to rise with an inflection. The inflection in your voice will demonstrate your interest in what the person is saying and may be perceived as a question. The perception invites the individual to clarify or elaborate on what they said. This technique should not be applied regularly, but may be applied once or twice during a conversation.

When applied by over exaggerating the words or from excessive use, you may give away your intentions. Should you telegraph this technique, you could alienate the person with whom you're speaking as they realize what you are trying to do. Furthermore, depending on the individual you are speaking with, you may come across as insincere. Because of this concern, you should be extremely cautious when applying this technique. As with any elicitation technique, the last thing you want to divulge is that you are intentionally performing elicitation.

Instinct to Complain

The instinct to complain is a normal human tendency. Most people have something to complain about, and this often lends itself to interesting conversations that reveal a person's private opinions and feelings. Because complaining may be considered a normal part of human nature, you should provide the missing ingredient for the person who is complaining. The missing ingredient is that of the listening ear. When someone complains, the person wants someone to listen to their complaint; they want to be heard and know that their opinion is important to someone. As you listen to a person complain, you can pick certain aspects of their ranting and raving or discussion and decide what area you wish to explore. When you have selected the specific area, all it may take is one word, a question, a

statement, or an "I don't understand" to encourage this person to continue the conversation with little contribution from you. Additionally, a provocative statement may be useful as you are looking at building one elicitation technique upon another.

Naïve Mentality

Earlier in the book when discussing human tendencies, I mentioned the tendency to underestimate people and people who wish to impart their knowledge or project themselves in the teacher role. Depending on the situation you find yourself in or the type of individual you may be speaking with, you may choose to use the technique of naiveté to elicit information. When using this technique you project yourself as naive in a specific subject. A key point to remember when using this technique is to place your own personal ego in the background so that you may allow the individual whom you are speaking with to educate you in the information you are interested. When using this technique, you may find it helpful to have at least a little knowledge of the subject so that you may ask the right questions to elicit information. Your goal is to have just enough knowledge of the subject to be slightly confused so that the other person believes they are obligated to instruct you. Previously, I shared an example of a flight in which I was able to elicit information from an individual regarding nanotechnology. If you remember, I mentioned that I was not very knowledgeable on this subject as I had only read a magazine article and heard a small presentation that my young child was working on in school. Fortunately, this was just enough for the person to share more information. Some may be reading this and wondering how they can apply this in their own lives. Let me provide you another example, in which swallowing my pride and using this technique was a great benefit to my daughter, my wife, and in keeping me out of the proverbial dog house.

Shortly after moving to Florida and my children returning to school from summer break, my wife had to depart on a week-long

business trip. Just before she left, she called to see about registering both of our girls for school. Unfortunately, both schools told her that we would have to wait until the first day of school to register. As the stubborn father that I am, I did not think this made sense, especially since my oldest was entering her sophomore year of high school. While my wife was away and my daughters were anxious about starting school, I decided to take them and register them for school. Off to both schools we went with the determination to register both children. At both schools, I approached the situation as the confused, naive husband and father who had no clue what was going on or what I was supposed to do. Of course, the women working the front desks of both schools felt sorry for me and felt obligated to assist me because I was so confused. Assist me they did, and, by the time we had departed both schools, the girls were registered for the classes of their choice.

I'm not saying this should be used all the time, but I can assure you that there have been many other times that using this technique has assisted in both elicitation and getting things that I needed. The technique allows the other person to feel good about his or herself since they are helping or educating you. I will caution that you have to use this appropriately or some individuals will not even acknowledge you as they assume you are not intelligent enough or qualified to speak with them. For this reason, setting the stage is extremely important so that the other party can see that you have something to offer or that you are only unfamiliar with the one area discussed. Credibility is everything, hence the importance of using this technique at the appropriate time so you may preserve your credibility in other areas. Additionally, you should remember that with all elicitation you can acquire not only new information, but also validate other information that you may already know.

Oblique Reference

How often have you heard someone say a comment indirectly during a conversation or presentation? This type of comment made indirectly, either slightly positive or negative, is

an oblique reference. This type of comment often causes the person to whom the comment was made to believe that they need to either defend or criticize the comment. This meets the intended goal of eliciting a response. The need to clarify what was originally said assists in transitioning the conversation from one that was general in nature to one that is now specific. The specificity provided allows you to explore a path that was not intended by the speaker, thus allowing the individual to share unrehearsed and unprepared material.

Criticism

In the previous section, oblique reference, there was a mention of providing a critical comment. The technique is best used indirectly in reference to an individual or organization with whom the person has a shared responsibility or interest. When using the criticism technique you are almost always likely to receive some type of response. People believe they need to defend what they say and desire to have their opinion known. In the passionate response or rebuttal, the individual you are speaking with will provide an inadvertent disclosure of information. As mentioned in the last section, this disclosure is not intended and thus becomes new venue for eliciting information. Although this may be what you want, you could jeopardize your conversation if rapport has not already been established. Often a person you have just met will not want to hear you criticize what they have said or remain even an acquaintance. Though this technique can be used on a new individual whom you barely know, I advise developing good rapport so that your criticism is taken in the context of clarification. This will leave you an opportunity to maintain rapport.

Disbelief

Although criticism was mentioned, there is another technique that borders along the same premise. Disbelief is

another technique, which, when applied correctly, will again provide an expansion or clarification as part of a defense statement. Through the use of an expression, gesture, or orally-stated disbelief, the individual you are speaking with will clarify the information stated. As with the previously-mentioned techniques, the person believes they must defend or clarify, so that you may understand exactly what they are saying. This technique continues to play on the natural tendencies that people have to not only be understood, but also to teach you what you may not know. To continue moving the conversation further into the clarification stage, you may want to consider a light use of repeat-a-word after you have used either criticism or the disbelief technique. The other person will want to ensure that you understand. The well-placed repetition of the last word spoken will make those individuals think that you are pondering and working through what they said so that you can agree with them. While using this specific technique, you do not want to use it throughout the conversation. Should you do so, you are only fostering a potential argument or you may give the impression that you are not receptive to new ideas and ways of thinking. Your goal is to elicit a response or more information and move the conversation forward. Think of a time when a person you were talking with kept saying that they didn't believe you or understand. What did you think of that individual? Do you want to be labeled as that type of person. Use this technique as part of an elicitation combination and move along through your various techniques.

Purposely False Statement

The last of the basic techniques covered is the purposely false statement. Just like the techniques previously mentioned, this technique is best used to prey upon those who hold the natural tendency to correct others. This technique or statement, if you will, allows you to mention something that you know is incorrect with the idea that the other person will correct you. This technique again calls for you to step back and suspend

your ego, as the other person will need to correct what you said. In a one-on-one conversation, this may not be a problem for you, but in a group, a business dinner, or a cocktail party you must be willing to take the back seat and allow this person to speak. Knowing that most of you are not going to want to come across completely unknowledgeable on a topic or say that you believe the false statement yourself, there is an out for you. Do you remember that dear friend Barry, or was it Mary? who said ... Was it John or Jane that heard ...? Almost everyone can refer to another person who might have heard or said something that you can blame on your imaginary friend, colleague, or associate. Often people tend to use the imaginary friend to relay or state something that he or she would want to share while maintaining plausible deniability and stand apart from the statement. This additional measure is applied so that you may remain impartial and open as the conversation evolves.

Putting It All Together

Many of the techniques shared are common to us and are techniques which one may have either learned through some sort of training or just from speaking with other people. The important thing is combining these techniques with human tendencies to determine the best way to elicit information. With every elicitation technique setting the stage is extremely important. Here is a quick reference chart of the eight natural tendencies and the eleven basic techniques. Take a moment, and go through the chart and identify which basic techniques can be applied to the natural tendency listed on the left.

	<i>Flattery</i>	<i>Quid Pro Quo</i>	<i>Secret Knowledge</i>	<i>Provocative Statement</i>	<i>Repeat a word</i>	<i>Instinct to Complain</i>	<i>Naiveté</i>	<i>Oblique Reference</i>	<i>Criticism</i>	<i>Disbelief</i>	<i>Purposely False Statement</i>
<i>Not Direct Concern</i>											
<i>Correcting Others</i>											

	<i>Flattery</i>	<i>Quid Pro Quo</i>	<i>Secret Knowledge</i>	<i>Provocative Statement</i>	<i>Repeat a word</i>	<i>Instinct to Complain</i>	<i>Naiveté</i>	<i>Oblique Reference</i>	<i>Criticism</i>	<i>Disbelief</i>	<i>Purposely False Statement</i>
<i>Recognition</i>											
<i>Curiosity</i>											
<i>Gossip</i>											
<i>Inability to Maintain a Secret</i>											
<i>Underestimating</i>											
<i>Occupationally Challenged</i>											

As you went through the chart, you may have been thinking how each of the techniques may be applied to the tendency depending on the situation and the flow of the conversation. Depending on how you set the stage, it will also depend on the amount of information that will flow and the receptiveness of the technique applied. Each aspect of elicitation continues to build upon itself. Where you are in the onion philosophy and how receptive people think you are to their thoughts and ideas is crucial. It is amazing how much your receptiveness will enable you to elicit further information from almost anyone.

When teaching others about elicitation, I encourage them to practice, practice, practice. The only way you can become good at what you do is to practice. The same is true with elicitation. Go out to your corner store, your library, or local bookstore and attempt to elicit information. Spend the time learning to talk with people and develop the basic techniques so that they become second nature during a conversation. Elicitation should occur in every one of your conversations so that it becomes one of your own natural tendencies. Try eliciting what people want, why they want something, and how they plan to achieve their personal desire. Talk to the person at your local coffee shop, bar,

or activity that you attend for your child. Talk to people and practice elicitation often. This is the only way to master this art.

“Wayne, there must to be more, more than just practicing the techniques in this chapter. There have to be some other ways to have this person open up when I attempt eliciting information from them.” All right, the next chapter will provide advanced techniques.

Advanced Elicitation Techniques

The advanced elicitation techniques build upon the basic techniques discussed in the previous chapter. The techniques require you to spend slightly more time observing the behavior of the individual whom you are speaking with. Traveling is one of my favorite activities. Unfortunately, I am blessed with always choosing that one flight that happens to be delayed. During this time, I find joy in people watching. I enjoy watching how people act and react to certain situations that they are presented with and that, for some, may be beyond their immediate control. By doing this, I become a student of human behavior and further learn how to apply these lessons in my daily life and activities that allow me to elicit responses from individuals. This is also the reason why I like to go out and watch people shop on the day after Thanksgiving. My wife reminds me that this is the worst time of the year to shop and that I am not going to enjoy waiting in the long lines at the checkout. When I share with her that I just want to watch the people, she just shakes her head wondering what to do with me.

Besides using the advanced techniques to enhance elicitation, the techniques will also further assist you as you attempt to create, solidify, or maintain rapport. As you read through the advanced elicitation techniques, you will realize that to learn these techniques, you will have to interact with people and practice the techniques regularly. Knowing the technique alone is not enough; you will need to go out and apply the technique often. Once you begin practicing and the techniques become second nature, you will see how easy elicitation can be to use on just about anyone. Some of the

advanced techniques are elements of neurolinguistic programming (NLP). The intent is not to make you experts in NLP, but you can take additional classes on this subject if you are so inclined. These classes will help you to determine if a person may be lying. Of course, this also requires that you take into consideration culture, values, ethics, and societal norms. As this book is not a how-to for NPL, the intent is to provide you with a few techniques that use principles of NLP to further assist your elicitation endeavors.

Anchoring

Anchoring is one of the fun techniques that can be explored on many levels. For elicitation purposes, anchoring occurs when you associate an action with an external or internal experience. These experiences vary and are dependent upon the rapport, the current relationship, and even the cultural experiences of an individual. Take, for example, a simple little thing, which is actually complex: the handshake. The handshake has so many different interpretations. Go ahead and look it up on the Internet and you will see what I mean. Think of the sincerity someone uses when shaking hands, think of the message the person wishes to convey, and think of the message that you wish to convey.

The handshake is but one example. Think of the last time a friend of yours came over to give you some news or information that may have been upsetting. What did they do? Did they just blurt out the information or did they change the manner of their presentation? Did they come over and place a hand on your shoulder while they told you the unfortunate news? What about when you are interested in a person? Does your body language change? Does your voice change? To understand how to use this technique to its upmost power, you need to understand the sensory acuity type of the person to whom you are speaking. Though further information about sensory acuity will be defined later in this chapter, you need to understand that everyone learns and receives data either visually, auditorily, or

kinesthetically. When the sensory acuity is combined with anchoring, you will subtly connect an external action to a word, a feeling, or even a decision. Look at the following examples of anchoring and think what was said the last time one of these was used on you:

Visual example of anchoring: wink, wave, smile

Auditory example of anchoring: tone of voice is happy, conspiratorial, unique

Kinesthetic example of anchoring: hug, unique touch, hand on shoulder, different handshake.

Combination example of anchoring: the use of a handshake, smile, and unique verbal greeting at the same time

Each of the aforementioned is something with which you are already familiar. In fact, this familiarity is what makes the anchoring technique so successful. Because you are not seeing, hearing, or experiencing something out of the ordinary, you are willing to accept anchoring techniques when applied. For the same reason, you will be able to apply anchoring techniques to individuals from whom you are eliciting responses. As any cue may be associated with your elicitation efforts, you only need to decide how you will combine the technique with anchoring. An example would be that of combining anchoring with the elicitation technique of *Secret Knowledge*. As you plan to share something that may be considered a "secret" while attempting to elicit further information from the individual you are speaking, you lean in subtly and glance around to make sure no one else is in earshot. The other individual realizes that you are sharing something secret or private so they lean in to hear what you have to say. You lower your voice to a hushed conspiratorial tone. When you finish speaking, you lean back and wait. The person you are speaking with feels obligated to share something just as secret as he or she mimics your previous movements.

Another example would be when using flattery or attempting to demonstrate sincerity to the person whom you

are speaking with. As you're speaking with the individual, you place your hand on their arm or elbow to reinforce the personal connection that you are making. Again, this technique is not meant to be applied all the time, but may be applied to individuals whose sensory acuity you understand.

Sensory Acuity

All this talk of sensory acuity requires you to understand a little more than what was described in the previous section. Each person has his or her own primary representational system that they use in daily life. This system allows an individual to think, learn, fantasize, and recall data. Without writing volumes and citing multiple pages from numerous neuroscience journals, I cannot delve into the scientific reasons for why our brains function in this capacity. What I will do is remind you that, at least once in your life, you probably have had someone ask you, "What type of learner are you?" If no one has, consider yourself asked now. Each person associates stronger with one specific sense than with another. You are either a visual person, an audio person, or a tactile (hands-on) person. Of course, you can be made up of all three, but which one is more dominant? Or better yet, which one is the person you are speaking with? Now, here come the complaints: "Wayne, I just met this person and we have only spoken for a few minutes. How am I supposed to know?"

Fortunately for you, I am willing to share a little secret with you. (Are you leaning forward? Did you look around in a conspiratorial manner?) When you talk with a person, the individual will often reveal what type of sensory acuity they are more in touch with. Think of certain conversational phrases that you may say or others around you may say. Do they say things such as this:

That is not the way I feel about it. (Kinesthetic)

He'll sing a different tune when I'm done. (Auditory)

I see what you mean. (Visual)

I feel you. (Kinesthetic)

I hear what you're saying. (Auditory)

Get a grip. (Kinesthetic)

The aforementioned examples are sayings that you have heard in your daily conversations. Think of the various items you may say and then think of how you may process information or learn best. Are the two comparable? Of course, as you sit here thinking about the sayings and which sensory type you may be, you are probably thinking, "I don't say any of them," or "I say all them." If you're confused, which you may find yourself to be, ask someone close to you to tell you what type of individual they think you are.

"Great, now I have spent the last minute or two reading what type of person I am. How is this going to help me elicit information?" Besides using this information in anchoring, you can look at why you may not connect with a person whom you are trying all the basic elicitation techniques on.

There are a few reasons why you may not connect with the other person when attempting to establish your own version of rapport:

1. The person is not interested in anything you are saying and doesn't want to be around you
2. You just spilled a drink on them to meet them (Don't laugh, I know someone who has attempted that.)
3. You appear to be stalking them, and they are trying to figure out how to obtain a restraining order
4. You are not speaking the same language

"Not speaking the same language, Wayne, what are you speaking about? I understand them, they understand me, but we just don't hit it off." Maybe your reason for not hitting it off is that you are not speaking the same sensory language. Remember when I said to work on the basic techniques and just talk to people. This is the reason that, as you progress further in

elicitation, you need to use so many additional measures, and certain elements may become confusing. Maybe things aren't working on the job site because of the following:

You don't see things the way I see it. (Visual)

You're not in touch with reality. (Kinesthetic)

You don't have a clear vision. (Visual)

Do you two hear yourselves? (Auditory)

This sounds ... (Auditory)

Just as you listen to what a person says during a conversation, you should listen to how and what they say all the time. You should have a mental catalog of individuals and know how you need to change your communication so that you may relate and communicate with them on their sensory level. This technique is not the easiest to master, and it will take patience and a considerable amount of time to change how you speak to every person around you. Once you master this technique, you should be able to elicit additional information with ease as the person believes that they are able to connect with you instantly and they find communication a breeze. Again, this technique requires much practice in talking to individuals, watching individuals, and practicing your basic elicitation skills.

Matching

Another technique that exists and that some of you may have heard or even seen it used before is matching. Matching is a process in which you mimic, or "match," another person's behavior. This can resemble the old childhood game in which many children mimic a sibling to upset him or her. Read that again; this was something many of you did as children to upset another person. Because your goal is not to alienate the individual you are speaking with, you need to be extremely cautious when using the matching technique. Matching is a

careful and well-crafted technique that, when applied correctly, further opens the lines of communication between you and the individual with whom you are speaking. Even in the infancy stage, you can still eventually match the body movements of another during a conversation. You may choose to cross your legs the same way or you may move one foot forward as the other individual does during the conversation. The real advanced technique of matching isn't matching body positions, but the matching of behaviors.

The matching of behaviors between you and the individual whom you are speaking with might be challenging at the beginning of the conversation, but the longer you are with the individual, the better the opportunity to match their behavior. At the onset of a conversation, you may use the various basic techniques to elicit both physical and emotional responses that will help you identify the individual's behavior. As the behavior changes during the conversation, you will be able to change your behavior as well. The changing of behavior during a conversation is something that occurs during every interaction as you and the person you are speaking with begin connecting through commonalities. The commonalities only set the stage as you assess the other person and determine what behavior they present while speaking with them. When was the last time you heard someone say that you would get along with so-and-so because you are both driven, or you both share the same management or presentation style? Your goal is to identify that behavior without someone telling you and match that behavior to build rapport and elicit information.

Modeling

Modeling is a much different technique as this requires you to have specific knowledge at an expert level. Modeling is the ability to perform a certain act as well as an expert and be able to teach others to do it just as well. From this explanation, you will see that not everyone will choose to use the technique of modeling as this technique is used on individuals who are

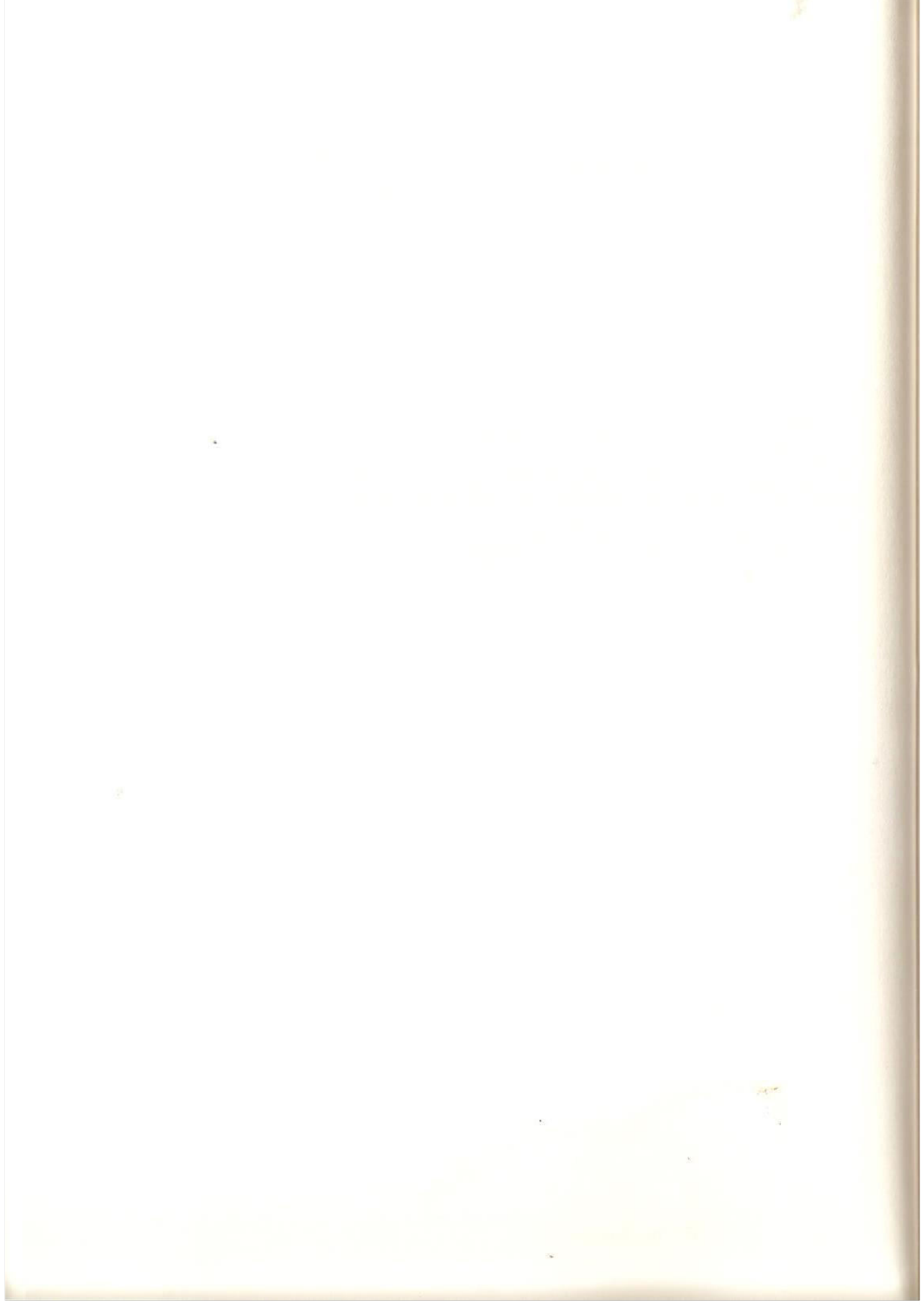
experts in their specific fields. Think of the last time you sat through a class and thought that you knew just as much as the professor. Did you believe that you could converse with that individual on the same level and able to teach others to be an expert as well? For you to use modeling, not only do you need to be a subject matter expert, but you also need to be able to teach others to become the same. Most people either can't use the modeling technique or they can use this technique on only certain occasions. Although you may want to try this technique, be careful not to construct your conversation toward this technique. Should you attempt to orchestrate this occurrence, you may find yourself either ill-prepared or the person will not be interested as they assume you are only attempting to show off or be person in charge. Others may look at you as an instructor and seek your opinion or expertise on a certain subject.

Ethical Dilemma

One of the most advanced techniques does not evolve from the elements of NLP or a combination of basic techniques. Instead, the ethical dilemma technique is one that allows you to elicit multiple responses at once, based upon a simple ethical situation. Think of the last time you were faced with an ethical decision. What did that decision entail? Why was that decision so difficult? What did that decision measure? Now, imagine if your associates or your competition had the answers to these questions. Imagine if they understood your thought process and what drove you to the answer that you selected. Can you imagine the information they could elicit from you if the other person understood what type of elicitation technique to apply against your human tendencies?

When considering whether to use the ethical dilemma technique, select an ethical problem or situation that you or one of your imaginary friends, employees, or associates may be experiencing. Although I told you that you should be listening 20 percent of the time, this technique allows you to share a story in which the person being spoken about must discover an

answer to an ethical dilemma. You are eliciting a response from the individual that shares how they would handle that situation. When I have used this technique I have used subjects such as money, business deals, inside information, relationships, and corporate espionage. All these categories have elicited various responses that provided great insight into the individuals with whom I had been speaking. These individuals shared stories of why they would make a specific decision. The stories, of course, revealed further information about the person allowing a greater understanding of the individual and what make the person tick. Imagine what you could do if you understood what made your competition tick or what drives them. Eliciting this information enables you to craft your conversations carefully so that you may obtain the specific information or responses that you desire.



Conversational Gates and Mapping

When you need to do a presentation, give a speech, or sell a product to a client, do you just wing it? Do you just walk in and sit-down for a job interview or walk in and ask for a raise? Of course not, most people think about what they want to say and plan out the conversation or at least how they want the conversation to flow. Unfortunately, for most people the conversations don't flow the way they intend or they are only able to express part of what they had to say.

Have you ever been the one to sit there and wish you had some sort of supernatural power to read a person's thoughts or have you daydreamed about just the right thing to say at the right moment to a client? Think of when you had planned out a conversation to go the way you wanted, but the other person took it completely the opposite direction. What if I told you that I could help you avoid those situations? Wouldn't you be interested? Of course you would, because any advantage you can have over your competition or your colleagues equals success for you. In previous chapters, I mentioned that a one-hour conversation takes approximately eight hours of preparation. I also mentioned that I attempt to plan every possible conversation the other person could engage in. Although I'm not asking you to plan eight hours for a one-hour conversation, I am asking you to take some additional time from your hectic schedule and plan. Think of the most complex decision you have faced in your life. I'm sure that decision wasn't made by the flip of a coin or maybe it was and that is why it didn't end up the way you wanted. In fact, you probably spent hours contemplating the pros and cons of the

decision so you could make the most informed decision possible. Imagine if you spent that much time contemplating the conversations you have and the information exchanged.

So much information is passed both verbally and nonverbally during a conversation that many choose to ignore what they see and hear. You have the points that you want to get across and you're thinking of multiple items at once that make it extremely difficult to focus on exactly what the other person is saying. In this book, you have read of the variety of elicitation techniques that you may use on the person you're speaking to. You read about showing interest in what the person is speaking about, but how do you further your elicitation techniques or move the conversation along? The use of conversational gates allows you to transition through green light topics easily without alienating the person you are speaking with.

Conversational Gates

Conversational gates are natural transition opportunities that allow you to move a conversation from one topic to another almost seamlessly. Naturally, when you have a conversation with another person, information is exchanged. During the conversation a person may mention various topics or make a quick comment to the information that you are speaking about. Because time is often of the essence, many people don't follow up on the conversational gates that are presented because they are too focused on their own personal agendas. During the conversation a person may make a small comment about a similar experience, missed opportunity, or even a planned activity or function they will attend. Because you are so focused on business or meeting your own personal goals, you fail to ask or even comment on the area that they mention. Should you ask or conduct some sort of follow up, you demonstrate that you are interested in what the other person has to say and further enhance your opportunity for rapport. Of course, some people don't follow up or notice these additional conversation points.

When this occurs you often walk away feeling slightly empty or with the feeling that you didn't connect for some reason.

When you are engaged in a conversation, you should listen intently for the items or areas mentioned during the conversation. You should continue with your original conversation, making a mental note of the various points that arise. By continuing on with the original conversation, the other person believes that you may have missed the cue that was provided to you. Sometimes these cues are intentionally provided by the other person, but sometimes these are inserted during the conversation subconsciously. Whether conscious or subconscious, these conversation points become the gates that you need to move your conversation along. When your original conversation is coming to a close and you are not ready for the conversation to end, you should revive one of these previous points. By mentioning the point that the person had mentioned or by tying your past conversation with an item the other person had suggested your conversation will continue.

Of course, this seems natural, and you say you do this all the time. When you consciously think of this or pay attention to the little items that a person has to say while engaged in a conversation, you will be amazed by how much you happen to remember. You may say you are a good listener and pick up on all the subtle conversation pieces that exist, but do you really? During your next conversation take a moment to listen to what the other person really has to say. Listen and identify the conversational gates that you could use to move your conversation along. Try using one of these gates and see how much the other person opens up and shares additional information.

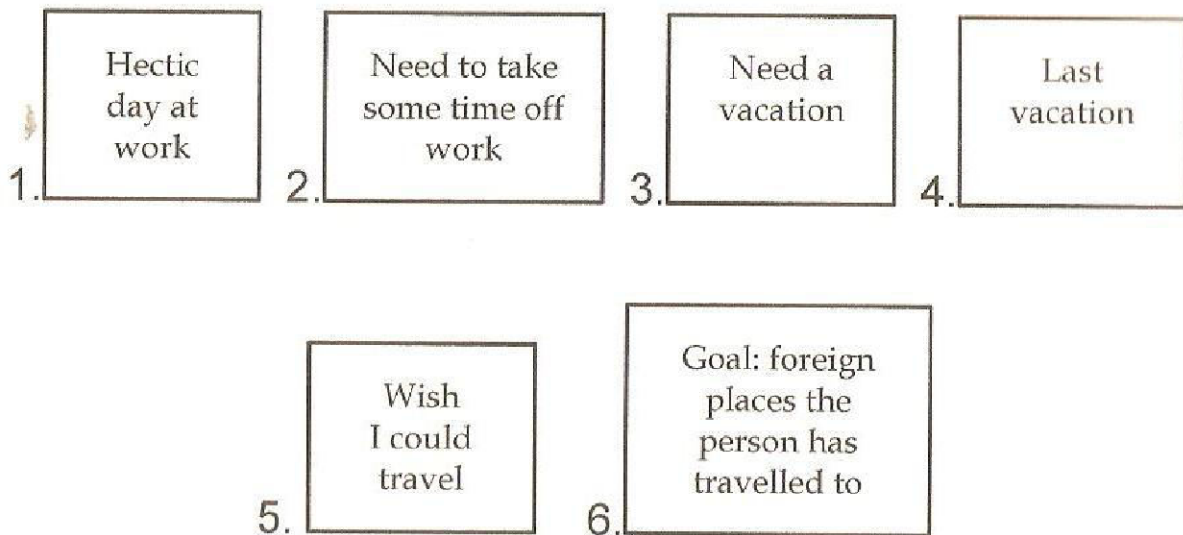
Unfortunately, there is a drawback to using the conversational gate process. As you pick up on various points and use them as gates to move your conversation along, you may realize that you could continue picking up more and more conversational gates that will keep you engaged in a

conversation for hours at a time. For this reason, you should learn about conversational mapping and how to use conversational gates to follow your conversational map.

Conversational Mapping

Many individuals think that a conversation just occurs. Those who are interested in elicitation and acquiring the most from of a conversation understand that these are planned-out interactions. Conversational mapping is just that, a planned-out conversation using the appropriate gates to transition a conversation to reach a specific goal. Just like a roadmap, you can use this conversational mapping process to move along a desired path. The difference is that just as roads have detours, so do conversations. For this reason, the mapping exercise is extremely important. Some individuals may look at this technique as a method to remain on track with a planned discussion. Although this may assist you with your conversation, you don't reach your goal unless you monopolize the conversation. How many of you want to speak with a person monopolizes a conversation? I assume that not many of you want to be engaged with a monopolizer. Your goal is to take conversational mapping to a different level.

When I teach conversational mapping to groups, I teach them to choose a specific piece of information that they may want to know about an individual. In one exercise, the group chose the subject of foreign travel. This would be easy if you came out and asked a direct question about the person's foreign travel. Unfortunately, the use of direct questions is often alarming and can be a turn-off to individuals you have just met. Look at the diagram below and see how this particular group developed a conversational map to reach the desired subject.



Although the above example appears to be simplistic, the planning of this conversation and moving exactly as you want to is not always the easiest. Using this example, try to have a quick conversation with a friend or spouse to reach the goal listed in step six. Some of you may accomplish this, others of you may find this a tad bit difficult.

Step one: You begin by mentioning that you had a hectic day at work, and, hopefully, the other person is able to commiserate with you. At this first step you may find that the person you are speaking with has already shared a few conversational gates as they commiserate with you. Of course this may move your conversation off track, which will require you to find a way, using the gates, to move the conversation back on the track of your conversational plan.

Step two: The frustration you have faced at work makes you long for the weekend or even taking some additional time off work. Your goal is to have the person begin speaking about their frustration and that they want to take some time off work as well. Again, the conversation

may move off track and you will need to guide the conversation back on course.

Step three: In this step, your frustration at work and desire to take time off prompt you bring up your need for a vacation. This, of course, can allow you to discuss your vacation policy at work.

Step four: The discussion of vacation allows you to bring up your last vacation. You can speak about how fun it was, where you stayed, and the activities you participated in while on vacation. This works even better if you had the chance to travel somewhere exotic.

Step five: Begin speaking about your next vacation, your plans, the activities that you may want to conduct, or the place where you're planning to travel to. Of course, your goal is to further elicit some type of response during the last two steps that will allow you to reach your ultimate goal.

Step six: Your goal is to elicit the information about their past travels outside the country and future travel that they are considering.

Throughout this entire process you need to be consciously aware of what the person says and how you can use the various conversational gates to continue mapping your conversation to reach your intended goal. I recommend that you use a backward planning process and write down the goal of what you want to elicit from the individual you are speaking and determine what additional topics can help guide you to reach your goal. One important element to remember is that the conversational mapping process is just that, a map. Your conversation may not cover all your intended topics. Don't become upset if this happens. Most conversations won't go as originally planned. Other times you will get off track and

realize that the new conversation is more lucrative and that you have no desire to follow your previously-established map. Throughout the conversation, keeping the other person talking and sharing new information is your goal. Even if you do not reach your original goal, but you're able to keep the person speaking, not alienate him or her, and maybe even acquire a second meeting, then you are a success.

Practicing the elicitation techniques, identifying the conversational gates, and mapping out your conversation are all skills that you need to practice on a continuous basis. Conquering your fear of speaking to another person and remaining interested in what they have to say are keys to eliciting information from others. Continue to practice and you will soon master the art of elicitation.

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[Faint, illegible handwriting]

About the Author

Wayne Taylor, originally from New Bedford, Massachusetts, left his home in 1992 for a rather interesting and diverse career ranging from Army Infantry to the Military Intelligence career field. From working as a strategic Counterintelligence Special Agent to holding in depth conversations with tribal leaders along the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the elements of elicitation and a myriad of human intelligence (HUMINT) skills have afforded some of the greatest opportunities and experiences one can imagine. With an interest in corporate security and competitive intelligence, Wayne realized that the benefit of the skills that he had acquired throughout his career could prove beneficial to those in the private sector and inspired him to author the The Dark Arts of Business Series. Wayne has assisted various companies in developing security strategies focused on awareness and educating employees of the dangers of competitive intelligence.