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Teaching Intelligence Analysis: Field vs. Academia

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Abstract

In response to growth in organized crime, transnational crime, and national security offences, policing strategies have evolved. The field of criminal intelligence has emerged to combat these increasingly sophisticated criminal activities. Criminal intelligence analysis is the foundation of intelligence in policing and the authors have 23 collective years of experience in the field. The authors have developed and delivered numerous courses and lectures in criminal intelligence analysis to analysts, investigators, and managers in law enforcement. They have also created and conducted a "Criminal Intelligence Analysis" course in the Criminal Justice Department at the University of Winnipeg. This paper examines the similarities, differences, and challenges associated with teaching intelligence analysis in law enforcement and in academia. The relationship between the academic and practical world in terms of creating teaching material and best practices is also explored. Lastly, the benefits and challenges of team teaching in both environments are addressed.

Introduction

Policing strategies have evolved in response to the growth in organized crime, transnational crime, and national security offences (Ratcliffe, 2008). The field of intelligence has emerged to combat these increasingly sophisticated criminal activities. Criminal intelligence analysis is the foundation of intelligence-led policing. The authors have taught criminal intelligence analysis to analysts, investigators, police managers, and university students. Based on the diverse analytical experience

of the authors, this paper first provides a description of intelligence analysis and then goes on to examine the similarities and differences between teaching intelligence analysis in law enforcement and in academia. The benefits and challenges of team teaching in both environments are also explored. Three primary findings result from comparing teaching intelligence analysis in the field and academia: Teaching challenges are similar, teaching in academia and the field are complimentary to one another, and team teaching is a valuable technique for instructing intelligence analysis. This paper aims to highlight various effective techniques used to teach intelligence analysis in order to help improve instruction in academia and law enforcement.

Intelligence Analysis

At the most basic level, intelligence is processed information. An analyst collects information from numerous sources and processes this information through the various stages of the intelligence cycle. This process is similar to the academic research process. The structure of the intelligence cycle differs by agency, but generally involves the same basic stages: collection, evaluation, collation, analysis, and dissemination and planning (See for example Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 2009 and Peterson, Morehouse, & Wright, 2000).

Analysts and investigators are involved in the collection of information. At this stage, the analyst performs research to gather information in both the open (public) and closed (police) source domains. Information can be in many formats: a surveillance report, a picture from the internet, or informant information gathered by an investigator.

Plans are often used in the collection phase of the intelligence cycle. A collection plan serves as a research outline or road map for the direction and scope of the investigation. A collection plan ensures that analysts and investigators stay focused in their collection.

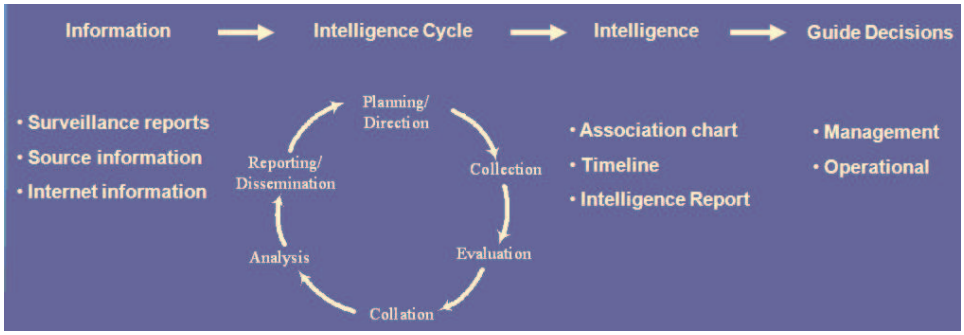
As information is collected, it is evaluated for its reliability and validity. The credibility of the source of the information (reli-

ability) as well as the accuracy of the information (validity) are examined in the evaluation phase of the intelligence cycle. This is an important stage in part because deception is inherent in the field of intelligence (Johnson, 2007).

Collation involves the organization of information in a logical fashion. This includes: sorting, categorizing, and comparing information. Databases are used to index large amounts of information. Electronic collation facilitates the sorting and retrieving of specific information.

In the analysis phase of the intelligence cycle, the analyst adds value and provides meaning to the information collected. Analysts are responsible for answering the who, what, where, when, why and how of the criminal activity. Analysis goes beyond descriptive summarization and considers aspects such as capabilities, weaknesses, intentions, judgments, and recommendations for enforcement action. This "added value" transforms information into intelligence. The analyst creates intelligence by transforming raw information into a useful product (Peterson, Morehouse, & Wright, 2000). Intelligence products include analytical reports or visual aids such as an association chart or timeline. Once the analyst has created an intelligence product, it is disseminated to those who require it.

Intelligence products are used to assist in the decision-making process at the operational and management levels. For example, at the operational level an analyst may identify who, when, and where to conduct surveillance. At the management level, an analyst may guide the disbursement of police resources by determining which organized crime group poses the greatest threat to the community. The diagram below depicts the essence of intelligence analysis.



Teaching Intelligence Analysts

The authors teach intelligence analysis at the regional, national, and international levels. We conduct regional training workshops for analysts on various topics surrounding intelligence analysis, such as: ethics, critical thinking, and role of the analyst in investigations. We have instructed on national courses, including: Tactical Intelligence Analysis, Strategic Intelligence Analysis, and Advanced Intelligence Analysis courses at the Canadian Police College. We have also lectured at the international level on advanced intelligence analysis at the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit (LEIU) / International Association of Law Enforcement Intelligence Analysts (IALEIA) training conference.

Throughout these training initiatives many case studies were utilized. Investigations were examined in detail as well as how and why analysis was conducted in a particular manner throughout the investigation. The training involves scenarios, exercises, and tests. Discussion and questions are encouraged during training so bad habits can be curbed and self confidence can be gained. Intelligence analysis training has improved over the past few years due to police management placing greater emphasis on the importance of analytical training. In addition, analysts themselves now have more experience in this still new field to base their training curriculum. As a result, experienced analysts will often ask themselves "What do I wish I had learned when I was hired?" and then impart that knowledge to new analysts. Mentorship is a large part of analytical teaching and involves job shadowing experienced analysts. New analysts can learn many facets of the job this way, such as how to interact with investigators, how to create intelligence products, and how to conduct themselves in briefings with management. Mentorship involves a new analyst being tasked with analysis on an investigation, under the guidance of senior analysts. Their analytical products are reviewed by several experienced analysts throughout the process. Senior analysts also gain different viewpoints and perspectives from the new analysts during the mentoring process.

Teaching Law Enforcement Personnel

In addition to teaching intelligence analysis to analytical peers, instruction is also provided to front line members and managers in law enforcement (the "field"). Although the teaching objectives may differ, case studies and tactical products are used with both audiences to illustrate concepts.

Front line members include uniform police officers posted in detachments, and plain clothes investigators working in operational units. The teaching goal for this audience is to provide them with a better understanding of their role in intelligence-led policing and outline the role of the analyst in investigations. The investigator's role as collectors of information in the collection phase of the intelligence cycle is emphasized. Instruction is provided on the ways uniform and plainclothes members can generate information. How analysts take this information and transform it into intelligence is also discussed. Analysts cannot create meaningful intelligence products without an information base.

Detachment and unit commanders holding managerial positions in the RCMP are also provided training in intelligence analysis. Managers should have a strong conceptual understanding of the intelligence-led policing model, therefore the teaching objective differs from that of teaching front line members where the emphasis is on collection of information. The teaching goal for this audience is to examine the role of managers and analysts in the planning and direction phase of the intelligence cycle. Emphasis is placed on how analysts can be better utilized by management. The role of the analyst in operational and organizational decision making is explored. Sample analytical products are explained to managers, and they are encouraged to request analytical assistance for investigations in their units and detachments.

Intelligence instruction is provided at the provincial, regional, national, and international levels. Training is also conducted with integrated audiences which includes members from various law enforcement agencies and may include court personnel, such as prosecutors. Teaching intelligence analysis in the

field is done by way of courses, presentations, and conferences. Instruction can also be more topic specific, for example teaching open source resources and techniques at a regional conference.

Teaching Students in Academia

Introducing intelligence analysis into academia was facilitated through the creation of a "Criminal Intelligence Analysis" course at the University of Winnipeg. The objective of the course was to bring the theoretical aspects of intelligence-led policing together with the practical application of intelligence analysis. The goal of the course was to provide students with a strong understanding of the intelligence cycle with a focus on the analysis phase. Lectures were developed as modules. Each module was designed to build on the theories and applications of the previous models. Students were first provided with the foundations of intelligence led-policing. Subsequent instruction included critical thinking and analytical methodology. Students were then prepared for the practical applications of intelligence analysis which included modules covering tactical and strategic analysis. Topic-specific modules were then introduced which covered other aspects of intelligence analysis such as ethics and transnational organized crime. Case studies were used throughout the course along with hands on exercises that simulated the practical application of intelligence analysis. Group work was also introduced. Students worked in teams, conducting tactical and strategic analyses for an investigation. Although the information used for the case study was obtained through the media and open sources, the exercise was successful in mirroring a real analytical assignment. Evaluation for the course was comprised of assignments, projects, and tests.

Teaching Challenges

Some challenges in teaching in law enforcement and in academia are similar. In both realms, there is a loss of anonymity which in turn poses a threat to the personal security of those that teach. Instructor identity is disclosed through teaching the

course itself and often the instructor's name and biography are posted on the internet. Biographies may contain work location and current area of expertise. Because intelligence is a world enveloped in security, the loss of anonymity has a greater impact when it occurs outside the law enforcement field. Analysts and investigators working in the field of intelligence require high levels of security clearance, and intelligence analysts have access to more information than most operational members. Analysts are exposed to information that is highly sensitive. There is an inherent fear that those who work in the intelligence field may be targeted by organized crime groups seeking information on rival groups or on law enforcement personnel. The loss of anonymity associated with teaching in academia and law enforcement increases that fear.

The practical application of intelligence analysis is best illustrated through the use of actual case studies. The secret nature of police work poses challenges to teaching the practical side of analysis. In law enforcement varying levels of security clearances means not all members have access to the same information. When teaching intelligence analysis in law enforcement consideration must be given to the case studies used to ensure that on-going and sensitive investigations are not comprised. This is a challenge when instructing to an integrated audience comprised of members from numerous law enforcement agencies with varying security clearances and differing access to information. Attempting to integrate the practical application of intelligence analysis is even more difficult in academia. Investigative techniques can not be disclosed and only information available in the media is used for teaching purposes.

Introducing analytical concepts is difficult in both law enforcement and academia. The more abstract aspects of intelligence analysis, – i.e the evolution of intelligence-led policing, the analytical process, and critical thinking—are sometimes difficult to convey in law enforcement. These concepts are sometimes interpreted as "academic" and having little application to front line policing. Conversely, the practical aspects of intelligence analysis – i.e. the tactical support to investigative

units and the analyst's role in investigations – are difficult to explain in academia due to covert police techniques that can't be shared. Students are also unfamiliar with basic police culture and vernacular, therefore instructors ensure acronyms and police terms are explained throughout the course.

"Old school" mentality is a challenge that can occur when teaching intelligence analysis in law enforcement. There is still occasionally the perception that individuals working in law enforcement that are not uniformed (i.e. civilian intelligence analysts) are hired for clerical support and are not essential in the decision-making process of the agency. In reality, intelligence analysts play an important role in guiding decisions both tactically and strategically. Analysts are an integral part of intelligence led policing. Long held, "old school" attitudes may make it difficult to assist decision-makers if they are resistant to change.

One of the challenges of teaching intelligence in academia is that it is, in essence, a "side job" to a challenging full time career. After working a full and often long day, an additional three hours of instruction in academia is required. Academic preparation is secondary to the long working hours and pressures associated to working as an intelligence analyst. Scheduling academic teaching is also complicated with travel that is associated to the career of an analyst. Analysts can travel frequently for investigative necessity, conferences, meetings and training. One of the benefits of team teaching in academia is that modifications can be made to the course as a result of the demanding career of an intelligence analyst.

Field and Academic Teaching Interplay

There is strong interplay between teaching in academia and teaching in the field. The use of academic research and practical experience were used to create training for law enforcement and academia. Conducting research for the preparation of courses in both realms enables instructors to remain current in their field and encourages professional development. The combination of academic research and field knowledge was

used to create the basis of all lectures in both the field and academia.

Many of the academic lectures and the field training modules fostered one another and served dual purposes. Some academic lectures began as field training workshops. Modules that were created for teaching in law enforcement were modified and used in academic lectures. For example, the "Ethics in Intelligence Analysis" lecture began as a field workshop to train analysts in an important area that is often overlooked in analytical training. It was created and delivered to intelligence analysts and then items such as organizational policy and corruption investigation specifics were removed, and the lecture was delivered to university students in the "Criminal Intelligence Analysis" course.

Similarly, some modules developed for academia were altered and incorporated into field teaching. For instance, the "Critical Thinking" and "Intelligence-Led Policing" lectures were specifically designed for the university course. The lectures were later expanded and developed into field workshops by including restricted information, exercises, and evaluation. Some topics within university lectures later became field workshops. The role of the analyst in investigations was an aspect covered in the tactical analysis lecture in academia. The "Role of the Analyst in Investigations" is now being developed into a training workshop for the field. The workshop will include many restricted investigation job duty specifics that were not included in the academic lecture.

Academic lectures often created greater discussion than field lectures. In the ethics classes, an example of an officer putting a man to sleep with a fire extinguisher as he is burning to death is examined (Kidder, 1996). When this example is given in the field little discussion ensued. Whereas in the academic class, many questions arose from the students, such as "Is what he did any better than burning to death? Were his actions wrong?" and other potential avenues of action were discussed. The academic course included a participation grade and both university students and law enforcement personnel were

enrolled which may have affected the amount of discussion. In addition, police agencies are hierarchical organizations, so new intelligence analysts may feel their role in training is to listen and learn rather than express their opinion and question information, which are encouraged in academia. Questions and comments that arose in academic lectures were later directed toward analysts in field training in order to facilitate discussion.

Team Teaching

Team teaching is a concept in which two or more instructors co-operate to facilitate student learning (Buckley, 2000). Team teaching can be an effective tool in various fields, including criminal justice (Gray & Harrison, 2003 and Tewksbury & Scott, 2000). The authors have taken the concept of team teaching and applied it to instructing intelligence analysis in the field and academia. They have found this approach to be beneficial in both arenas.

There are many benefits to team teaching intelligence analysis, such as: comprehensive training, reduced bias, increased credibility, division of workload, instructor learning, and the review process. In team teaching, each analyst brings their own expertise and experiences. The combination of varied experiences and abilities in the creation and delivery of intelligence analysis lectures results in more comprehensive training. The notion of team teaching parallels the trend of collaborative analysis in the intelligence field. (Heuer and Pherson, 2010) Collaborative analysis encourages differing opinions and challenges individual biases.

The combination of experiences and viewpoints in both academia and the field produces training that is less biased. When there are multiple instructors they can challenge one another if a particular viewpoint or avenue of analysis is favored more than another during training. The team teaching approach limits the instruction of a single perspective as the only perspective.

The use of multiple instructors also increases the credibility of

courses. Subject matter experts are available to clarify material, draw on examples, and answer student questions specific to their area of expertise. This results in the ability to effectively and accurately respond to student questions and convey course concepts.

As previously discussed, a career in intelligence analysis is very demanding. Therefore the division of the course development between three analysts makes the workload much more manageable. This division of workload allows publishing opportunities as well.

Instructors also gain valuable knowledge from team teaching. The authors continued to learn about the field of intelligence analysis from researching books, journal articles, and internet entries during course development. In addition, the authors gained valuable information about the field and tips on training methods and presentation skills by attending one another's lectures.

When there are multiple instructors developing and delivering lectures there is a built in review process that improves the quality of teaching. Once lectures were created, they were circulated to other instructors who provided constructive criticism on content, structure, and clarity. After lectures were delivered, other instructors provided feedback on how to improve the delivery of lectures and identified specific material that resonated with students.

There are also some challenges associated with team teaching, such as scheduling, time consumption, communication issues, and cost. Intelligence analysis is a career that can involve unpredictable and extensive overtime. So, no matter how carefully one schedules meetings, timelines, and lectures, they may be disrupted due to investigations that require immediate attention.

Team teaching can be very time consuming during the development of courses. It can take much longer to compile three instructors' ideas into one cohesive workshop than for one person to create that same lecture. Regular meetings on course

content, exercises, and tests are required to ensure course continuity. The review process takes longer when multiple instructors are involved in one course. However, it is these multiple layers of experience, review, and divergent ideas that create a higher quality teaching product.

Disagreements and misunderstandings are inevitable in team teaching. Instructors have different ideas and are not always going to unanimously agree on every aspect of a course or workshop. The authors encountered this situation during creation of the university course outline. The "Majority Rule" was used in these situations.

Cost can become a major issue in team teaching. Generally, when organizations request a lecture, they will only cover the transportation and accommodation costs of a single instructor. However in team teaching, the organization requesting the training must cover the cost of multiple instructors or the instructor's agency may need to fill this financial gap. This may result in a need to justify the expense and the value of the training. Justification can involve professional development of the instructor or advancement of an agency's reputation in the intelligence community.

Challenges associated with team teaching in intelligence analysis are obstacles, not barriers, because they can be overcome. None of the challenges outweigh the benefits of using team teaching in intelligence analysis training. We believe that team teaching results in superior training in academia and in the field.

Conclusion

In summary, this paper compared and contrasted teaching criminal intelligence analysis in law enforcement and academia. The benefits and challenges of team teaching were also examined. Several results emerged: Teaching challenges are similar in both environments, teaching in academia and the field are complimentary to one another, and team teaching is a valuable technique for instructing intelligence analysis.

Information in this paper may increase instructor awareness and help improve criminal intelligence analysis teaching in academia and law enforcement.

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