



## Session 20 | How to Listen for, Recognize, and Break Down Assumptions and Conclusory Language

August 25, 2020

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EDT

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The saying, “We do not see things as they are, we see them as we are,” is the basis of police misconduct investigations. Civilians, officers, and investigators all have life experiences that color their perception of what happened during an incident, and what happened during an interview for an investigation. Investigators cannot conduct a thorough investigation if they are unable to recognize what assumptions and conclusions they are making about what people are telling them, and if they are unable to break down the assumptions and conclusory language that the people they interview are using.

“He was belligerent,” is a common phrase in police misconduct investigations. However, it has no direct meaning—it is conclusory. This subjective assessment of someone’s behavior does not help the investigation determine what specific factual actions were taken and whether they were appropriate to the situation. Ultimately no one attempting to recreate the scene could act out what “he was belligerent” was in that specific instance.

In addition to explaining how prevalent this is, the lecture will include exercises that investigators can use to fine-tune their listening, in order to avoid pitfall assumptions like, “I know what ‘He walked up to me,’ looks like.” These exercises will also help in breaking down the conclusions of others such as, “I could tell he wanted to kill me.”

Ultimately once this careful listening skill is acquired, investigators will be able to obtain the information they need to make a factual determination regarding an incident.

Speaker:

- Jennifer Jarrett

### Speaker Biography

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**Jennifer Jarrett** | Jennifer Jarrett, the Deputy Director of Training for Investigations at the Civilian Complaint Review Board, has been with the agency for thirteen years. Jennifer began her tenure as an investigator and spent several years supervising dozens of investigators. Jennifer currently leads the New Investigator Training course and creates and leads continued and advanced trainings for the investigative staff. She was a co-presenter of the “Evaluating Use of Force” lecture at the 2017 NACOLE Annual Conference, presented the “Investigating Search and Seizure Allegations” NACOLE webinar in May 2018, and is currently a member of the NACOLE Training, Education, & Standards Committee. Jennifer is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania.



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*Please note, content and speakers subject to change.*