

ELICITATION: WHAT IS IT?

In the espionage trade, elicitation is the term applied to subtle extraction of information during an apparently normal and innocent conversation.

Conducted by a skillful intelligence collector, elicitation appears to be normal social or professional conversation and can occur anywhere – in a restaurant, at a conference, or during a visit to one's home.



WHY ELICITATION? & WHAT IS ITS APPEAL TO TODAY'S SPY?

As an intelligence technique, elicitation exploits several fundamental aspects of human nature:

- Most of us want to be polite and helpful, so we answer questions even from relative strangers.
- We want to appear well informed about our professional specialty, so we may be tempted to say more than we should.
- We want to be appreciated, and to feel that we are doing something important and useful. As a result, we often talk more expansively in response to praise about the value or importance of our work.
- As open and honest people, we are often reluctant to withhold information, lie, or be suspicious of others' motives.

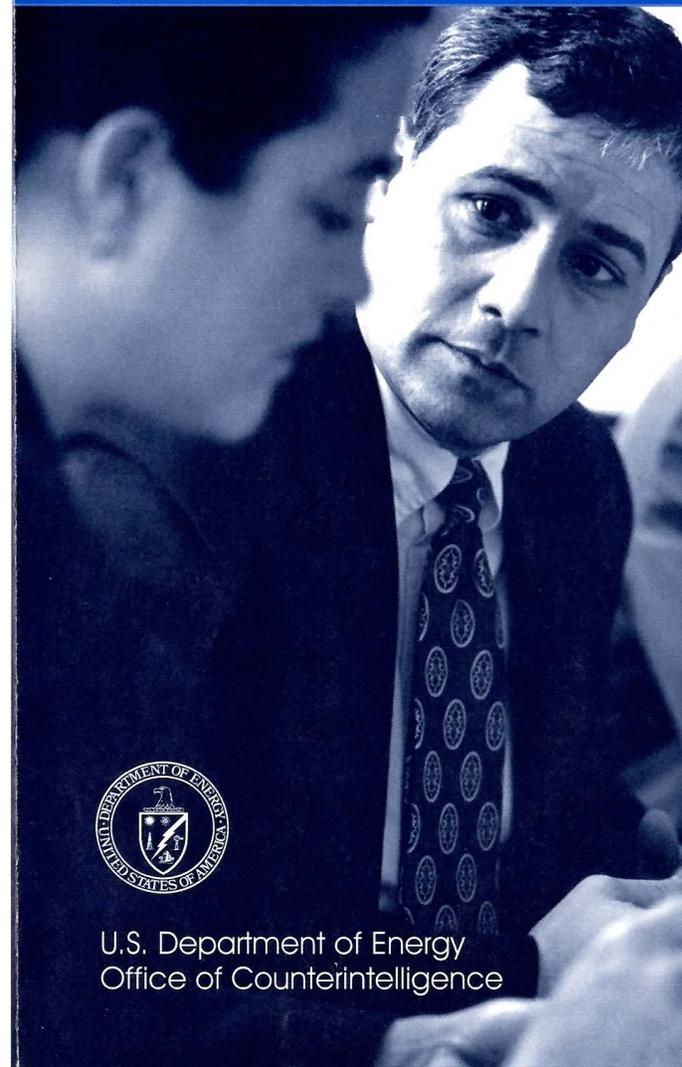
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY OFFICE OF COUNTERINTELLIGENCE



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ELICITATION

More Than Just a Conversation ...



U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Counterintelligence

THREAT

The National Counterintelligence Center (NACIC) advises that despite the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War espionage activities continue unabated. In fact, there is evidence that the intelligence threat has actually grown over the last decade, as national priorities have shifted to include economic and technological information in addition to the more traditional classified military/security information.

Elicitation requires patience. Pieces of information collected over an extended period of time can include the final piece of the puzzle needed to solve a complex problem or save the expenditure of scarce research money.

POTENTIAL

Keep in mind that a key objective in any espionage operation is to **MAKE IT AS EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR THE TARGET TO SHARE HIS OR HER INFORMATION.** Elicitation appears only to be normal conversation among colleagues and friends. What is more natural than that! We do it all the time. Many professionals encourage conversation, especially discussion of theories, concepts and plans. It is a spy's dream come true! No skulking about dark street corners – just normal conversations in pleasant surroundings – **LIKE RESTAURANTS – LIKE CONFERENCES – OR THE HOMES OF COLLEAGUES.** Whether a particular conversation is elicitation or merely innocent inquisitiveness would be very difficult to tell, and ultimately makes no difference in your need to be cautious and aware of what you can and cannot say.

So remember, on your next trip or during any conversation with a foreign colleague...

BE AWARE TO WHOM YOU ARE SPEAKING AND WHERE YOUR CONVERSATION MAY BE REPORTED. DON'T BE PARANOID, JUST BE CAREFUL.



ELICITATION RESPONSE

If you should ever feel you are being drawn into a conversation that is making you uncomfortable, keep these points in mind:

- **YOU ARE NOT OBLIGATED TO TELL ANYONE ANY INFORMATION THEY ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO HEAR – THAT INCLUDES PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU OR YOUR COLLEAGUES.**
- **YOU CAN SIMPLY IGNORE ANY QUESTION YOU THINK IS IMPROPER AND CHANGE THE TOPIC.**
- **DEFLECT THEIR QUESTION WITH ONE OF YOUR OWN.**
- **GIVE A NONDESCRIPT ANSWER.**
- **IF APPROPRIATE, SIMPLY SAY YOU DO NOT KNOW.**
- **AVOID SUCH AN INDIVIDUAL.**
- **IF ALL ELSE FAILS SUGGEST YOU WOULD HAVE TO CLEAR SUCH DISCUSSIONS WITH YOUR SECURITY OFFICE.**

REPORTING CONTACTS WITH FOREIGN NATIONALS

Presidential Decision Directive NSC-12 and DOE Directives require that government employees/contractors report the following:

- All Foreign Travel outside the fifty states and US possessions and territories.
- Any contact with Foreign Nationals from Sensitive Countries.
- Contacts by any person as described below:

Illegal or unauthorized access is sought to classified or otherwise sensitive information.

The employee is concerned that he/she may be the target of actual or attempted exploitation by a foreign entity.

Because elicitation is so subtle and difficult to recognize, report any suspicious conversations to your local counterintelligence or security officer.

For further information on this topic, please call the Counterintelligence Information Line.

202-586-1247



REPORTING



Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-12 requires that government employees report all contact with individuals of any nationality, either within or outside the scope of the employees' official activities, in which:

- Illegal or unauthorized access to classified or sensitive information is sought
- The employee is concerned that he/she may be the target of foreign entity exploitation

Because elicitation is subtle and difficult to recognize, you should report any suspicious conversations to your facility security officer, DSS industrial security representative and DSS field counterintelligence (CI) specialist. The individuals staffing these offices can assess your information and determine if a potential CI concern exists.

SUMMARY

In the espionage trade, IOs use elicitation as a technique to subtly extract information about you, your work, and your colleagues. Elicitation is the art of conversation honed by intelligence services to its finest edge. You never know if entities are using elicitation to pass the time or to gather intelligence.

Social networking offers almost unlimited opportunities to gather information through direct personal contact. Elicitation requires patience and persistence. Pieces of information, collected over an extended period, can provide the final piece of the puzzle to a complex problem or save scarce research money.

Elicitation is non-threatening. It is hard to recognize as an intelligence technique and it is easy to deny any wrongdoing.

Report suspicious activity to your local security contact.
Your DSS point of contact is:



Elicitation & Recruitment

Can you recognize it?

It's your duty to report it!

This pamphlet is intended to:

- Sensitize you to foreign intelligence services targeting and elicitation
- Assist you in recognizing and countering recruitment attempts
- Advise you to immediately report an incident or questionable relationship



What is RECRUITMENT?

Recruitment is obtaining cooperation from someone to provide sensitive or classified information.

- An intelligence service typically conducts recruitment after careful assessment and patient cultivation of the target. By the time the offer to work for the foreign government or entity (the “pitch”) is made, the intelligence officer (IO) is relatively confident of the target’s willingness to cooperate
- If the target agrees to the recruitment, that person becomes an “asset” (a spy). The IO handles the asset by clandestinely receiving the information, paying the asset, and guiding the asset in illicit collection activities
- Money is frequently used as a recruitment tool, but there are alternate methods, such as appealing to ideology, ego, revenge, blackmail, etc. Safeguard your actions and words to avoid becoming an easy target
- Be honest with yourself about your own vulnerabilities and adjust your lifestyle to close gaps that hostile entities could exploit



THE THREAT

The mainstay of most intelligence services worldwide is the recruitment of well-placed assets who can provide insightful intelligence on collection requirements. Most sensitive military and civilian jobs are of special interest to foreign intelligence services.



- Foreign intelligence services use foreign defense industry representatives involved in business with U.S. companies to identify, assess, and approach potential recruitment targets
- Despite the number of Americans who have initiated espionage careers on their own volition, foreign intelligence services continue to invest considerable time and resources assessing and targeting U.S. citizens for recruitment
- Approaches are almost never made impulsively, but are actually the result of detailed planning and thorough assessment of the target. By the time the target is asked to work for an intelligence service, the person is probably aware that a dubious relationship is developing

BOTTOM LINE:

BE ASSERTIVE. BE ALERT. BE AWARE.

REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY!

DAMAGE POTENTIAL

Indisputably, those Americans who have betrayed their country, regardless of whether they volunteered or were recruited, have caused immeasurable damage to the security of the United States. In some cases, lives were lost. In others, lives were destroyed. In all cases, lives were irreparably altered.

- Americans who have spied have betrayed a special trust to the country and to their friends, colleagues, and families. Despite their personal rationale for committing espionage, all had other means at their disposal for fulfilling their aspirations, needs, and desires. Most, if not all spies, eventually regret their actions and their decisions to commit espionage
- Providing classified information to any unauthorized individual is illegal. Espionage against the U.S. government is a very serious crime punishable by imprisonment, fines, or death



Your individual contribution to the security of your company, military branch, federal agency, and your nation is vital.