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Professional Certified Investigator (ASIS-PCI)

ASIS PCI

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Topic Break Down

Topic	No. of Questions
Topic 1, Case Management	33
Topic 2, Investigative Techniques and Procedures	106
Topic 3, Case Presentation	26
Topic 4, Mix Questions	1
Total	166

QUESTION NO: 1

A significant difference between interviews and Interrogations is that:

- A. an Interview Involves a controlled environment, while an Interrogation involves a variable environment
- B. an interview is accusatory, while an interrogation is nonaccusatory.
- C. guilt is unknown during an interview, while guilt is indicated during an interrogation
- D. an interview involves absolute privacy, while an interrogation involves privacy/semiprivacy.

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

The distinction that “guilt is unknown during an interview, while guilt is indicated during an interrogation” reflects the investigative purpose of each interaction. An interview is a nonaccusatory fact-gathering conversation used to obtain information from witnesses, victims, complainants, or persons whose knowledge and involvement have not yet been established. The investigator’s objective is to develop facts, assess credibility, identify leads, and determine whether further inquiry is warranted. An interrogation is ordinarily undertaken after the investigation has developed facts indicating that a particular person may be responsible for the matter under investigation. Its purpose is to obtain a reliable account from that person, resolve material inconsistencies, and, where appropriate, obtain an admission or confession. “Guilt is indicated” does not mean guilt has been legally proven; rather, it means the available evidence has created a reasonable investigative basis to focus accusatory questioning on that individual. This practical distinction is consistent with professional investigative practice: investigators should first collect and evaluate information objectively, then use a structured and lawful interrogation only when the evidence supports that transition. ASIS identifies interviewing and interrogation among the core investigative knowledge areas for PCI practitioners. See [ASIS Professional Certified Investigator \(PCI\)](#) and the [National Institute of Justice guidance on interviewing and interrogation](#).

QUESTION NO: 2

What is one of The three 'i's?

- A. intellect
- B. Intuition
- C. Initiative
- D. Information

ANSWER: C

Explanation:

Initiative is one of the three “I” qualities associated with effective investigative practice. An investigator must be able to move an inquiry forward proactively: recognizing relevant leads, identifying information gaps, planning appropriate next steps, and pursuing lawful, objective fact development without waiting for every action to be directed by someone else. This does not mean acting outside authority or disregarding established procedures. Rather, it means applying sound judgment, persistence, and professional curiosity while maintaining documentation, confidentiality, and impartiality. These behaviors support the broader competencies expected of a Professional Certified Investigator, whose work includes case management, evidence collection and preservation, interviews, and preparation of investigative reports. ASIS International describes the PCI credential as validating knowledge and experience in these core investigations functions. See the [ASIS Professional Certified Investigator \(PCI\) certification page](#) and ASIS’s [certification overview](#) for the credential’s investigative-practice context.

QUESTION NO: 3

Which statement is correct regarding the distribution and protection of investigative reports?

- A. Repents delivered by the Investigator to the company's attorney of record for retention will likely be protected from subpoena
- B. Reports cannot be protected item disclosure during the Judicial process using the attorney-client privilege
- C. The qualified privilege accorded an investigative report can be lost If it was not disseminated widely to all stakeholders
- D. The distribution of investigative reports should only come through the client since delegating it to the investigator or the client's attorney can result in the loss Of the attorney-Client privilege
- E. Investigative reports should be distributed only to personnel with a need to know, and legal counsel should direct and control distribution when privilege or work-product protection is sought.

ANSWER: E

Explanation:

Investigative reports should be distributed strictly on a need-to-know basis and, where legal protection is sought, through or at the direction of legal counsel. This disciplined process helps preserve the confidential character of communications made for the purpose of obtaining or providing legal advice and supports an appropriate claim of attorney-client privilege when its requirements are met. Counsel should define the investigation's purpose, direct any investigator acting as counsel's agent, control the report's circulation, and identify recipients with a legitimate role in receiving legal advice or making related decisions. Limiting distribution is particularly important because unnecessary disclosure beyond those who need the information can waive confidentiality and undermine a privilege claim. Protection is not created merely by sending an otherwise ordinary business record to an attorney; rather, it depends on the report's purpose, the role of those involved, confidentiality, and the applicable jurisdiction's law. Materials prepared because of anticipated litigation may also qualify for separate work-product protection, subject to the governing discovery rules. See [Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26\(b\)\(3\)](#) and the U.S. Supreme Court's discussion of privileged communications involving corporate employees and counsel in [Upjohn Co. v. United States](#).

QUESTION NO: 4

Which step of the intelligence collection cycle includes activities such as determining how the intelligence can be best used?

- A. Evaluation
- B. Requirements
- C. Dissemination
- D. Integration & Analysis

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

Integration & Analysis is correct because this is the stage at which collected and evaluated information is combined with other relevant data, interpreted in context, and converted into actionable intelligence. Determining how intelligence can best be used requires more than confirming that information is accurate or distributing it to an audience. It requires an analyst to identify patterns, assess relevance and implications, connect findings to the organization's risks or investigative objectives, and formulate conclusions that support decisions and operational action.

In a professional investigation setting, integration brings together information from distinct sources—such as interviews, records, observations, and digital evidence—while analysis establishes what that combined information means and how it can guide the next decision. The resulting intelligence may inform investigative priorities, protective measures, resource allocation, or further collection requirements. This function reflects the intelligence community's emphasis on analytic rigor: conclusions should be derived from available information and communicated in a way that supports informed action. See the Office of the Director of National Intelligence's [overview of intelligence](#) and its [Analytic Standards](#) for the role of analysis in producing decision-useful intelligence.

QUESTION NO: 5

An investigator receives a sealed evidence package containing original invoices. The chain-of-custody form shows that the package was transferred to the investigator, but it does not identify the employee who released it from secure storage. The investigator should first:

- A. add the likely releasing employee's name to the chain-of-custody form
- B. return the package to the storage area until a new form can be created
- C. open the package and compare the invoices with electronic copies
- D. document the discrepancy and seek to reconcile the transfer record

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

Documenting and resolving the discrepancy without changing the original record is correct. The investigator should preserve the package, record the condition in which it was received, notify the appropriate evidence custodian or supervisor, and seek to reconcile the missing transfer information through contemporaneous records or witness statements. Altering the original chain-of-custody record would undermine its integrity. A gap in documentation does not automatically make the evidence unusable, but it must be identified and explained accurately.

QUESTION NO: 6

Which of the following is NOT a consideration when using drones as a tool for surveillance in investigations?

- A. Proper maintenance and repair
- B. Technical specification and user manual
- C. Legal consideration and requirement for the use
- D. Comprehensive training and opportunity practice

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

Technical specification and user manual is the best answer because these are informational resources, rather than an overarching investigative-use consideration. Investigators should certainly consult the aircraft's specifications and operating instructions before deployment, but those materials primarily describe the equipment and how to operate it. They do not, by themselves, address the central planning, governance, competency, and lifecycle issues that determine whether surveillance can be conducted responsibly and effectively.

In an investigative context, drone deployment must be governed by an operational plan that establishes lawful authority, appropriate operator competence, safe deployment practices, documentation, evidence handling, and continuing airworthiness. The relevant manual and technical data support that plan by helping the operator understand limits such as battery endurance, payload capacity, weather limitations, and control features. They are reference inputs to safe operation, not a standalone surveillance-program consideration. This distinction is consistent with aviation guidance requiring remote pilots to know and follow the limitations and procedures applicable to the unmanned aircraft being flown. See the [FAA guidance for commercial unmanned-aircraft operators](#) and the [FAA UAS policy library](#).

QUESTION NO: 7

While investigating expense-report fraud, an investigator discovers information suggesting that a defective piece of equipment may create an immediate safety hazard. The equipment issue is outside the original case scope. The investigator should:

- A. Document and promptly escalate the potential safety hazard.
- B. Continue only with the expense-report investigation.
- C. Wait until the fraud case is closed before reporting the hazard.
- D. Personally order the equipment permanently removed from service.

ANSWER: A

Explanation:

An immediate safety concern should be escalated promptly to the appropriate authority while the investigator documents the information and coordinates any necessary expansion or separate handling of the matter. Case scope is important, but it does not justify delaying action on a credible risk of harm. The investigator should not independently make technical safety conclusions beyond available expertise, nor should the information be ignored merely because it was discovered during a different investigation.

QUESTION NO: 8

During a confrontational interview, the investigator should

- A. allow the suspect to offer denials
- B. use the Behavior Analysis Technique.
- C. refuse to accept a moral justification for the act by the suspect
- D. accuse the suspect of committing the act under investigation

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

“Accuse the suspect of committing the act under investigation” is correct because a confrontational interview is used after the investigator has developed sufficient factual grounds to reasonably believe that the subject was involved. At this stage, the interview shifts from information gathering to directly addressing the allegation and seeking an account, admission, or other clarification from the subject. The accusation should be specific, professional, and grounded in the known facts of the investigation. It is not a license for coercion, threats, promises of improper benefit, or disregard for the subject’s legal and organizational rights. Effective practice requires the investigator to remain objective, document the interaction accurately, assess the subject’s responses against independently established evidence, and preserve the voluntariness and reliability of any statement obtained. This direct approach distinguishes a confrontational interview from an initial fact-finding or rapport-building interview. ASIS PCI certification covers investigative principles, including conducting effective investigations and interviews; see the [ASIS PCI certification overview](#). For principles concerning voluntary, reliable interviewing practices, see the U.S. Department of Justice’s [National Institute of Justice guidance](#).

QUESTION NO: 9

With regard to evidence searches, which statement is FALSE?

- A. search must be timely.
- B. Physical evidence cannot be overdocumented.
- C. A search may be either a cautious search or a vigorous search
- D. The best search options are the quickest and the simplest.

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

The best search options are the quickest and the simplest is the false statement. An evidence search must be selected and conducted based on the scene's size, layout, complexity, likely evidence locations, available personnel, safety conditions, and the need to preserve fragile or transient material. A simple method may be appropriate for a small, uncomplicated scene, but simplicity and speed are not the governing measures of quality. Investigators need a deliberate, systematic approach that provides complete coverage, minimizes the risk of contamination or loss, and allows the search activity and evidence locations to be documented and later explained. Timeliness remains important because conditions can change and evidence may deteriorate, but prompt action must be balanced with scene security, planning, documentation, and careful collection. The U.S. Department of Justice's crime-scene guide emphasizes that personnel should use a systematic search method appropriate to the scene and record the search and evidence-recovery process. Likewise, NIJ guidance stresses preserving and documenting physical evidence so it remains useful and reliable throughout the investigation. These principles mean that the appropriate search is the one that is methodical and fit for purpose—not automatically the quickest or simplest. See the [U.S. Department of Justice Crime Scene Investigation guide](#) and the [National Institute of Justice crime-scene investigation guidance](#).

QUESTION NO: 10

When an interviewer is seeking a confession, it is most important to:

- A. stress the importance of the matter under investigation
- B. consider the interviewee's behavioral indicators of deception
- C. help the interviewee to rationalize actions and avoid embarrassment
- D. convince the interviewee that it is futile to avoid confessing

ANSWER: C**Explanation:**

"help the interviewee to rationalize actions and avoid embarrassment" is correct because a productive confession-focused interview seeks a truthful, voluntary account by reducing the subject's psychological resistance to acknowledging conduct. People may resist admitting involvement not only because of anticipated consequences, but also because an admission conflicts with their self-image or creates shame. A professional interviewer can use rapport and carefully framed, nonpromissory themes that allow the person to discuss motives, pressures, or circumstances without needlessly humiliating them. This approach can make it easier for the interviewee to move from denial to an accurate narrative, including details that can be independently corroborated.

Rationalization must never become coercion, an offer of improper leniency, a threat, or a suggestion that supplies facts. The investigator should maintain neutrality, allow the interviewee to speak in their own words, document the process accurately, and test the resulting statement against known evidence. These safeguards support the reliability and voluntariness of any confession. The U.S. Department of Justice's guidance on eyewitness and investigative procedures emphasizes documentation and reliability safeguards, while constitutional protections require that custodial statements be voluntary and obtained consistently with applicable rights protections. See the [National Institute of Justice guide for law enforcement](#) and the [Miranda v. Arizona decision](#).

QUESTION NO: 11

Lapping is described as:

- A. accepting short weights or counts from a vendor.
- B. undercounting goods on the receiving side and over counting goods on the shipping side of the warehouse
- C. crediting one account with money taken from another account.
- D. throwing perfectly good material into a dumpster and later reclaiming it when no one is around.

ANSWER: C**Explanation:**

Lapping is the fraudulent concealment of a cash shortage by applying funds received from one customer or account to another customer's or account's balance. In a typical scheme, an employee steals a payment intended for one account, then uses a later payment received for a different account to credit the first account. The process may continue in a rolling sequence, requiring additional incoming payments to keep earlier accounts from appearing delinquent. Thus, *crediting one account with money taken from another account* accurately captures the essential mechanism of lapping: the misapplication of receipts to hide an earlier theft or diversion of funds.

For an investigator, the key evidence often lies in timing and reconciliation anomalies: payments posted to accounts other than the remitter's account, unusual delays between receipt and deposit or posting, unexplained customer balance discrepancies, and an employee retaining incompatible control over receiving payments and maintaining accounts receivable records. Effective controls include segregating cash-receipt, posting, and reconciliation duties; independently reconciling customer statements; and promptly investigating aged or unusual credits. The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners describes lapping as an accounts-receivable fraud technique in its fraud resources: [ACFE Fraud Resources](#). Additional internal-control guidance is available from the [Office of the Comptroller of the Currency](#).

QUESTION NO: 12

What should be done to capitalize on memories and evidence in an investigation?

- A. Open and complete an investigation as soon as possible, but avoid closing prematurely
- B. immediately obtain audio recordings of the interviews with those that have first hand knowledge
- C. Ask interviewer to rationalize their thoughts to make sure what they are telling you makes sense
- D. Use new bags to collect and store all investigation findings to ensure there is no contamination

ANSWER: A**Explanation:**

Open and complete an investigation as soon as possible, but avoid closing prematurely is correct because information quality generally declines with time. Witnesses' recollections can fade or become influenced by subsequent discussions, while physical, documentary, and digital evidence may be altered, overwritten, lost, or become harder to authenticate. Promptly initiating the matter enables the investigator to identify issues, preserve relevant material, locate and interview knowledgeable people while their recollections are freshest, and establish an orderly investigative plan. Completing work efficiently also supports timely reporting and appropriate organizational action. At the same time, an investigator must not close a matter merely to meet a timeline. A sound conclusion requires that reasonable leads have been evaluated, material evidence has been appropriately documented and preserved, and findings are based on sufficiently corroborated facts. This balance between urgency and thoroughness reflects professional investigative practice: act promptly to protect perishable information, then maintain an objective, complete process before reaching a final disposition. ASIS identifies professional investigation as a disciplined process for developing reliable facts; see [ASIS Certification](#). For practical guidance on preserving evidence and documenting investigative activity, see the U.S. Department of Justice's [Electronic Crime Scene Investigation guide](#).

QUESTION NO: 13

in the FBI's Computer Analysis Response Team programs, the two-pronged approach to forensic examinations consists of investigations and

- A. education
- B. training
- C. legal support
- D. laboratory support

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

"laboratory support" is correct because the FBI Computer Analysis Response Team model treats digital-forensic work as a coordinated function serving both the investigative mission and the laboratory mission. Investigators identify potential electronic evidence, establish the case context, and define the evidentiary needs. Laboratory support supplies the controlled forensic capability needed to preserve, acquire, examine, analyze, document, and report on that evidence in a manner suitable for investigative use and potential judicial proceedings. This pairing reflects the practical division of effort in computer forensics: investigations drive the facts and legal objectives of a case, while laboratory operations apply validated methods, specialist expertise, quality controls, and evidence-handling procedures. The approach ensures that computer evidence is not merely collected but is processed through a forensic workflow that supports reliable findings. The FBI Laboratory describes its role as providing forensic examinations and expert services in support of investigations, and its digital-evidence resources emphasize disciplined handling and examination practices. See the [FBI Laboratory](#) and the FBI's [Forensic Science Communications archive](#) for background on FBI forensic laboratory support and digital-forensic practice.

QUESTION NO: 14

An interviewer/interrogator is much more likely to gain the cooperation of an individual by exhibiting a/an:

- A. angry and aggressive manner
- B. calm manner.
- C. Easygoing and lackadaisical manner.
- D. businesslike, impersonal manner.

ANSWER: B

Explanation:

A calm manner is most likely to gain an individual's cooperation because it establishes emotional safety, communicates professionalism, and helps the interviewer maintain rapport and control of the interaction. In investigative interviewing, cooperation is more readily obtained when the subject perceives that they are being treated respectfully and listened to without premature judgment. A calm demeanor also lets the interviewer observe verbal and nonverbal behavior accurately, ask clear follow-up questions, and adapt the interview strategy without escalating tension. This approach supports the objective of obtaining reliable, voluntary information rather than simply eliciting a reaction. Investigative best practice emphasizes rapport, active listening, patience, and an interviewer's ability to regulate their own emotions throughout the encounter. The U.S. Department of Justice's guidance on investigative interviewing similarly stresses rapport-building and effective communication as foundations for obtaining useful information. The College of Policing's PEACE interviewing principles also emphasize planning, engagement, explanation, and ethical information gathering, all of which depend on a composed, respectful interviewer presence. See [National Institute of Justice guidance on investigative interviewing](#) and [College of Policing: Investigative interviewing](#).

QUESTION NO: 15

An undercover operative should "quality" each subject targeted to buy illegal drugs to:

- A. determine how many employees are drug dealers
- B. overcome the risk of detection-
- C. determine when the dealer has possession of drugs
- D. overcome allegations of entrapment

ANSWER: D

Explanation:

“Qualitying” a prospective target means conducting sufficient preliminary assessment to establish that the person is an appropriate subject for the undercover approach—particularly that the person is predisposed to engage in the suspected criminal conduct. In an illegal-drug purchase operation, the operative should identify facts indicating that the subject is already willing or disposed to sell drugs, rather than creating criminal intent through pressure, persuasion, or inducement. This careful pre-contact assessment helps ensure the operation documents an existing illegal activity and that investigators can clearly articulate the factual basis for selecting the subject and initiating the encounter. Accordingly, the purpose is to overcome allegations of entrapment. Entrapment principles focus on whether government conduct improperly induced an otherwise unwilling person to commit an offense; evidence of predisposition is therefore central to evaluating and defending the operation. Undercover planning, authorization, supervision, and documentation should preserve the intelligence supporting the target-selection decision and the operative’s conduct throughout the contact. The U.S. Department of Justice addresses undercover operations and their required controls in its [Justice Manual](#). The Supreme Court’s discussion of predisposition in entrapment analysis is available in [Jacobson v. United States](#).

QUESTION NO: 16

A pretrial meeting that involves opposing litigants and aims to produce all tangible evidence is called a:

- A. voir dire.
- B. derogatory
- C. duces tecum
- D. mens rea
- E. discovery.

ANSWER: E

Explanation:

discovery is the correct term. Discovery is the pretrial phase of civil or criminal litigation in which opposing parties obtain and exchange information and evidence relevant to the case. Its central purpose is to ensure that each side can identify the material that may be presented, assess the strengths of the case, prepare testimony and exhibits, and avoid unfair surprise at trial. Discovery can involve formal procedures such as requests for production of documents and tangible items, interrogatories, depositions, requests for admission, and inspections of property or electronically stored information. The question’s reference to opposing litigants and the production of tangible evidence describes this evidence-exchange process. In an investigation context, careful preservation, documentation, and organized production of physical evidence are essential because discovered materials may be reviewed by counsel and ultimately introduced in proceedings. The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure expressly provide for discovery of documents, electronically stored information, and tangible things in a party’s possession, custody, or control. See [Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26](#) and [Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 34](#).