

Hypnotic interviewing: the best way to interview eyewitnesses?

Posted At : November 24, 2011 5:31 PM | Posted By : [Tim Brunson, PhD](#)

Related Categories: Forensics

It has been suggested that hypnosis techniques may have the potential to enhance eyewitness memory in forensic investigations. However, laboratory research shows that increases in recall with hypnosis techniques are often associated with decreases in accuracy, false confidence in incorrect information, and increased suggestibility to leading questions and misleading post-event information. These problems limit the usefulness of hypnosis as an interviewing procedure. However, in practical investigations, many factors associated with hypnosis, apart from the hypnotic induction itself, might lead to memory enhancement compared with standard police interviews. For example, hypnotic interviewers, because of their psychological, clinical, and interpersonal skills, may be better interviewers than police officers. They may use effective interviewing strategies such as those associated with the "cognitive interview"; a procedure which has the potential to enhance recall by approximately 35% without the problems of memory distortion associated with hypnosis. It is concluded, therefore, that a cognitive interview procedure should be used in preference to hypnosis.

Behav Sci Law. 1998 Winter;16(1):115-29. Kebbell MR, Wagstaff GF. Department of Psychology, University of Liverpool, U.K.

Object N

—————This document m: