

## GSI OVERVIEW AND TRAINING OPTIONS

### Explanation

The *Guided Storytelling Interview™* (GSI) elicits true stories from interviewees to identify needs, wants, desires, and personal capabilities and attributes, both technical and social-emotional.

### Background

A challenge facing every qualitative researcher or interviewer is how to obtain accurate/valid data from subjects/interviewees. The gold standard for dialogue based data collection is called “critical incident interviewing,” which was first developed and applied in the 1950’s. The GSI is a highly refined version of the critical incident interview that has multiple applications in education for both adults and children/students K-12.

### Technique Overview

The GSI employs an inquiry/probing technique that appears on the surface to be very simple and involves the probing of emotion-bound events/stories/memories, either positive or negative. The GSI obtains a very detailed retelling of particular events/stories. The core of the questioning strategy is captured in the following summary description:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tell me about a time on the job (or at school) when you were particularly satisfied (high point) or dissatisfied (low point)</i></li> <li>- <i>provide me with a one-minute snapshot of that situation/story that includes whether it is a high or a low, what made it a high or low, and the length of time (days/weeks/months/years) over which the story took place</i></li> <li>• <i>Take me back to the beginning and</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>describe:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What you did</i></li> <li>- <i>What you saw</i></li> <li>- <i>What you felt</i></li> <li>- <i>What you said</i></li> <li>- <i>What you heard</i></li> <li>- <i>What you thought</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Please recreate conversations whenever possible</i></li> <li>• <i>Take me to the next most relevant thing that happened that you were a part of</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>NOTE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The interviewee must speak in the first person</i></li> <li>• <i>Paraphrasing is OK</i></li> <li>• <i>Asking for more detail is OK</i></li> <li>• <i>Any form of leading questions is <u>not</u> OK</i></li> <li>• <i>Commenting on the content of what is expressed by the interviewee is <u>not</u> OK</i></li> <li>• <i>Asking What or How questions is <u>not</u> OK</i></li> <li>• <i>Giving feedback on the level of detail being provided by the interviewee is OK</i></li> </ul>
---	---	--

While appearing simple, learning to conduct the GSI well takes time. It takes both training and practice to reach a satisfactory level of proficiency. Basic GSI proficiency training takes 2.0 days to get participants to a 60%-65% level of proficiency. Getting to a 80%-100% level of proficiency takes an additional day or two of practice with review and feedback provided by a certified GSI trainer.

## GSI Applications

### MOST COMMON

- Creating behavioral models (including rubrics) of the competencies demonstrated by top performers in any position, those required at a threshold level, and what are described as “derailers,” i.e., failure factors.
- Evaluating people against competency models to determine proficiency - for hiring, professional development, training, promotion, performance evaluation, succession planning and/or career-pathing.
- Conducting student engagement studies.
- Conducting student executive function and social-emotional competency studies, and individual student assessments (which can be effectively done from 1st to 12<sup>th</sup> grades).
- Fostering deeper learning through deeper listening (GSI), i.e., teaching teachers how to do the GSI with students to gain a deeper understanding of their students resulting in more effective personalization strategies.
- Conducting general organization needs assessments.

### OTHER

- Identifying position success factors re: outcomes, tasks/processes, basic knowledge, skills, and talents (KSTs)/competencies, and advanced KSTs/competencies for the purpose of creating high-utility position descriptions.
- Monitoring performance from a distance, e.g., when staff members are at remote locations - a distant campus – through phone calls or teleconferencing.
- Mapping student and/or adult needs around specific variables, e.g., retention and job satisfaction factors.
- Investigating organizational incidents.
- Studying process execution in detail, in particular the task-behavior interface.
- Building stakeholder relationships - through the deepened understanding of stakeholder needs, i.e., having heart-to-heart discussions based on the GSI methodology that significantly enhance listening skills

### THE FOLLOWING IS A SAMPLE OF ACTUAL GSI-BASED PROJECTS IN SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS:

- The creation of competency models of top-performing, principals, superintendents, teachers, district level special education administrators, and special education case managers.
- The study of student engagement factors 1-12 in a public school district.
- The study of executive function and social-emotional competencies in students 1-12.
- The evaluation of leader job incumbents in a middle-high school for professional development purposes.
- The hiring of teachers in an expedition learning school.
- Conducting a climate evaluation involving both teachers and administrators.

## GSI Training Options

### 1. BASIC GSI OVERVIEW (one facilitator for up to 24 participants)

This is a one-day orientation program that describes the GSI applications, and helps participants identify what applications would be of most value for their organization. The GSI is demonstrated re: different applications. Participants are provided the opportunity to practice the GSI in the application of their choice. The level of GSI proficiency attained is about 20-25%. A certificate of attendance is provided.

### 2. GSI PRACTITIONER PROFICIENCY TRAINING (one facilitator for every 12 participants)

This program has two elements that are conducted over 1.5 to 2.0 days, with the level of GSI proficiency attained being 60%-65%.

- GSI overview to include application options (abbreviated version) – which includes instruction on how to analyze and score the data surfaced by the interview.
- GSI demonstration and practice.

### 3. INDIVIDUAL GSI COACHING (one facilitator)

This program is only open to those who have participated in the practitioner proficiency training (2 above). It is designed to bring the participant to a 80%-100% level of GSI proficiency. This involves practice, feedback, and coaching. Participants conduct and record practice GSIs that are submitted to a GSI coach for evaluation and feedback. At the point the participant demonstrates an 80% or greater level of proficiency, the coach deems the participant to be qualified as a GSI practitioner, and the participant receives a certificate attesting to this.

### 4. GSI TRAINER TRAINING (one facilitator for every eight participants)

The goal of this training is to enable those already certified as a GSI practitioner to conduct GSI training and to certify individual GSI practitioners that they train. The elements of the process include:

- Two days of training on how to deliver standard GSI training. Participants are provided with a detailed *GSI Trainer Guide* and the *GSI Practitioner Guide* given to GSI training participants.
- The observation of participants conducting practitioner training and the provision of feedback and coaching. At the point trainers are providing the training with fidelity and meeting proficiency requirements, they are deemed certified to conduct GSI training and are provided with a certificate attesting to this. This usually requires trainers to conduct two GSI training programs with new participants in each.

Once certified, trainers are free to conduct GSI training programs. A reasonable fee is charged for use of GSI training materials, which can be done on a case-by-case or licensing basis. Without charge, The Bryan Group provides certified trainers with updated materials and annual webinars for the purpose of refining GSI training skills in different applications.

#### 5. CUSTOMIZATION

The Bryan Group is prepared to customize any of the four types of programs described above to best fit client needs. Coaching can also be provided in the design and implementation of GSI based projects, such as creating GSI based hiring systems, and the study of student engagement or executive function.

To discuss GSI training possibilities and/or applications, please contact Bill Bryan at The Bryan Group: 401-965-8345 or [billbryan@tbgleaders.com](mailto:billbryan@tbgleaders.com).