

Identifying Deceptive Behavior[®]

Finding The Truth from Deception!



Kurt Barbour

Lou Savelli

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

KURT BARBOUR



With a career spanning over 20 years, Kurt Barbour is a retired law enforcement officer who has seen it all. From working in the jail and patrol to serving as a gang and narcotics detective, Kurt has a wealth of experience. He has worked undercover for four years and has been involved in major discreet investigations with the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), United States Customs and Border Protection, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), and United States Postal Inspectors. He has also served as Commander for Negotiations of a prominent SWAT Team in Illinois.

As a national instructor, Kurt Barbour has left an indelible mark on law enforcement training. His expertise in Identifying Deceptive Behavior® has made him the nation's leading authority and trainer in this field. He has trained thousands of local, county, state, and federal law enforcement officers and military personnel nationwide. His instructional repertoire includes various topics, from the Tactical Debrief Method™ and Advanced Interview and Interrogation to Crisis Intervention Team Training (CIT) and Leadership.

Complementing his practical experience, Kurt Barbour is a dedicated scholar. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois at Springfield and is pursuing a graduate degree in forensic psychology at Purdue Global University. His academic journey is driven by a deep-seated curiosity about the criminal mind and the role of psychology in understanding human behavior. He leverages this knowledge and experience in his courses, illustrating how science and law enforcement techniques can synergize to improve community policing and foster stronger relationships with the community.

As an authority on verbal/non-verbal communication, body language, micro-expressions, and many deceptive cues, Kurt Barbour has earned national recognition as a trainer in this field. His expertise is acknowledged and celebrated as he continues to train others in “Finding the Truth From Deception.”

Introduction

"As hypocrisy is said to be the highest compliment to virtue, the art of lying is the strongest acknowledgment of the force of truth." - William Hazlitt.

Imagine being able to observe a person and tell whether they are being deceptive. Imagine having the power to accurately read someone's behavior and discern whether they are truthful or deceptive. What would you do with such an ability? Psychology is the observation of behaviors to define, catalog, interpret, and change behaviors. Psychology looks at conscious and subconscious thoughts of the mind and how they translate to behavior. While psychology involves human behavior, it can also involve non-humans in observations. Some behaviors can be linked to the animal kingdom, and some are learned.

How does this behavior correlate to our day-to-day interactions? How can we use what we learn here to our benefit? Our mind is very complex. Understanding how our mind processes information will give us a better understanding of behaviors. With understanding comes power. Much research has been conducted on how deception is presented in both verbal and nonverbal indicators. There seems to be a deep-rooted interest in how to read and distinguish between truthful and deceptive interactions. Psychologists are not the only ones interested in this research. Research involving verbal and nonverbal communication has opened many areas of interest in sales, business, law enforcement, human resources (HR), and people who want to know if someone is lying to them.

Is there a difference between deception and lying? There is a difference. However, most of us use these terms interchangeably in speech. This book will also slip between the two throughout, but let us ensure we agree on the definitions. Lying is an intentional act in which someone sends false messages in communication. Deception is often exploiting cognitive

loopholes to benefit one's purpose. There are many classifications, such as a white lie or lies of omission, but they all boil down to deception, whether to spare someone's feelings or for self-gain.

To quote from a paper I wrote as a University assignment: "The allure of understanding how people deceive and the unique characteristics displayed during deception has led to this paper's exploration of experimental research designs for deceptive behaviors. Imagine the power of discerning whether someone is telling you the truth just by observing them. How could this skill benefit you in real-world scenarios? The potential applications are vast, from law enforcement uncovering the truth to consumers verifying if the product the salesperson is promoting lives up to its claims. Parents, too, would undoubtedly be engaged to know if their children are attempting to deceive them" (Barbour, 2024). Replace "paper" with a book in this paragraph.

Audiences have become utterly fascinated by the ability to read people's behavior to determine whether they are lying, which is why television programs depicting this quality have become popular. *Lie to Me* (2009 – 2011) depicts the character Dr. Cal Lightman, the head of a behavioral think tank that assists in reading deceptive behaviors. This character is based on a real-life scientist, Dr. Paul Ekman, who was noted for his micro-facial expression research and the Facial Action Coding System (FACS). *The Mentalist* (2008 – 2015) depicts a sham psychic, Patrick Jane, who is a master at reading non-verbal communication. *Psych* (2006 – 2014) depicts characters Shawn Spencer and Burton Guster forming a psychic detective agency where Shawn Spencer uses his observational skills to solve crimes, often observing non-verbal behaviors. *The Irrational* (2024) depicts a character, Dr. Alec Mercer, who uses his cognitive psychology skills to analyze irrational behaviors and help the FBI solve crimes. This show was

based on Dr. Dan Ariely, a cognitive psychologist conducting cognitive psychology experiments on irrational behaviors and correlations to deceptive behaviors.

This book is written for a variety of audiences interested in seeking the truth from deception; however, it would be an oversight to say it does not contain science. To truly understand how deception is presented, one must understand that these observations come from the scientific research of psychology.

It is also important to note that no single word or gesture might indicate deception. You will see that clustering of indicators combined with context will provide an accurate assessment. Perhaps you have noticed that some people appear more adept at reading deception than others. Through our journey in this book, we aim to provide a simple explanation for interpreting behaviors we observe in truthful and deceptive interactions.

Life is about negotiations. Whether you are buying a new car or a new house, debating political views, selling widgets to a large chain, instructing children, or conducting an interrogation as a law enforcement officer, it all comes down to the art of negotiation. Understanding truthful and deceptive behaviors makes the negotiation process easier to navigate.

We start this journey with a bold statement: Everyone wants to tell the truth. I have taught many classes in Identifying Deceptive Behavior® and Advanced Interview and Interrogation, making the same statement. More often than not, most of the group does not believe this statement until after they have been through the class. After reading this book, I hope I will convince you that we can find the truth from deception because people want to tell the truth.