



## Chapter 14

---

Improving Intelligence Analysis

Shinichiro Terashima  
Xiaotian Yin



## Introduction

---

- Introduction
- Checklist for Analysts
- Management of Analysis
- Conclusion



## How can Intelligence analysis be improved (introduction)

---

- Collecting more and better information for analysts to work with
- Changing the management of the analytical process
- Increasing the number of analysts
- Providing language and area studies to improve analysts' substantive expertise
- Revising employee selection and retention criteria
- Improving report-writing skills
- Fine-tuning the relationship between intelligence analysts and intelligence consumers
- Modifying types of analytical products
- **ANALYSIS IS, ABOVE ALL, A MENTAL PROCESS!!!!**



## Checklist for Analysts (6key steps)

---

- Defining the Problem
- Generating Hypotheses
- Collecting Information
- Evaluating Hypotheses
- Selecting the Most Likely Hypothesis
- Ongoing Monitoring



## Defining the problem

---

- **Ask** the right questions
- **Clarify** any tradeoff between quality of analysis and what you can accomplish within a specified time deadline



## Generating Hypotheses

---

- Identify all plausible hypotheses that need to be considered
- Whittle the list down to a workable number of hypotheses
- Decipher between deceptive hypotheses and reasonable hypotheses
- Deceptive Hypotheses: another country or group is engaging in denial and deception to influence US perceptions and actions



## Collecting information

---

- **Dig** for information
- **Collect** information to evaluate reasonable hypotheses
- **Explore** alternative hypotheses
- **Suspend Judgment** while information is being assembled on each of the hypotheses



## Evaluating Hypotheses

---

- Do not be misled by preconceived idea
- **Recognize** the fact that your conclusion might depend on how you interpret the evidence
- Use the **matrix format** to keep track of evidence
- **Guard** against the various cognitive biases
- When making a judgment, spend time on consulting with experts



## Selecting the Most Likely Hypothesis

---

- Try to **reject** hypotheses
- Consider **all reasonable** hypotheses
- Insert **odds ratio** or **probability**



## Ongoing Monitoring

---

- **Monitor** a change.
- **Pay attention** to any feeling of surprise



## Management of Analysis

---

- Research
- Training
- Exposure to alternative mind-sets
- Guiding analytical products



## Research

---

- Better understanding of
  - Thinking skills, cognitive limitation
- Choice of scholars
  - Various background: cognitive psychologists, post-doctor
- mind-sets and implicit mental models
  - Screens or lens towards foreign areas



## Training

---

- Focus
  - More on thinking and reasoning processes,
  - than on organizational procedures, writing style.
- supplementation
  - experienced coach
  - on-the-fly monitor and guidance
- Learn from both analytical failure and success
  - over a series of related judgements, not a single instance



## Exposure to alternative mind-sets

---

- Let well-reasoned competing views stand out
- help analysts remain open to alternative views
  - Avoid “everybody-thinks-like-us” mindset
  - Consultation with outside experts
  - Interdisciplinary brainstorming
  - Pre-publication review from other areas’ point of view, etc



## Guiding analytical products

---

- Reject “single-minded” decision
  - low-probability, high-impact events
  - Be aware of, allocate resources to
- Let consumers know
  - Both limitations and capabilities of intelligence analysis



## Conclusion

---

- Occasional intelligence failures must be expected.
- Analysis can be **improved** by the measures discussed in the book!