



Chapter 14

Improving Intelligence Analysis

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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!