

PROFESSIONAL PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

DAVID A. DADOUN

PROFESSIONAL PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

PREVIEW



DAVID A. DADOUN

POLICE SCIENCE INSTITUTE



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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Throughout this book, we have used the masculine (he or his). This is solely for the purposes of general flow, and in all cases is designed to refer to both sexes.

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THE PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATOR

COURSE: PPI – 101

LESSON #: PREVIEW

DISCLAIMER

The educational information presented in this Course Preview is valuable, general information designed and set out specifically for individuals seeking to enter the field of Private Investigation. However, this educational material should not be construed as comprehensive professional advice, nor, should it replace the professional advice of an attorney-at-law and/or any other professional practitioner of similar standing.

Each country, and, each jurisdiction within each country, maintains its own regulations, rules and requirements pertaining to the various aspects, duties, responsibilities and obligations governing the Private Investigation industry to include, but not limited to, licensing and advertising, and, may further include insurance requirements, hand-gun certification and/or some academic qualifications, et al. Please confer with your respective Local, State and/or Provincial authorities before actively engaging in the business of Private Investigation.

PREAMBLE

Though highly overly-glamorized by television and movies, the career of a Private Investigator is often stressful, sometimes dangerous, and, assuredly “irregular” when placed in context of the “normal 9 to 5” work ethic.

Private Investigators are in fact “freelance professional investigators” hired by individuals, companies and/or institutions in order to assist in legal proceedings, investigations and other “confidential” matters. Most commonly, a Private Investigator (“Private Detective”) provides surveillance, conducts background checks, traces missing persons, undertakes investigative research and provides interviewing services to the general public, legal counsel and businesses alike.

It was quite a cultural shock to many seeking a career in Archeology, and, who were concurrently avid fans of “Indiana Jones” ... to find out that the career being sought involved more library research and “dusting bones with a dry brush” in lieu of undertaking exciting escapes with the “beautiful girl in one hand and a revolver in the other”.

Realistically, however, while books, television and cinema do in fact (and intentionally) overly-glamorize the “world of the Private Investigator”, most “real world” Private Investigators conduct their work in relative obscurity ... by design and more often by choice. Accordingly, many maintain a complete misperception suggesting that the field of Private Investigation is “24/7” high adventure and filled daily with professional intrigue ... because it assuredly is not.

That is definitely not to suggest, however, that Private Investigators do not face a certain amount of risk in their workday activities. Do remember, Private Investigators are not “sworn” law enforcement officers, and, as such, do not regularly deal with the dangers attributed to the “criminal element” for the most part. Accordingly, they only possess the same powers of arrest as any other citizen.

Private Investigators may, during the course of an assignment, be required to interrogate “hostile witnesses” or ask inflammatory questions on behalf of their client(s). Getting people to admit self-incriminating behavior requires a certain combination of “psychological manipulation” and self-confidence ... both of which successful Private Investigators have mastered.

Most aspects of Private Investigation present no inherent danger or risk when searching public records, pre-trial preparation for civil actions, computer crime investigations, etc. However, other aspects of Private Investigation may well involve some level / degree of danger and risk when involved in an assignment or case of employee theft, undercover investigation, process serving, marital investigations, surveillance and bodyguard services.

In comparison to many other professions, Private Investigation is a relatively uncomplicated career in which to enter, regardless of age or present / past employment experience. The “novice” will most probably commence his / her Private Investigation career as a “field investigator” within the framework of an Investigation agency or under the tutelage of an experienced Investigator.

It is here, in the “formative years”, that the novice will combine “beginner’s luck” with common sense and “street smarts” in order to gain optimum professional results. The desired abilities of “thinking on one’s feet”, “looking over your shoulder”, and, developing the ability to create immediate and creative responses if “caught in the middle of an undercover assignment task” will be readily achieved.

Those individuals seeking a “mid-life career change” will as well find that the field of Private Investigation provides an excellent “next step” in their professional goals. Older, more “mature” individuals bring substantial “life-experience” in understanding human problems and motives, as well as having theretofore developed the important abilities to deal with varying, often unpredictable circumstances, and, a wide range of experience and knowledge concerning many professional and technical matters of “life in general”.

All such factors are both desired and inherently necessary for a successful career in Private Investigation. And, finally, those who fall into the mature grouping as aforementioned, and, who additionally maintain specific experience in law enforcement, security and/or intelligence, have been found to be the very finest “prospects” overall when examining a career in Private Investigation.

Apart from the readily solvable issue of making a concerted adjustment regarding the “different investigative format” (i.e., civil and business matters not having been part of their previous official responsibilities, etc.), such individuals bring with them the cultivated “official demeanor”, and, in most instances, look forward to the challenge of operating their own business enterprise in lieu of remaining a civil service employee.

But let us first and foremost dispel some myths. As a Private Investigator:

- ◆ you do NOT “automatically get to carry a firearm”, unless of course you are duly qualified and/or are prior-licensed based upon your pre-Investigator circumstances;
- ◆ you will NOT be “chasing killers down busy streets or alleys”, as that kind of situation very, very rarely happens in the “life” of a Private Investigator;
- ◆ you will NOT make a “fortune in income” ... without putting in an enormous amount of high-quality work;
- ◆ you will NOT be working on only One (1) case or assignment at any given time, but instead in multiples;
- ◆ you should realize that unless you are already a “proud owner”, do NOT expect to be “driving a Ferrari” when you begin your Private Investigation career;
- ◆ you should understand at the onset, and, in general, that investigations can be as routine as any other profession and sometimes equally boring;
- ◆ you will be working cases that will seldom involve danger or intrigue;
- ◆ your time will be predominantly involved in finding information, talking to witnesses, possibly taking photos, and assuredly, researching documents;
- ◆ you may be “appreciated” by few people other than the client for whom you are working and/or other Private Investigators who respect your particular talents; and,
- ◆ you will NOT always be received with “open arms” when working with law enforcement personnel.

Private Investigation work, for the most part, cannot be considered “hard”, but it can be time consuming, will have you working at odd hours of the day or night, requiring the kind of person who is flexible, open-minded, inquisitive, intuitive and who does not jump to conclusions, requiring patience and

persistence, and, requiring you to search and search until you find “what everyone else said didn't exist” or prove that “what everyone else thought existed really never existed at all”. Not everyone will fit into this “mold”, as you must have and demonstrate a wide variety of talents and skills ... but ... IF you are good as a Private Investigator, you could earn an excellent living and a have rewarding career.

Let us examine then “if you qualify” ... at all times, the Private Investigator MUST remain professional in his / her ...

- appearance;
- attitude;
- professional conduct; and,
- work-product.

And, if you expect to gain the respect you deserve, you must also ...

- be willing to work during hours that other people consider unreasonable, including nights, holidays and weekends;
- have the patience to “wait and wait and wait”, as well as show similar patience and understanding (and often-times even compassion) for people with whom you come in contact during the course of your professional duties;
- have a personality that can remain "cool, calm and collected" under trying and/or aggravating circumstances; and,
- remain courteous at all times, even when you are the recipient of expletives.

Further, in order to assure that you, the Private Investigator, have fully provided a successful result for your client, REMEMBER ...

- that a Private Investigator is NOT “bestowed with the powers of God”;

- that there exists a “code of ethics” to which you are required to adhere;
- that you will be granted certain legal authority by State or Province licensing in order to engage in a business, but in doing so, you will be expected to abide by the law and even to certain “higher standards” thereof;
- that you will never maintain the legal authority to enter a dwelling or facility just because you suspect someone might be inside (or that no-one is inside and you desire to seek and procure something of evidence therein);
- that it is illegal for you to “tap phones” or take photographs through the window of someone's private residence;
- that you cannot enter an area that has been posted "NO TRESPASSING", nor “eliminate” the dog that is “guarding the front door”;
- that there are rules, regulations and laws as to professional conduct which you will be expected to follow, as the gravity of failing to do so could result in serious charges; further, to the benefit of the client, the success of his / her entire case might be based upon whether or not you did your work properly, honestly, legally and ethically; make certain that you find the facts in all cases “as they are” and not what you “want them to be”; and,
- that since you want to be an Investigator, you will need to gain certain knowledge about the laws and procedures that govern what you do BEFORE commencing your work.

As such, in this Course Preview, we will endeavor to provide you a less-glamorous, but more-accurate, portrayal of the “life of a Private Investigator” ... pragmatically what the “job” entails, what benefits can be derived therefrom, and, what employment opportunities exist for those serious about undertaking this venue as a career choice. The selection of a career in “Private Investigation” will take a great deal of concerted effort as well as some deep introspection. Accordingly, we wish you the utmost luck in your quest to become a true “Private Investigator” !

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS

It is quite difficult to accurately and with any precision determine precisely “when” the first “Private Investigator” appeared in the course of human history. If we initially view the concept of an “Investigator” as an “arm of law enforcement”, then, we may loosely identify such a designation at least as far back as the early Egyptians and Sumerians.

But in the alternative, if we initially view the concept of an “Investigator” from the viewpoint of being a “spy”, we can with more accuracy detect an origin. In the Biblical “Old Testament”, Moses was instructed by the Lord to ... “Send thou men, that they may spy out the land of Canaan”. Therefrom, the “Twelve (12) Spies” [a group of Israelite chieftains, one from each of the Twelve Tribes], were dispatched by Moses to thoroughly “scout” the Land of Israel for forty days during the time the Jews were “in the desert”. (*Numbers 13: 1-16*)

Since we know for certain that “spies”, in some “form or fashion”, have existed and actively operated in virtually every society from antiquity for several thousand years to the present, it can be reasonably argued that the “spy” has in fact been a “historical forerunner” of today's “Private Investigator”.

In 1833, Eugène François Vidocq, a French soldier (and, concurrently a criminal and privateer), founded the first recorded “private detective agency”, Le Bureau des Renseignements (Office of Intelligence), and, in doing so, engaged the services of “ex-cons” as his “employees”. Having done so, it is not surprising that official law enforcement attempted on many occasions to find cause to terminate his operation(s).

Finally, in 1842, the police arrested Vidocq on suspicion of unlawful imprisonment, and, upon the charge of taking money on false pretenses after having had successfully solved an embezzlement case. Vidocq later suspected that it had been a “set-up”, but, was sentenced to a term of five years imprisonment in conjunction with a 3,000-franc fine. Subsequently, the Court of Appeals released him after eventually finding in his favor.

Apart from those negative issues, Vidocq is instead affirmatively and constructively credited with having introduced “record-keeping”, “criminology” and “ballistics” to the field of “criminal investigation”. Additionally, he is said to

have made the first plaster casts of shoe impressions, created indelible ink, and developed unalterable bond paper through the auspices of his printing company. And, his form of “anthropometrics” is still partially used today by French police.

Between those advancements and his philanthropic pursuits, he further claimed that he never “informed on anyone” who had stolen in the furtherance of “real and true need”. Due substantially to his positive efforts, the “Private Investigation industry” was effectively born.

Many of the duties undertaken by Private Investigators in the early days were akin to “serving as police” in matters that their clients felt “law enforcement” was not equipped for or willing to conduct on their behalf. A larger role for the new “Private Investigation industry” was to serve as “pseudo-law enforcement”, particularly in matters pertaining to labor and employee issues.

That came to pass in view of the recognition by the wealthy that there was a defined need (on their behalf) to effectively “control” large numbers of workers who had developed new and “progressive” ideas as a result of the French Revolution ... “the freedom of men” ... all of which being most contrary to the self-interests of the wealthy resource owners.

As such, some early Private Investigators were nothing short of mercenaries and/or “professional military companies”, assisting private entities with “problems” that could most likely be solved or nonetheless abated by the use of force or the show of force.

In the U.S., the “Pinkerton National Detective Agency” was formed to be a “security guard and detective agency”, established in 1850 by Allan Pinkerton. The Pinkerton Detective Agency had become famous when an original plot to assassinate then-U.S. President-Elect Abraham Lincoln was foiled by their intercession.

Pinkerton's agents performed services which ranged from the equivalent of both a “private military contractor” to that of security guards. As an interesting side-note, during the height of its existence, the Pinkerton Detective Agency had more agents than the standing army of the United States, causing the state of Ohio to literally “outlaw” the Agency, fearing that it might be hired at some point or for some reason as a “private army” or (adversarial) militia.

During the extensive labor unrest of the late 19th century in the U.S., businessmen frequently called upon “Pinkerton guards” to bar strikers and suspected unionists from their factories. The most notorious example of this was the “Homestead Strike of 1892”, where Pinkerton agents allegedly killed several people in the process of “enforcing the strikebreaking measures” at the instruction of Henry Clay Frick (acting on behalf of Andrew Carnegie). Coincidentally, the Agency's “logo”, an eye embellished with the words “We Never Sleep”, inspired the term “private eye”.

Thereafter, in similar notoriety, Pinkerton agents were retained in order to track western outlaws Jesse James, the Reno Brothers, and, the “Wild Bunch” including Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. Quite the “resume” ! But in reality, it was not until the 1920's that the Private Investigator became a “person readily-accessible to the average American” due to the expansion of the middle class and the resultant needs of “middle-America”.

Since then, the “Private Investigation industry” has grown in direct proportion to the changing needs, requirements and interests of the over-all public. Social issues such as “infidelity” and “unionization” have strongly (and dramatically) impacted the industry and thereby created new aspects of business direction.

Similarly, the rising need for insurance, and, with it, issues regarding “insurance fraud”, matters pertaining to “criminal defense investigations”, the invention of low-cost “listening devices”, computers and Internet technologies (and more) have as well caused a noticeable, upward swing in the demand for highly-qualified “Private Investigators” in the global marketplace (effectively regardless of jurisdiction).

The early Private Investigators were “part-time keepers of the peace”, at least in the U.S. Many early Private Investigation companies employed talented individuals to locate and bring criminals to justice. As we mentioned hereinbefore, they often undertook employment and/or assignments that could not (or would not) be handled by the established “law enforcement” venue.

Today, however, having passed the generations and having acquired by evolution a certain higher degree of sophistication, the “Private Investigator” of today is ... Diligent, Attentive, Prepared, Resourceful, Creative, Inquisitive, Patient and Neutral ... and is multi-talented, multi-functional and multi-operational.

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION BASICS

A “Private Investigator” (also commonly referred to as a “Private Detective”, “PI” and “Private Eye”) is an individual who can be retained by persons, groups, companies, organizations and institutions in order to undertake a myriad of different types of “investigations”. From its Latin derivative, “vestigare”, the act of investigation suggests “a tracking, a search, an assimilation and/or collection of information and facts”.

Further, many statutes have generally defined the “Private Investigator” as "any person who engages in the business of, or, accepts employment to make investigations to determine information of crimes or civil wrongs, the location, disposition or recovery of stolen property; the cause of accidents, fires, damages or injury to persons or to property, and/or, evidence to be used before any court, board, officer or investigative committee."

Additionally, "private investigation" can be defined ...

- as the process of “fact assimilation”, being the systematic collection of evidence necessary to support or refute a claim, whether that claim has its genesis in civil or criminal foundation;
- as the process of “observation”, “careful inspection and analysis”, and, the “consistent and detailed inquiry into a specific subject”;
- as the “search and journey” toward the reconstruction of events and conditions pertinent to a client's needs and interests;
- as the collection of information in order to affirmatively and constructively resolve factual disputes as well as complex data; and,
- as the supplying of “independent pieces of the information-puzzle”, in order to achieve a clear and verifiable “picture-as-a-whole”.

Private Investigators are quite often engaged by attorneys involved in civil litigation cases, while many work for insurance companies in the pursuit of suspicious claims, and, prior to the advent of “no-fault divorce”, many Private

Investigators were retained in order to search out evidence pertaining to “adultery” and/or other illegal conduct within the context of a marital relationship in order to establish grounds for a divorce, etc.

With specific regard to the latter, and, despite the lack of legal necessity for such evidence in many jurisdictions, according to press reports, the collection of evidence pertaining to “adultery” or other "bad behavior" by spouses and partners still remains one of the most profitable activities Investigators undertake, considering the gravity and multiplicity of issues being in dispute such as alimony, marital property and child custody.

Most Private Investigators are not directly involved in the arrest or taking into custody of criminals. However, they are expected to keep detailed notes / records, and, to be fully prepared to testify in Court regarding any and all of their professional observations and findings on behalf of their client(s).

During the course thereof, great care is required in order to remain within the “full scope of the law” in the furtherance of those duties, otherwise an Investigator may well face criminal charges regardless of “good-intent” or “ignorance of the law”. And, without question, irregular hours of employment may also be required when performing investigations ... especially as to surveillance work.

In addition thereto, Private Investigators also engage in a large variety of work that is not commonly associated with the industry in the mind of the average person or of the public in general. For example, many Investigators are involved in “Private Process Service”, which is the personal delivery of Court Summonses, Subpoenas and other legal documents to parties during the course of a legal case. “Skip Tracing”, the locating of absconding debtors (et al), can also form a large part of an Investigator’s work schedule.

Many Private Investigation agencies, by design and choice, specialize in a particular field of expertise. For example, some Private Investigation agencies restrict their clientele (and work) to “Skip Tracing”, while others may specialize in Technical Surveillance Counter-Measures (TSCM), or, Electronic Counter Measures (ECM), being the locating and neutralizing of unwanted forms of electronic surveillance (i.e., a “bugged” boardroom for industrial espionage purposes).

And still, other Private Investigators (also referred to as “Corporate Investigators”), specialize in strictly corporate matters, including, but not limited to, anti-fraud work, the protection of intellectual property and trade secrets, anti-piracy, copyright infringement investigations, “due-diligence” investigations, and, computer forensics assignments.

“Legal Investigators” are trained in specific investigative, data-gathering and evidence recordation techniques of fact-finding and forensic procedures with an “eye” on trial preparation, where the evidence collected must properly and logically correlate to the claim, the cause of action and/or the offense involved.

Before proceeding in depth with our Course Preview, let us pause momentarily to better examine the different “types” of “Investigators” most prevalent in today’s marketplace. Many “overlap” in function and operation, but a definitional identification is always helpful in order to provide you a necessary “overview” to better appreciate the material(s) hereinafter:

- **The “General Investigator”** ... this Investigator customarily “balances” a multitude of different clients ... small businesses, corporations, retail establishments and private individuals, and, therefore undertakes a multitude of constantly varying assignments / cases to include, but by no means limited to, the location of missing persons, pre-employment background checks, internal theft investigations, undercover investigations, et al; the most impressive aspect of the “generalist” venue is that virtually every assignment / case (and similarly the techniques required therefor) are totally unique and require constant innovation;
- **The “Legal Investigator”** ... this Investigator is most always engaged by an attorney or law firm representing a diversity of client needs; in general, the “Legal Investigator’s” primary (overall) obligation under such a retention is the accumulation and organization of “case facts” in order that the designated attorney may utilize that evidence during negotiations and/or trial to the client’s benefit, and, quite often is required to testify in Court with regard thereto; should the respective case be a “negligence” action, there can be expected a tremendous amount of purely investigative work ... inspecting damaged vehicles and/or defective machines, interviewing “injured parties” (and witnesses) in order to determine the extent of negligence, et al; with regard to assignments / cases wherein “workmen’s compensation” is the

cause of action, negligence is not an issue “at bar”, but rather the degree or extent of injury alleged, and, whether the alleged injury was in fact work related or otherwise; and, in “probate” assignments / cases, an investigation could involve either locating missing heirs, and/or, attempting to determine what the “mental state” of the deceased was at the time the Last Will and Testament was written;

- **The “Insurance Investigator”** ... this Investigator is either employed directly by insurance companies, or, can be sub-contracted by them for investigation services to be rendered; many of the duties undertaken by “Insurance Investigators” are akin (and overlap) with those of a “Legal Investigator” as we just discussed, however, the basic difference here goes to the primary duty to defend the insurance company(ies) against fraudulent claims ... by way of investigating cases involving arson, product liability, workmen's compensation, personal injury, and, medical malpractice, et al;
- **The “Corporate Investigator”** ... this Investigator is customarily hired by larger corporations and businesses in order to undertake a very wide variety of duties and functions, to include, but not limited to, pre-employment checks, internal theft, falsification of records, work-place accidents, workmen's compensation, pirating, violation of trade secrets and shoplifting, et al; when added to the purely “investigative” functions, matters pertaining to “industrial security” may also become a part of the “Corporate Investigator’s” job ... minimizing losses from natural and man-made disasters, and, general security functions common to most types of organizations (i.e., physical security, disaster planning, computer security, protection of proprietary information, fire prevention and anti-terrorism, et al); and,
- **Some Related Fields** ... many Investigators also perform auto repossessions, “bounty-hunting”, body-guard and security work ... all being “fields” related to Private Investigation, but most often do so as an “extension” or an “enhancement” of their primary Investigation business and not in lieu thereof.

As an interesting point, many present-day Private Investigation agencies are hiring more women than in the past, in finding that women Investigators are very often more dedicated and conscientious than their male counter-parts. That “trend” has been increasing in rapid fashion for quite a few years, thus the “male

dominance” of the Private Investigation venue has effectively ended. This has been realized due to very solid and factual reasoning:

- female Investigators do an exceptional job in researching court documents, using computers, gathering data, et al, because they are more patient and detail-oriented by nature;
- female Investigators are exceptionally effective as "people detectives" ... there is truth in the reality of a “woman’s intuition”;
- female Investigators do an exemplary job of interviewing clients, and, as such, have a much greater likelihood of obtaining information from those being interviewed than their male counter-parts, as individuals being interviewed may often be suspicious or apprehensive of a male Investigator, while feeling much more “at ease” with a female Investigator;
- female Investigators have been found to be more adept at using a “telephone pretext” for the purpose of obtaining information than their male counter-parts; and,
- female investigators further have been found to excel in surveillance matters, as a female Investigator is less likely to arouse suspicion or apprehension in a subject, whether that subject is male or female.

Therefore, for the benefit of our female students, your opportunities are literally unlimited and more-so immediate in nature. And, if you are a male Investigator trainee planning to launch your own business, it has been found over and over that with a female Investigator as your “partner” or “associate”, your collective success ratios will skyrocket.

The question is frequently asked by many students ... “How does a Private Investigator truly DIFFER from a ‘Police Detective’ ” ? Simply stated, a “Police Detective” does not investigate or deal with civil matters, only matters pertaining to crime(s) and criminal activity, such as robbery, rape, theft and burglary, et al. As well, the “Police Detective” is on a salary and has no basis or incentive to “hit the streets” in an effort to obtain clients or to secure “new business”.

Being on a salary, they do not have to worry about the same economic issues as does a Private Investigator who is very frequently and effectively “self-

employed”, and, by his / her own initiative alone, must obtain the business and clients necessary in order to produce an income. However, “Police Detectives” do not “lack for business” in today’s society ... as all too many “calls to the station” regarding crimes committed keep them quite occupied.

Now, there are of course employment situations wherein an Investigator may be hired by an existing Investigation agency, and, similarly be “on salary”. But as part of private business, the necessity to propagate “business good-will” and “new clientele” remains a customary part of that salaried Investigator’s employment scenario within the agency framework. In whichever capacity, Private Investigators are required to do an excellent job, develop a superior reputation, and, as in any other “business enterprise”, raise the “value” of their professional services to a level that will “beat the competition”.

Another “frequently asked question” is ... “What type of education should a Private Investigator have ?” With regard to “formal (academic) education”, there are no “set standards” applying to the “new” Private Investigator, as that will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction as well as from person to person. Instead, the matter of “hands-on apprenticeship” under the guidance and instruction of another “seasoned Investigator” impacts the success of the “new” Private Investigator more than any other “educational asset”.

In furtherance of that, the “new” Investigator may elect to undertake that apprenticeship in a myriad of investigative venues such as cyber-investigations or investigative journalism. But ... there are certain situations that require a “special-skills investigation” such as involving the area of forensics. In accordance with and in anticipation of that, some Investigators will choose to formally specialize in a particular area of interest and/or expertise.

“Private Investigators” as such may specialize as polygraph operators, become experts with regard to computer crimes, or, possibly even handwriting analysis. For these areas of specialty (and others), they obviously must obtain specialized education in the respective field(s). Often times, even the “generalist” Private Investigator sees the great benefit in taking courses or a complete program of study in Criminal Justice in order to better serve his / her over-all knowledge.

Regardless thereof, there are a myriad of Colleges, Institutes and Universities offering such formalized education in all fields of study applicable to the Private Investigator. There are even Associations that sponsor seminars on a multitude of disciplines from data-base research, to surveillance, to photography,

to interview techniques, et al. The well-prepared Private Investigator knows that “knowledge is power”.

The field of private investigation, like most other professions, has varying levels of achievement and recognition based predominantly upon experience. As such, achievement is recognized through “certification”, the purpose of which is to establish a professionally-recognized standard of quality. “Certification” therefore provides special recognition of performance and investigative skill-development that attests to the Private Investigator’s years of experience in the field, and/or, concurrent academic achievements.

There are nearly two dozen “professional certification programs” available to experienced Investigators as they proceed through their careers. Obviously, the respective requirements for “certification” will indeed vary from program to program. But in general, the Investigator must have maintained a minimum of two years active employment experience as a full-time Private Investigator, along with the taking of oral and written examinations, and, in some cases, an academic requirement for the completion of certain educational courses or programs of study.

Once granted such certification, the Investigator may place on his / her business card and stationery the awarded “initials” such as “CPP”, or, “CFE”, or, “CPI” ... representing the “American Society for Industrial Security, National Association of Fraud Examiners, and, Certified Professional Investigator” respectively.

Many students also inquire ... “What types of ‘characteristics’ should a Private Investigator have ?” The successful Private Investigator must have an excellent “balance” of both curiosity and an analytical mind. Again, “reality” is far different from TV or Hollywood. The Investigator must identify and examine the “case / problem” carefully, and, quite often, must “put himself / herself in the shoes” of the subject in order to gain the best objective and analytical perspective, i.e., “if I was this guy, how would I do it ?”

The “seasoned Investigator” has learned early-on that obtaining valuable information very rarely is gained by means of confrontation or aggressive “attitude”. Instead, it is the “art and science of observation” that determines ultimate success. The successful Investigator must become highly proficient in all observation philosophies and techniques, have (or develop) a good memory, and,

be at all times prepared and proficient at taking notes and keeping accurate records.

But without question, the MOST important “characteristic” goes to (collectively) credibility, reputation and honesty. A Private Investigator must at all times maintain professional and personal credibility, and, be more than ready to admit to a mistake or error at the time it is discovered in lieu of any “covering up”. Apart from common business sense, the legal rationale for this is that should the Investigator be called upon to testify in Court with regard to the subject matter, there is “no room for question” and there can be no “gray area(s)”.

The destruction of any career in Private Investigation will be realized if there is even the PERCEPTION that the Investigator has “constructed” an answer or provided information that has not been accurate, and, has been done so in an intentional and willful manner. Similarly, regardless if the Investigator is retained by a person seeking a particular fact or outcome, the Investigator cannot “manufacture” information to meet that particular client’s “desire”. The job of the true Private Investigator is very simple ... find the truth and tell the truth.

In an effort to commence your “self-examination process” as to the desired qualities and characteristics to be maintained by a successful Private Investigator, please take a moment to reflect upon the following (partial) list in order to compare what is presented to yourself ... “keep score”. A Private Investigator should possess:

- superior intelligence and reasoning ability;
- inherent curiosity and imagination;
- keen observation and memory;
- well-founded knowledge “of life and people”;
- excellent technical skills and/or propensities;
- unwavering perseverance and boundless energy;
- the ability to recognize and control bias and prejudice in oneself and others;

- high sensitivity to the feelings of others;
- unquestionable honesty and courage to withstand temptation and corruption;
- the ability to “comfortably” testify in Court;
- exceptional communications skills; and,
- deep (and “real”) passion and purpose.

The “Private Investigator-to-be” maintaining the vast majority (if not all) of the above-noted attributes will assuredly, when coupled with determination and hard work, find himself / herself well on the way to a highly successful and lucrative career ... a career that WILL in fact permit the above-mentioned qualities to be daily utilized and appreciated. If your “score” was low ... start working TODAY in order to improve it !

THE BUSINESS OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

As will be mentioned further hereinafter, the U.S. *Bureau of Labor Statistics* predicts a greater-than-average growth curve for this industry over the next decade. While that is beneficial, it also means more competition. Remember however, not all Private Investigators are in business as “general” Private Investigators.

That is why we have suggested earlier in this Course Preview, do not “jump” to specialization until you have completed your “generalist” apprenticeship, but by all means, begin to examine all areas of specialization that may interest and “fit you” during that process.

At some point, the question is inevitably raised as to ... “How much does a Private Investigator charge (for his / her professional services)?” We will therefore provide current information based upon those Private Investigators who are self-employed through the auspices of their own, independent agency.

Based upon an economic average, self-employed Private Investigators charge Fifty U.S. Dollars (\$50.00 U.S.D.) per hour plus all expenses incident to the case / assignment. More experienced Private Investigators charge as much as One Hundred Fifty U.S. Dollars (\$150.00 U.S.D.) per hour or more ... and ... that “hour” effectively commences “when the phone rings”.

Based upon negotiations with the respective client, Private Investigators often, in the alternative to hourly billing, agree to conduct business based upon a “daily flat rate” ... normally Five Hundred U.S. Dollars (\$500.00 U.S.D.) per day, plus all actual expenses, mileage, lodging, transportation, food and all other “incidental” expenses. It has been found that one out of three Private Investigators are “self-employed” vs. salaried within the framework of an Investigation agency.

The middle Fifty (50%) percent of salaried Investigators can expect to earn between \$24,000 U.S.D. and \$48,000 U.S.D. dollars per year. That translates to reflect that Twenty Five (25%) percent of salaried Investigators earn less, and, Twenty Five (25%) percent of salaried Investigators earn more.

In the event an attorney or law firm engages the professional services of a Private Investigator, the Investigator's "invoice/ bill" may be added to the client's final bill, or, paid out as part of the eventual judgment or settlement, all to be determined on a "case-by-case" basis.

Why are we considering this issue so carefully at the onset of your new career ? Very simple. Before we get into the "nuts and bolts" of "Private Investigation", we feel that you will be able to gain a greater appreciation and depth of our Course material(s) with "all options on the table".

BECOMING A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

As we mentioned in the prior Preview section, once you have made the important decision to be trained as a “Private Investigator”, it will not be a purely academic undertaking, however, the “academic aspect” is highly desirable and strongly recommended, and, in certain jurisdictions, possibility required to a limited extent. But the reality exists that the primary “training” will come by working for (and with) another “seasoned Investigator” in order to gain valuable knowledge by “doing and following”. One of the results of this approach goes to realistically and practically showing you whether or not you in fact truly have the “knack” for investigative work.

At some point, and, most assuredly “early on”, you must further your “self-analysis” to realistically determine ... “Why do you want to become a Private Investigator?” Different people decide to follow a career in “Private Investigation” for different reasons. Perhaps you have been entranced by what you have seen on television or in the movies. Possibly you are departing a career in law enforcement and are “weighing all of your options”. Or, maybe you are simply seeking a complete career change and think that a career in the “Private Investigation industry” would be ideal for you.

Whatever your motivation, Private Investigation is a highly interesting career that requires a multiplicity of skills that most people never get the opportunity to realize or utilize. Although, as we have pointed out, the industry is not nearly as exciting and intriguing as television and the movies would suggest, it is in fact a career that fosters pride and a wealth of opportunities provided you are willing to “do what it takes” to reach that goal. Additionally, you will have a higher opportunity of success if you are able to combine your desire to become a Private Investigator with some of your existing talents, your background and experience, and, an eventual decision to specialize.

Whatever the respective requirements of your particular State or Province, suffice it to say that it will take you on average two to three years of active “hands-on” apprenticeship before you are prepared to take the Licensing Exam (which is required in virtually every jurisdiction). Make certain however, prior to “commencing your career”, that you thoroughly check with the appropriate Governmental Authorities in your respective jurisdiction in order to make

absolutely certain as to their particular academic and/or apprenticeship requirements, et al.

Many students inquire as to whether or not they should, from the very onset of their studies and training, focus heavily upon becoming a certain “type” of Private Investigator. At the point you first enter the business, it is strongly advised that you do NOT attempt to ascertain or heavily focus upon any specific “type” or specialty-area of investigation, but instead take a “generalist” approach during your training and apprenticeship.

It will naturally occur, during that process, by mere “evolution”, that you will develop certain likes, dislikes, interests and self-knowledge of any special “talent” in order to lead you properly to your “best-case” career. It is advisable however to become fully aware of the possible areas of specialization, and, begin to establish those interests and “leanings” early on.

Always remember, in the “Private Investigation industry” or otherwise ... once you find what it is you “like to do”, and, you find that you “do it well”, assuredly move in that direction ... the clientele, reputation, credibility and economic rewards will follow in natural fashion because of your (collective) positive attitude, self-confidence, high principles and gained expertise.

Concurrently, as you proceed through your training and “apprenticeship”, you will learn how to investigate many different forms of assignments and cases, and, will be exposed to many, varied investigative techniques, technological equipment and “hands-on” skills utilized by today's professionals.

This process will inherently provide you the opportunity to ascertain your true “professional likes and dislikes”, as well as to objectively self-assess your strengths, weakness, talents and skills. Your training period then will be highly influential in your eventual decision as to what “field” or “specialty” you will follow ... be it in a corporate environment, legal venue, within an insurance company, an investigative agency, or, independently.

Many who select the Private Investigation venue for a career will have a background in law enforcement, insurance, military or government investigation, or, even the intelligence community. Similarly, many Private Investigators are retired civilian or military police officers with specialized training in criminal and civil investigative techniques.

As such, some States / Provinces either require (or are initiating) training protocols that mandate specific education, a criminal background check and the successful completion of a written exam, et al. Again ... check with YOUR respective jurisdiction at the onset of your efforts in order to avoid unnecessary “future issues” !

During the course of his / her duties, a Private Investigator may face confrontational circumstances and situations, so he / she must be both assertive and a quick thinker. Similarly, the duties of a Private Investigator will assuredly require interrogation and interviewing, thus good communication skills are necessary. Other Investigators perform background or pre-employment checks, investigate computer crimes including piracy, e-mail harassment and identity theft, all of which requiring superior “detail-orientation” skills.

For the most part, it is safe to generalize that Private Investigators perform a disproportionate amount of work at irregular hours, such as early mornings, nights, weekends and holidays. However, specialized assignments involving computer searches and phone calls may be performed at an office during normal working hours. And, Investigators perform most of their work duties, especially surveillance and interviewing, alone.

Some Private Investigators are licensed to carry a firearm, although that is not necessary in most cases. In “real life” however, most work performed by Private Investigators is no more glamorous or dangerous than a trip to the local Department of Motor Vehicles or Tax Assessor's Office.

The hiring of a Private Investigator is, in reality, not an inexpensive process. However, it may be the best resource for those who seek more immediate answers than traditional law enforcement can (or could / would) provide. In further comparison with “law enforcement” personnel, Private Investigators normally carry much smaller caseloads, thereby permitting more professional time and focus to be devoted to a specific case or client's needs. Further, experienced Private Investigators may also have “sources of information” not readily available to local law enforcement.

As in many other professions, the quality of service can (and will) vary from agency to agency and from Investigator to Investigator. Potential clients should (and most agency will) ask probing questions before retaining the professional services of any Private Investigator ...

- “What is his / her professional background?”;
- “How many years have they been in business?”;
- “What is their area of specialty or expertise?”; and,
- “Have they handled cases similar to yours in the past?”etc.

When it comes to retaining the professional services of a Private Investigator, proven experience and demonstrated discretion are vital qualities that are always sought.

From a “legal” standpoint, we ask the question ... “In what areas of the law are Private Investigators most involved?” As you may be aware, in the U.S. Legal System, there are two primary classifications of “law” ... Criminal and Civil.

Criminal law deals with crimes and the commission of crimes, while Civil law deals with business disagreements, marriage separations, contracts, et al. For the most part, Private investigators conduct their business under the auspices of Civil law. There are six primary categories of Civil law as follows:

Tort Law: involving injury to persons and/or property, et al;

Family Law: i.e., the rights of husbands and wives, parents and children, et al;

Commercial Law: i.e., the rights of people and businesses to make contracts, et al;

Property Law: i.e., the use and ownership of property whether real (land, buildings) or personal (car, boat), et al;

Corporate Law: i.e., the formation and operation of a corporation, et al; and,

Inheritance law: i.e., the transfer of property based upon the owner’s death, et al.

However, the afore-listed notwithstanding, most of the investigations conducted by the Private Investigator will concern the following types of cases:

- Tort Law:** defamation of character, negligence, assault, accidents, false arrest and personal injury, et al;
- Family Law:** missing children and spouses, child support enforcement and divorce, et al; and,
- Commercial Law:** insurance claims, contract fraud and missing debtors, et al.

PRIVATE INVESTIGATION SPECIALIZATION

You must also have the ability and skills to present yourself well to your potential clients, and, the innate “salesmanship” to market your own business. The burden is upon YOU to “prove” to a potential client that you can “do the job” (better than anyone else), that you “always get your man”, and, that your professional service fees are competitive ... “but slightly higher than most because you are the best in the field”, or, “slightly lower than anyone because you are just getting into the business”, or, “lower than others because you believe the fees charged by others are excessive for the services they are providing”.

There are, of course, dozens of areas of “specialization” the incoming Private Investigator might want to eventually consider once you have fully and successfully completed your period of “generalized” education and apprenticeship. All in all, it effectively depends upon your own background, experience, talent(s) and interest(s).

If you have an accounting designation, you may want to lean towards “Financial Investigation”, or, if you have a prior expertise in computer coding better than most, assuredly consider becoming an “ethical hacker”, or, if you have a strong familiarity with electronics, then you may want to “break into banks, for the banks”. Bottom line ... when looking to “specialize” ... look FIRST to your work, interest and academic background to see the “blend”.

- Some Investigators choose to specialize in **insurance cases**, such as fraudulent workers' compensation claims, watching claimants suspected of defrauding the insurance company, et al. In such cases, the Private Investigator would take photos, for example, of a “back-pain claimant” lifting heavy objects in order to show the insurance company that the person is not actually suffering from debilitating pain.
- One (1) of the largest areas of business for Private Investigators is found in **marital conflict / domestic relations cases**, where a Private Investigator is hired to perform surveillance upon a spouse considered to be unfaithful. Although in most jurisdictions such evidence as may be collected is not useful in Court, many suspicious spouses retain Investigators merely to confirm or alleviate their concerns.

- **Intellectual property theft / piracy cases** provide another area of specialization. In such matters, the Private Investigator would be serving the artistic community, such as musicians, writers, publishers, etc. As such, the Investigator would be engaged to track down individuals who have “stolen intellectual property” in order to bring the offenders to justice.
- Many attorneys and law firms routinely engage Private Investigators to assist them in the **collection of evidence** in order to “prove” a criminal act, and, conversely to set an innocent person free as well as a myriad of other case-types. Of all areas of Investigation, the building of business relationships with attorneys and law firms can be by far the most rewarding.
- Then there is the specialization of **Protection Services**, as many “bodyguards” are affiliated with the Private Investigation industry. Some “protection services” involve “big, beefy men” who keep the general public away from famous rock stars. But other protection services should be considered as well, such as “preliminary security services” whereby the area at which a client is to arrive is “scoped out” in order to assure the client’s safety. For example, renting the client's hotel room a day or so before the client arrives in order to “scan and clear” the room / area for illegal surveillance equipment placed by paparazzi or whomever.
- Private Investigators also work from within organizations in order to **investigate employees** suspected of theft or drug use, or, work outside of the organization in order to investigate companies that may be “ripping off” consumers (i.e., a company employee selling secrets to a competitor).
- Private Investigators may also specialize in **accounting investigations**, providing financial services to help monitor those who deal with money. For example, the Investigator may be hired by a law firm or an accounting firm in order to investigate payments made, to determine whether those payments were real or fictional, and, to ascertain if those payments were merely an attempt by the company to increase their earnings reports for shareholders.

- Private Investigators work in the **retail venue** ... stores, hotels, cruise ships, airports, and railroads ... in order to help manage the movement of people and to prevent theft, as well as thwarting shoplifters, and, even watching the employees in an effort to reduce employee theft.
- **Corporate espionage** is a relatively new and growing form of “business” that is in reality “questionably ethical”. After all, if you had a business, would you want someone spying on you in order to learn the secret(s) of your success? Still, it is a viable undertaking for someone with very finely-tailored investigative talents and skills. In such a situation, the Investigator would be “conducting business” directly with the competitor (and/or sifting through discarded files in order to see how they conduct their business), then “selling” the findings report to the competition.
- Private Investigators also are engaged as **Loss Prevention Specialists**. As perfectly represented in the movie “*Sneakers*”, you may recall that the subject-line required breaking into banks specifically in order to help those banks identify “weak spots” in their security systems. This is assuredly an area of specialization in great demand requiring a background in electronics as well.
- **"Ethical hackers"** is a modern-day term used to reference individuals who undertake “online” versions of the work performed by Private Investigators. “Ethical hackers” are engaged by companies and governments in order to attempt to identify “holes” in their “cyber-systems” in order that the flaws may be corrected before “unethical hackers” can take advantage. This is a present day “gold-mine” for the specially-trained Private Investigator with a strong computer / IT background.

CONCLUSION

DO YOU STILL WANT TO BE A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR ?

To be a successful, self-employed Private Investigator, you have to have the inherent ability and desire to work on your own ... to “be your own boss”. Not everyone is “built” for that. Ask yourself ... “Can you?” ... “Have you ever done it before?”

In addition, it is imperative that you have an excellent “general understanding” of those areas that might affect your duties. For example, if you choose to do surveillance or clandestine work, then you will be required to have competent knowledge regarding the criminal laws in your jurisdiction governing the privacy rights of others.

Further, in most jurisdictions, you will need to be very familiar with matters pertaining to “venue”, Rules of Civil Procedure, Statute(s) of Limitations, Writs, Subpoenas, the Civil Practice and Remedies Codes, Evidentiary Rules and most likely a reasonable command of many of the legal words and phrases that will involve your efforts.

In short, you will have to acquire a “general understanding of the law” ... to fully understand what you can and cannot do in your professional undertakings, what you will be empowered to do under existing law(s), and, what the existing law(s) prohibit.

When self-employed, you will have to become operationally acquainted with all laws and regulations in your jurisdiction pertaining to the collection of sales tax(es), (which most Private Investigators very seldom if ever assess, but may not even be aware that they have the obligation to pay such taxes to the government in the event they do assess sales taxes upon clients).

Further, you will be fully responsible for keeping your own financial records, and, for paying your own Federal / State or Provincial / Local income taxes, including all “self-employment tax(es)”. And, in the event you subsequently elect to engage the services of employees, you must be operationally aware of all employee deductions, contributions and the payment of taxes thereupon.

As you “branch out” on your own, it is always an excellent idea to check with the local Chamber of Commerce for "how to start your own business"

courses, the local library, as well as with the jurisdictional Government, and, academic institutions in order to assure that you have set up your “business” properly and in full legal compliance.

Concurrently, strongly consider joining a professional organization, Local, State and/or National. The local Chamber of Commerce and Better Business Bureau, as well as various Professional Associations / Organizations serve as an excellent place from which to start networking with other people in the profession, and, by which to gain “name-recognition” for the obtaining of clientele / business.

Clearly, some organizations are better than others, so always attend a few meetings as a guest. Observe how well you are received by its members and what the organization truly has to offer members. You may have to pay “dues”, but for those “dues” the “return on your investment” might well be substantial.

In those organizations which you have joined that only involve other Private Investigators (et al), call upon them and meet them informally for “coffee” or lunch ... ask them for advice, ask “what would they do if ...?” You will not earn a dime in that process, but you will in fact obtain a wealth of knowledge and create important contacts.

And, as you stay in the profession, we strongly recommend that you take continuing education courses that are intended to help keep you abreast of changes in the law and techniques of the profession in order that you can always be ...”the best that you can be”.

We hope to have provided you in this Course Preview valuable information and helpful considerations showing that the field of Private Investigation is definitely NOT “boring” work ... but with equal honesty, not momentarily “action-packed” either. We have examined many of the interesting and exciting areas in which you may choose to specialize.

And, what should have been reflected most obviously ... this is a field that is growing faster than most other business opportunities in the marketplace. We wish you the utmost success in your upcoming career as a well-educated, well-trained Private Investigator !



A **Private Investigator** is an individual who, amongst other duties, investigates crimes; investigates the identity, business, occupation, character, etc., of a person; investigates the location of lost or stolen property; investigates the cause of fires, losses, accidents, damage or injury; and/or, secures evidence for use in court.

The movies, books and television are full of story-lines about "sexy and intriguing" Private Investigators, and, the recruiting of them into its ranks constantly. But what actually inspires devotees to really look at Private Investigators ?

After all, if we think about the entire matter in a sober way, a Private Investigator is a person who does the "dirty work" for someone else. He / she inquires details, performs surveillance, and, stares a "keen eye" into places which are not supposed to be accessible. In doing so, however, the Private Investigator very often ends up being the "messenger of bad news". So why are we drawn to them ?

One of the most basic reasons for our attraction lies in a shroud of secrecy that surrounds the "image" of the Private Investigator. Movies establish a mental picture of the Private Investigator's "aura" and underlying persona ... their looks are always secretive, "stealth" and forever give the feeling that they know something we do not. Most likely true.

This book is one of the finest of its kind to be offered outside of ("conventional") Law Enforcement and Governmental educational facilities. In this book, you will become closely acquainted with the necessary and foundational knowledge regarding the history, purposes, components, functions and parameters of the broad Private Investigation field.

Begin the most EXCITING career of your life ! Did you know that there are in excess of over 50,000 active, professional Private Investigators operating in the United States alone ?



About the **Author**

David A. Dadoun maintains a highly diversified and extensive resume in the fields of International Intelligence, Undecover Operations, Counter-Terrorism, Executive Protection, Physical Security and Specialized Investigations. During his career, covering a span of 35 years, Mr. Dadoun has acquired an in-depth exposure to these varied specialties as augmented by his service in the Israeli Defense Forces. At present, Mr. Dadoun is deeply involved as the founder and Program Director of the Police Science Institute, and, as the Executive Director of the International Police Congress.