

Please stand by for realtime captions. >> Hello everybody and welcome to this webinar on institutional analysis presented by Praxis International in partnership with the office of violence against women, today's topic walls, skills and responsibilities, my name is Lucy Pope. Our coworker Jennifer will manage the details of this webinar will turn this over to her right now so she can go over some important tips for your participation.

Hello everyone, I am Jen filling in for Liz today, a couple webinar tips, the phones are muted, if you have any questions use the private tab in the lower left or e-mail me. The session is being recorded and will be posted in two or three days. Thanks.

Thank you Jen. I also want to let everyone know that immediately following the webinar today you will receive an e-mail with a link asking you to evaluate this session. We've take a couple of minutes to answer five short questions. We really do use this information to help improve our training events so we appreciate you filling that out. Our presenters today are Disney's Eng who works with Praxis International community assessment program, and Rhonda Martinson, a practice consultant in that program. Let me briefly introduce Rhonda. She is a praxis consultant with institutional analysis and as a writer and trainer on the criminal justice response, domestic violence, especially in the role of law enforcement and prosecution. There is a really broad background in the criminal justice field she has been a 911 call taker/Joe officer, and has been a prosecutor in continuing legal education attorney. She has extensive consulting and training experiences at Equatas and also at the battered women's justice project and at Equatas she managed an initiative on improving justice response to witness intimidation and the battered women's justice project she provided technical assistance and training for coordinated community response teams including prosecutors. She is currently an advisor on the development of updated advanced training about batterers and battering. She is a board member of education for critical thinking which is an organization that assists governments and community organizations in the reduction of gender-based violence. We are very fortunate to have Rhonda and Denise resenting today and there is a real wealth of experience. We want to start by introducing what is the community assessment? Denise did you want to explain?

I do. Thank you Lucy heard before I get started I want to give folks a little bit of an opportunity to check out some of the technology on the webinar, as Jen mentioned the lines for the participants will be muted throughout the webinar, so if you have a question or comment about what you are hearing on the webinar, you can chat in your questions, and we will make sure that Rhonda has a chance to respond.

I noticed that a couple of people are trying to sign in on the public chat on the bottom so if you all want to test that out of little bit and say hello that would be useful, we want to make sure that people know how to talk to us if they want to and it is also great to know who is on the webinar with us and where you are from.

You also notice next to the public chat there is a private tab. If you want to contact and send someone a private message you can click on the private tab and select who it is you want to send a private message to, and you can send a message in that way. Throughout the webinar we will be monitoring the chat to make sure there is an opportunity for Rhonda in particular to respond to any questions.

If you have not tried it, you could probably check out the chat feature now to make sure that everybody knows how to use it. With that, I am going to give you a quick overview of what the safety accountability audit is, most of you may know this, this might be a review for some of you, we want to make sure that everyone has a basic grounding of what it is we are talking about.

The safety and accountability audit is a systematic way of analyzing a community's response to violence against women. The audit is sometimes referred to as community assessment or institutional analysis, with a little bit of difference between when we say safety and accountability audit we are generally referring to the review of the criminal justice response to domestic violence cases.

Sometimes we used broader application for these methodologies, or example sexual assault or child welfare, or other institutional responses to violence against women. We often use a broader term of community assessment, or institutional analysis. For purposes of today's webinar you may hear using the term audit assessment analysis pretty much interchangeably so I don't want people to get confused if they hear the three terms, if we use them interchangeably to refer to pretty much the same thing.

So again, the audit or assessment is not a way to look at individual workers, we are not doing performance review of individuals. What we are doing is looking at how work is put together and organized in such a way that it does or does not account for violence against women. We are continually in this process directing people to the attention of victims of violence and using that as a standpoint of our inquiry and focusing everyone's attention on how victims of violence experience with these institutions are. Institutions are concerned with how to make things to run more efficiently and smoothly and this is important of course, that in doing so it is not unusual to however inadvertently or unintentionally, fail to account for the real-life experience that people have as they try to interact with that institution.

So there are kind of those gaps, the difference between what someone needs from an institution and what an institution actually does or provides, it is really what it is we're trying to do. And because we find through this inquiry what the gap is and how it came about, it naturally leads us to understanding how we can create a blueprint for solving problems.

The auditor assessment is intended to be conducted by an interagency team made up from representatives of the agency that is being audited or assessed, and those who interact with them, along with significant partnerships from advocates and others in the community sometimes. That

is a very brief overview of what the auditor assessment is, in any questions feel free to chat the men and we will fit those in throughout the webinar.

The assessment is intended to be led by a coordinator. There are a lot of tasks that have to be accomplished. There are a lot of activities that happened throughout the audit process and so we really need someone to organize, coordinate and lead that effort and not personally call the coordinator. We will talk later in the webinar about what their responsibilities and tasks are in the kind of qualities that you want to look for.

Generally speaking, that person can be a community-based advocate, someone who is a representative from the agency being assessed, for example you can ask in the police apartment or prosecutor's office about is the focus, who is leading this, or it could be a CCR coordinator if you have a domestic violence task force, whoever is in charge of leading that initiative could become your audit coordinator.

Sometimes the way the community is organized or set up you might have to have a shared task, you might have some people who have some of the skills you need that someone else has some of the others and it can be a fairly complex task, said it is okay to share this task between a couple of different people if that seems to make the most sense for your agency or community. That is the brief overview of what an audit is and what the coordinator does and who coordinator is. With that, I just want to move along and get into the meat of what it is we want to talk about today which is what it is we need a coordinator to do.

You for the audit begins, it is important to learn as much as possible about the audit. One of the really good ways to prepare is to attend the Praxis Institute would hold every single year and the next one is coming up in May of this year, the 11th through the 14th year in St. Paul. We highly recommend that the coordinator, and if possible one or two members of the team, attend the Institute number there have been audits for people of not, and generally speaking I would say that things go much more smoothly when someone has that kind of preparation.

At the Institute, people who attend will receive a copy of the Praxis agent accountability audit toolkit and the coordinator should also read that, it has really good background on what an audit is. We also have a logistics guide on our website because a lot of information that will help coordinators figure out how to manage the process.

Coordinator then needs to work within the community to generate some community buy-in and community support. The coordinator will need to meet with agency representative, the agency heads and explain what the audit is and explain what it is we are trying to do, address and alleviate any concerns people might have about engaging in the process. It is a very brave for a community to decide they are willing to invite people to come in and look at all of the processes they have really examine what they do. It is important to respect that and alleviate people's concerns that you are not looking to get anybody in trouble

and it is not any kind of Exposé. It is a joint inquiry and we are going in together to look at what it is the agency does and how it operates.

The coordinator will then form a team that will be done in conjunction in consultation with the agency had, you ask evil to assign people to your team, we will talk about team composition a little bit later, we want people from the agency being assessed, those who interact with agency being assessed, significant participation from advocates and sometimes other community members.

In preparing the team it is important to think about what the scope of the audit is going to be. Are you going to be looking at 911, patrols, sexual assault audits, what is it you are deciding to take up as a community? And then you begin to gather not just individuals to come together and be part of your team, but documents from the agency that will help you learn about how the agency operates.

Confidentiality is a really important part of an audit process, something really important to pay attention to. Throughout the process of the audit team members will be handling confidential material. So it is important to make sure that people have a shared understanding about how materials will be accessed, handled,,, and maintaining confidentiality about what is in the records themselves. And also confidentiality about how the team will communicate outside your team meetings about what it is you are doing so that you do not leak out information that could be misunderstood or is only part of the process.

Along with that I think maintaining communication with agency heads shall not necessarily be a part of the audit unless you are in a small community where you'll have a very small number of per -- practitioners. So how about communication take place in who will talk to them about what kinds of mission you keep within the team so at the end of your process you have an agreed-upon process. With that, that is just a pretty brief overview of what the audit brief overview of what The Audit Court, Nader does to help prepare. I want to ask Rhonda who has extensive straits and doing audits throughout the country to talk a little bit about what it is that you have seen it unity zero taken this work up that was helpful, what pitfalls to avoid and anything else you want to add.

Thank you Denise a good afternoon everyone. I have a question to ask of you all and it is only partly in jest. How many on you call have been asked to attend a meeting to listen to other people discuss an issue, or perhaps yourself given input on an issue only to receive a list of unexpected assignments when you get there? Can you research this or can he write a recommendation about that? If I could click A2 hands raised on my screen I certainly would do it.

And I am only partly in jest when I say that because that is what agency leaders are fearful of. That is what they feel like they may be asked to do when they are asked to commit staff to this audit or assessment project, sort of a snowballing time commitment. That is what

an audit coordinator supposed to manage. This is not a bureaucratic position that exists to write progress reports on grant activities, but it is a person that is supposed to make work. And -- makework happen.

The agencies are really there to give their expertise and give their input and to help do activities, it not do all the work that needs just described, which is that work of preparation. With Denise and Lucy, one were planning this webinar, we noticed that if you listed all the items of information that are companions to all of the slides you are about to see, by far the highest proportion of information had to do with what we are talking about right now which is preparation.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance of the audit coordinator taking on that role. As picking out a few examples of real audit experiences to better extent -- illustrate, I just finished an audit project a couple of months ago where an audit coordinator was hired in the first thing that was done was to take that person around and ask her to meet with the supervisors of the law enforcement agency that agreed to be part of this audit.

There was a sitdown meeting with each law enforcement supervisor privately so that if they had any concerns or fears about time commitment, if they had any question like what the heck is this audit process anyway? Police in part titular are used to be challenged, assessed, evaluated, chastised, and quite a bit. You can imagine in meeting someone who is about to embark on another evaluative project it is a scary project to be in the meeting the audit coordinator and establishing those relationships up front was very important.

Similarly, the preparatory work of collecting information and forming a team, most of the time we have audit coordinators involved in what we would call a site book. Although sight it is very important as well, but a site book is a collecting book for all the things that again Denise alluded to briefly in her introduction, laws that may be important, assessing what people were doing as it relates to responding to violence against women.

For example, in my home state where I was trained as a lawyer, we do not have an assault statute as many of you have. Have a battery statute which involves inflicting injury on someone. So the type of conduct that would involve threats and things that do not involve physical conduct or physical contact would be encompassed by other active statutes like disorderly conduct in threats and things of that nature.

Said if the injury portion that needs to be proved when law enforcement takes a report of domestic violence and sin to a prosecutor's office, there are also requirements that it be shown that the party did not engage in mutual combat like a bar fight. So each of our reports would say something to the effect of I am married and did not consent to being struck by Bill or Jean did not consent to being cut by John. And so on.

Some of you may be smiling at this but that is an element we have to prove, and yet when I read those police reports there was a group of

people who did not create a site book, some people immediately jumped to the conclusion that police documenting this element were being a little bit smart, kind of a smart mouth in writing the reports by saying I am married and did not consent to being stabbed because they did not realize one of the parameters around officers work with this particular statute. I cannot emphasize enough, again, the importance of reparation and collecting materials that influence the practitioners work and how important that is for an article were Nader to do to really be able to be a credible assessor of what is going on in your community.

You know, that is a really interesting example that you gave Rhonda and I am reminded of a site where I was working, around the whole mutual combat idea, where we were really puzzled at first about why some of the folks or victim support people connected with the prosecutor's office were not offering services to battered women who fought back.

What we found is that in their state statutes that if the person who is defined, or in order to be entitled to the support of advocates connected with government, that you're not officially defined as a victim if you're somehow involved with the events yourself. And so in those cases where they determined or could make a predominant aggressor determination or it was not done very well, that the battered woman could not get any services from the state because she did not meet the definition under their law.

It is a really good example of uncovering how it is that defining this text could be really key to understanding what it is that folks are doing.

Agreed. I guess I would sum up this area by saying remember the Girl Scout motto, Be Repaired.

Exactly. The other thing I would say is well just to add that I did not address very much in my earlier comments was the whole function of coordinating and facilitating a meeting, Acacia the meetings actually happened. Sometimes that can be a really different skill than organizing and preparing, you know him engaging with the people within the criminal legal system but that is a really important task.

Gathering people together and making sure they have the information they need, and actually facilitating the discussion and leaving those meetings and initiatives on when folks come together -- leaving those meetings and initiatives on when folks come together. Moving on. Once you're into your assessment you begin the audit itself, there are many, many additional tasks the coordinator is responsible for and one of the really port once is arranging for focus groups.

The coordinator may or may not will be the person who will arrange for and conduct focus groups, they need to make sure they actually happened. As I said earlier the audit assessment is conducted from the standpoint of victims of violence. It is really important to gain information and an understanding of how people experience their involvement and interaction with the system.

If the coordinator isn't going to be the one to actually do it it is important that they connect with a shelter or community-based advocacy program to make sure they happen. It is a superb part component of an auditor assessment.

The coordinator will also schedule the team activity, of which there are many. The team, throughout the course of the audit, will be interviewing people who are involved with handling the cases that are the subject of the audit. For example we could be talking to patrol officers or 911 call takers or prosecutor probation officers or others who handle these kinds of cases.

They will be observing people and watching people at work and maybe going on police ride along, watching what happens in arraignment courts, sitting in an interview with a probation client or those kinds of activities. And they are going to be reading a lot, I will talk about text analysis separately in a moment, but there is a lot of stuff to read and analyze. The coordinator is responsible for making sure all of these things happen. There are a number of different ways the community's approach this.

It is not uncommon for these activities to take place over weeks or months. Sometimes people would do what we sometimes call a blitz week we get everybody together and everyone on the team tries to take that week and just dedicate it to their audit or assessment. The coordinator will be responsible for assigning people to do various tasks that will comprise the data that will be used for making the findings of the audit.

Scheduling people in making sure that people know where they are supposed to be in when. And also making sure the people who participated are interviewed or observed. This is a really time-consuming and Tito oriented task the coordinator has to do. There are many administrative tasks in addition to that just with arranging the meetings themselves, getting meeting space and sitting out notices him arranging for food or making sure the materials are there, leading the team and interpreting and analyzing the data as you progress, especially as you get to the end of the audit itself.

I want to say a word about text analysis because it is a really key component of any audit. There are many different kinds of examples of text and Rhonda gave an example of something that was in the state law that led people to look at other text with police reports in a different way.

You will be gathering state, local, and federal ordinances that will pull together policies if they exist. It is helpful together whatever administrative forms people use as a process cases and then you'll be looking at case files. The coordinator will lead the team to figure out what kind of case files they even look at and how many, what kinds of files, are they going to redact or not redact and that is removed any identifying information, who will be involved in a review, and what is the structure that will be put into place around that?

Praxis has produced a text analysis guide that is available for free for download on our website. I can put that link in the chat if anyone is interested in looking at that text analysis guide. It is very helpful for people who want to do audits. And finally I really, really important thing the coordinator has to do is make sure that someone is keeping track of all this information. You will generate a wealth of information so the coordinator has to make sure that everyone is keeping accurate notes, this will save a lot of time and headache at the end you're trying to make sense of what it is you found and to make sure that you can back up any findings you make based on the data collection activity the people were at Volvo with.

The coordinator has to be in charge of making sure all the information is collected and organized and systematized and made available when it is needed. Those are the main activities people have to do during the activities of the audit itself. With that I will ask under what it is you would add and what it is you have seen [ Indiscernible-low volume ] .

I was just thinking, here again is one of my partly facetious questions deserving of a hand raised, have you ever been on a tour led by two or guide and a person has visited the place out of time and he or she knows who are meeting and who you are seeing and knows exactly when you will be picked up, has instructions for you on what to wear, what to bring? They have mapped the route you need to take and they know the time and distance between each point? I would say an audit coordinator is a tour guide of the entire audit process absorbed thinking about some of the things that did need said, like scheduling or knowing directions or scheduling of meetings.

I am reminded about a humorous story on myself and working on an audit but it makes the point quite well. I was touring a jail and I was supporting the local audit coordinator in doing that she was relatively new and have-nots were the jail -- and had not toured the jail. I had worked for college for six years at nights at a jail so I thought I would know what is what.

I went there and I parked in the wrong place. I parked in a place visited visitors and of course I am thinking jail, to me that was a logical place for someone visiting the jail, however the visiting parking lot belong to a private company so that was not well appreciated. The second thing I discovered was I walked in wearing some nice leather red pants and I was told immediately by the person at the reception area that you are not going in there wearing those things. I said why not question and she said red? Gang members. Classification symbols. I thought oh my gosh, sometimes it symbolizes in some instances adding affiliation or colors are used in different parts to indicate different levels of security so had to go data -- back out my now illegally parked car and get a black raincoat visited on over my red band.

It all turned out okay but I wanted to say that these are the kinds of things and audit coordinator looks at ahead of time and T members know.



Where do you park? Is it inappropriate, or will not be helpful or comfortable to wear certain things if you have to wear or walk a long distance for example, or be in the security situation like I was. Even things as simple as phone numbers, you get there and the person you're supposed to meet isn't there or your company wrong officer building, having a cell phone number of someone that you can call to let them know where you are would be very important.

I had that happen going to an interview with a judge and the judge was very busy and could only speak during his lunch hour. Of course, the court room, behind which his office was located and he is waiting for me, was locked during the lunch hour and nobody thought, I guess, thought that through and thought how will Rhonda let the judge know he is there if he is in chambers behind a locked courtroom if there's no one there to let someone like Rhonda and -- in?

That was the best legwork and thinking work to remedy but these are the things that your audit coordinator will have figured out ahead of time and provided team members instructions on. And a last thing, Denise ended up by talking about things related to text analysis. As she mentioned in the earlier slides, ensuring the confidentiality agreement, this is also key with text analysis because as you can imagine people are already a bit nervous, a bit hanky, perhaps not quite understanding what an audit is thinking that it is looking for things that are wrong or things that are problematic.

What better way to find that than by looking at the text people produced? It is important to reiterate confidentiality in honor people's confidentiality expectations when looking at the paper they produce. Some departments might prefer that you reject certain things about police reports or prosecution files you are looking at, or if you're listening to something like 911 calls as part of your audit and analysis, that those be redacted or that they are listened to in a room that cannot be overheard by passersby.

Or that you leave your materials in the room and not make copies of the in other words, perhaps the way you analyze text, you can go to the place where it is stored and look at it there and leave it there and not make copies and bring it back to any sort of meeting space that is used by other people.

That is something that is important to remember about text analysis. We talk about confidentiality we are often thinking confidential always say to each other or what we hear one another say. But it also applies to the paper you look at in the departments that have committed their staff or have committed themselves to being observed or interviewed or analyzed.

You know Rhonda, your comments are making me think of a couple of examples I have had. First, in terms of there is the story about the red hand wearing to the jail which reminds me of a couple of exteriors I have had where I arrived in the courthouse, in one case I discovered we could not bring in a cell phone. We did not have a car or any thing unless we could have stored it.

Another case we were told that you could bring all sorts of stuff into the courthouse but not to the actual courtroom. So that we had to scramble to figure out what it was we were going to do to get our work done under the constraints that we had not anticipated. A cohort of Nader can be very helpful in providing the information in advance as we have already mentioned. Also one other thought I had in both of those instances is it can also be an opportunity to really learn about what a victim of violence experiences when they're coming into those settings.

They may not know either what the requirements are and they can get there and try to gain access to the courthouse or justice system and be facing some kind of barrier when they are trying to do so. The other thing I am thinking about with the text analysis, you referenced this a little bit, but one of the things the people asked me about a lot is this whole notion of how you gain access to various kinds of text. He gave an example of how sometimes people or an agency might way to go to sit where the records are kept and look at them. Can you talk a little bit more about how other people can gain access to records and how you think about how many you should look at or what kinds of records you want to read?

Certainly. I think that is a very important role of a coordinator, and that is to check out and get a sense of not only real, concrete data privacy or confidentiality rules related to papers, files, and reports, but any perceived ones that agencies have. Some agencies do not necessarily have a law or administrative rule or policy preventing them from sharing something but just have a general discomfort with doing so, especially given today's world of technology, things kind of magically appearing on Facebook and so on.

I think there is a generalized, a vague fear of such things I providing access to paper. So in addition to some of the strategies I just enumerated, a couple of other things I can think of that would be helpful in gaining access would be limiting evil who have access. Many agencies would be fine with a subcommittee of say two or three or four people from the audit team, looking at the reports and they are not comfortable with a huge group of say 12 or 13 or 14 people so limiting the number of team members that will be doing that activity is one helpful way to get access.

Another way is if there is a rule or information sharing policy related to only certain practitioners or professionals having access to information, I can think of a couple of instances where part of the audit process was to review prosecutions files. There was an administrative rule or statute or policy that limited that access to attorneys, probation officers, and law enforcement officers.

It was decided to let team members who have that professional affiliations look at the file, report that generally on findings without identifying particular cases to the rest of the team and that was satisfactory with the agency that was permitting access to their files.

The last thing I can think of, in an agency where there are various restrictive and difficult to manage data privacy and confidentiality rules, as they were able to share information with researchers, research project, provide the information that would support statistical analyses and so on. And so we were able to be termed temporary researchers on behalf of the County we were doing this audit project in. That was satisfactory to the persons who were deciding and creating parameters around our access to files.

So there is usually a way.

Yes there is. Spirit to be a total of some records. What other way that happen in the community I was working in, there was a restriction in looking at probation files with those in exception and allow the civic to be made available in order so we got a court order to gain access, is very carefully crafted about a specific kind of file at a specific time frame. But there is usually a way. Praxis or Rhonda can help problem solve with that if you all are having trouble getting access.

So the next chunk of activity that coordinators have to take the lead on is kind of the tricky part I think. That is really once you have gotten through the whole data collection phase and your team is synthesizing information in deciding what it is you think it needs, you really try to craft carefully what your findings are and what your recommendations are going to be. It becomes the coordinator's job to take the lead and communicate with the agency and potentially the public, what the team has found. Sometimes, despite the fact that the intention is not to get people in trouble or to embarrass anyone, some of the findings might have some sensitivity for some of the agencies that get involved.

You have to think carefully about how you want to frame up those findings and how you want to communicate it to the agencies and to others. Again we want to keep in mind do not want to embarrass anybody. You will pay for that later if you do and so we want to try to respect the fact that people are coming in into this process with integrity and diligence in doing their job and so figuring all that out trying to go to agency heads, you might want to say here's what we found and the good news is we can also help you fix it.

Think about what strategies might help motivate that group to implement the findings at in general get some sort of buying in whatever the final product will be for the group. Most communities will do some sort of report at the end, not all, but most will do some kind of report at the end of their will make some kind of checklist or a to do list of some kind, a presentation or PowerPoint that will share with the agency.

The question then becomes how will the information be used? Some communities will choose not to make their findings public. Although I was working in one community where we made a presentation to the agency heads about our findings, initially they intended to keep the report confidential, one of the lawyers in the room said you know, this

is paid for with public funds, in this case it was, if someone makes a freedom of information request for the report it would probably need to be turned over, and so the team decided they needed to make sure that if they released the report, they would develop and release the report not necessarily without criticism of the agency, but they really wanted to be extra careful by how they frame stuff up and so they decided to make it public in the end. Working through those kinds of questions and communicating outside of the team about what the audit found is a key function of the coordinator.

This may not be the only initiative coming or going on the community dealing with violence against women so it is important to take that work I connect it with other work that might be done in the community. There may be a domestic violence task force, maybe there is another initiative happening that could connect with what it is you are doing. The Cold War did Nader should take the lead in trying to attend as many of the meetings connected to the other initiatives -- the coordinator should take the lead and try to attend as many of the meetings connected to the other initiatives as possible. [ Indiscernible-low volume ]

Finally there could be all sorts of other things that could happen post audit the coordinator will want to do. For example, make decision on what steps should be taken to implement the findings, the coordinator can take the lead. Since audit tells how the problem occurred it will tell you how to solve it and the coordinator plays a key role in working with other team members to go back to their agency in trying to implement the changes they are recommending. Rhonda, I'll ask you more comments on the final phases of the audit.

You know I was thinking of these old Western movies where the lone cowboy rides off into the sunset and nobody ever knows what happens to the end of the story nobody knows what is end of the story and there are all sorts of projects like that. It is important the audit coordinator finishes what started and brings the project home and provides closure to those people who committed their agencies to be examined and committed their staff to help in the process.

I would say that things like not just collecting information by providing a space for the debriefing of it by the team. I remember the really early days of doing these projects, like I will say in the late 90s, people thought we have analyzed all of these police reports and we have this whole spreadsheet on how long it took to get there, if they gave the victim notification and referral information or not, if they asked these three risk assessment questions and so on.

Well but information is important, I remember that particular group want to create a nice booklet out of the spreadsheet and bang, we are done. There was no discussion about what the information meant, how it connected to the interviews and observations the team members also done, and we were able to talk to the team and the coordinator about not just stop it with a spreadsheet analysis.

What we found was the really needed to be a process where the audit coordinator is not just involved in collecting information from the

activities, the providing regular opportunities, whether it is at the end of the day to attend an activity or during the regular timeframe once a week, to debrief what you found what that means.

We have found some of the best ways of developing your Statements, in other words finding out how is it we are going to articulate a particular gap in patient or victim safety, often comes from that organic discussion of key members saying I have had the same experience, or you got that from reading the reports? All the observations I did last week people were saying the same thing. By that debriefing process, and making space for it is a coordinator, you got this nice, many stranded rope all twined together and really strong, as opposed to one skinny threat of information coming from one source that is not necessarily supported by some of the activities or information other team members have collected.

I cannot emphasize enough that the project does not stop when activities are done but that is when the analysis process really begins. It is important to facilitate everyone's involvement in that. A couple of other things, you'll never get another project again if you don't share this information ahead of time with agency heads. No one likes to be surprised with a report that magically appears on the website without anyone in a leadership edition having a chance to look at it first, make sure there is no inaccurate statements or any explanations that may have been inappropriately attached.

Probably enough said, but agency heads will really appreciate an opportunity to deal with Rollins or gaps found ahead of time, they may have additional information that may be helpful for you, they will also appreciate the fact that you looked for, and identify good things, too. An audit is not just about finding things that are problematic, although we so want to relate these to the victims experience and want to know them, the sometimes you will find really great innovation or great use of resources that you want to emulate and that you want to show other people and encourage the continuing of, so it is good to identify those things.

In a report from last year we decided that the front page of each chapter, in other words there would be a small gap, where we would identify, it would be a page that could be used on a PowerPoint slide, create a graphic, show who this helped and have we done this thing where we documented this information?

What we found on this particular audit, children's presence at a domestic elements incident -- violence incident was not documented often or if it was, safety was assessed or the children were not talk to often. We put in something about you that would have helped had we had that information. We did that for the report and we found examples of where it was done where did help. Supervisors appreciate having that information and we were not simply looking to identify a problem and stop, but talk to other practitioners and victims and focus groups.

Say we found this gap in say how would have helped if we had had police do this? So done, not just what you say to a supervisor but how you say it and how you support it will be very them or.

I think how you communicate information and when and to what people, I think your point about a project not being done effectively and respectively is something to think about when you're doing your project. And so I think this leads naturally to what other skills the coordinator needs of this is a pretty good list. They need to be an organizer, facilitator, planner, communicator, and strategic thinker. They need to wear an awful lot of hats.

Going back to these earlier discussions, this is a point or you might want to think about communities having a coordinator, administrative functions, making sure that all of these skills are accounted for in your coordination because there are many different kinds of things people need to do. People need to be able to do this detailed coordination pieces and also work effectively with agencies and to be thinking creatively and strategically and thoughtfully about all the things that Rhonda has said it has been talking about. With that Rhonda can you say more about the coordinator's skill?

Certainly. One of the things I can remember in talking to someone else about this, someone who was looking to hire someone in the leadership position in the domestic violence effort, they said you know, we really get a struggling getting the right person for this description and we have built a good job description that specializes the domestic violence prosecutor, why haven't we done this for people in leadership or coordinating positions? Why have we not created a good job description for them?

One of his I really appreciate in working with Praxis over the years of their development for example -- sample job description for a coordinator, one of the recent audit I coordinated on from there was a group looking to hire an audit coordinator, in other words this position did not previously exist in nor was there any one in the organization who is going to do that function so they had built their grant funds to create this position and higher a person. They used that job description to talk with myself and Denise and other people at Praxis, how would you use this job description to get the right percent? What sorts of questions would you develop at a job interview for candidates for this position for example? What would be some good answers? Can we anticipate what people might say and for those of us on the hiring committee and conducting the group interview, what a good follow-up Russians we might be prepared to ask depending on how the person answers?

I thought that was such a great idea. I really appreciated being involved in that level of preparation for getting the right person. And it really worked to their advantage because I ended up getting a great coordinator who did a great job with all the functions which is described in this webinar, did a great job writing the report and have great communication skills with all the supervisors and so on.

You know, again, I am thinking there are a wide range of skills people need in order to do this work effectively. You know, it would be really a challenge to find it in one person, but you all will have someone who is really committed to making changes that will improve the lives of victims of violence. But at the same time has the ability and the respective folks in the community who are taking on this work. Just thinking about what skills and qualifications are needed will be a really important function of your audit. I wanted to take a quick pause because we're going to talk about the team for just a moment. Lucy, as you have been monitoring the chat are there any questions or comments that have come up around the notion of the coordinators skills and responsibilities that we would like Rhonda to respond to before moving onto the team?

Not really. There was a question about getting buy-in but I assured Nancy that would be covered in the Institute, and the materials they would be getting.

Rhonda, do you have any other comments you have not addressed around the whole notion of creating buy-in and working with agency people before we move on? There is an opportunity to respond to that question.

Sure. And if the person who asked the question was a bit of follow-up the sure to chat in and we can do that. One of the things that is really helpful is being that prepared audit coordinator were talking about early on. One of the things that is the death knell to getting buy-in is not known much about the process yourself or not knowing much about what is going on. People who are being asked to commit staff to this, or supervisors, they're looking at the picture things related to their agency or community or policy and they're looking to you, the coordinator, as being someone who is much more in the mix of knowledge, much more into the details, and able to answer picky, pointed questions about the audit Ross us. If you are not able to do that and if your response is I don't know, I'll get back to you, that will not do very well for getting by in, especially for someone who might be a little bit confused about what this is and maybe a little bit nervous about the fact that it sounds rather evaluative or kind of looking for problems.

It is important that the coordinator is ready knowledgeable and confident about the explanation of the process. I would even suggest that if you are somewhat new in the field of coordinating or in domestic violence work a bit developing a script for yourself and practicing it before you go and meet so you can actually even anticipate what people's questions I'd be as you develop the script or the resistance and be prepared to respond to that.

We've had to shorten our Institute so we don't have time for it, but we said everybody prepare an elevator speech, so I think that it's a really good suggestion. And also thinking about a colleague of mine in the field of law enforcement who is involved in a long force but audit which was very intense for the community and he said he little trepidation about it at first and was kind of concerned about it. But

it ended up being the highlight of his career because he learned so much about his community and it really develop relationships and it was a tremendously working together in the community having gone through that experience together. So really selling the benefits of the audit can be a very useful thing.

I will shift quickly and talk about the team, we only have a few minutes left. There are a couple ways of thinking about the team, and its role what will the team actually do? And what should the team composition be, who should be on the team in terms of their abilities other skills, and who they are and the role they play in the community? The coordinator wears an awful lot of hats and they also rely on the team.

The team will participate in fine-tuning what we call the audit questions, we have not reference the audit questions on the webinar today, but essentially the inquiry the community takes up when they decide to do this work centered around some sort of questions the team decides they want to try to answer further audit.

For example, how does our unity respond to risk and danger, capture and disseminate information about risk and danger? That is kind of a question a team would do. That focuses your inquiry and the team helps to frame the question. The team should attend training and you want to have team members committed to going to this kind of training they should commit to doing their data assignments and keep careful notes, which is abating and contributing to all meetings and discussions that happen.

Participate in presenting findings to the agency in the community and they want to support the process was within the agency and publicly. If there are audit recommendations to be implemented, to go back to the agency and begin to implement them in their agencies. With that, Rhonda can you talk a little bit about the role of 18 and who the team members should be?

Certainly. You might wonder, those of you on the call, why we are talking about the team and a webinar about the audit coordinator, but the coordinator needs to know that to better facilitate the work of a team and to better coordinate the work of the team, because if someone gets sick or promoted and move someplace else I can no longer be on the team, it is likely going to be the audit coordinator that either built-in or has to locate another team member to do the work the previous team member was doing.

I think just an overall familiarity with the fact that team members are going to be doing activities like interviewing other practitioners, watching other people at work such as doing right along or sitting in the dispatch center, writing along with an officer when serving protection or restraining orders. I'm trying to think of other observations I have done. Watching prosecutors prepare witnesses for trial or watching probation officers conduct their first intake meeting with a domestic violence defendant. Being familiar with what it is that team members are going to do is activities, what paper they're going



to look at, are they looking at lease reports or listening to 911 calls?

Again, you do not have to be an expert on every piece of punctuation in those documents, but simply being aware of what it is that team members are going to be doing, are they going to be sitting in front of a recording device and listening to 30 calls? Will they be sitting in a reference room rifling through police reports? Knowing what it is that they are going to be doing and what they will have their hands on, having a sense of that is very important. And as I said earlier, contributing and not just the collection of information and stopping right there but also providing space for discussing what it is you have found in debriefing that information.

Can anyone say a little bit about team composition and who they are and what kind of qualities? Direct I am sorry about that.

[ laughter ]

You're just too fast for me. You know, I think today many people working in the field of domestic violence know about the mandatory, multidisciplinary team. I do a lot of work in areas of violence and I just finished up with something related to elder abuse in the multidisciplinary teams used in a variety of ways to review cases or do work like we're talking about here today. The idea is generally won't talk about a multidisciplinary team is the importance of advocates. The central role is a very important because we are doing this to better build in the voice of the victims and to better account for the experience of the victim and to better build in safety for victims and accountability for offenders within our criminal justice system.

You cannot really do that unless advocates for those victims are central in your efforts and so that is number one. Number two, there should be representatives of the agencies or the parts of the system that you are looking at. For example, if you're looking at the law enforcement system and the law-enforcement processing of domestic violence cases, you cannot do that credibly without representatives from both agencies. For example, a recent audit project where we looked at police documentation of cause they responded to that world dispatch to them by 911.

There were three police agencies within a large county who committed to being involved in this audit. We have representatives from each agency, both from patrol in from investigation or the detective bureaus from each agency, and we had a representative or a couple of representatives from other law enforcement agencies were not necessarily contributing reports to look at but were frequent partners with these three law-enforcement agencies.

So again, it will not be a very credible effort at the end of it all if you have not involve representatives of agencies were looking at. And last, but not least, there should be other people who are closely connected to the use of the agencies work that are important analyzers

of the agencies work . Like we say in the computer world, is there an end-user to that work or work product that would be important to get their input on?

To use law enforcement as an example, if we're doing an audit related to the law-enforcement response we would want to have not only law-enforcement officials and patrol officers and investigators, but people connected to the work of law enforcement such as prosecutors, dispatchers, permission officers, and victim advocates.

You know, as you have been talking I have been thinking about couple projects I have been involved in to provide examples of some things you been talking about and I remember one community I was then where we were really looking at the police reports in the way that police reports were created and distributed.

We decided to do this exercise were we were trying to talk with law enforcement about who uses the report they produce. And you know, they gave us a long list of folks who use the reports they use but it was quite a long time before they were thinking about anybody beyond law-enforcement who was looking at it. And so I think it illustrated to me how easy it is to focus on your job and your task of completing that things on your tasks, but not really thinking beyond what it is you do, and how somebody else is going to rely on what you did.

I think that illustrated the importance of having folks in the same room who are linked up with each other, to talk about and think about this either work together. That is one example I was thinking of. And I'm sure that you have others Rhonda.

Finally let's talk a little bit about the quality of team members, because of course, it is not just about who the person is on the team and making sure that you have that person who is like your content expert from your agency that is being looked at, and of course the importance of having buy in an credibility, we also need to think about what are some good qualities of team members that make for effective assessment? Could you cover us with this for a few minutes.

Yes. I think that people have good analysis and good critical thinking skills, not everyone has that type of thinking style, so for an example that I will give, and I don't mean necessarily by measuring someone's education either when I say that, I can recall an audit project of rather large size or a lot of information was being looked at, and a larger and more urban area, so we were not looking at 20 or 30 cases but 82 a couple of hundred.

The prosecutor representative on the team did not understand why were having a debriefing session that I mentioned earlier, in other words he was content to march through and do a checklist, this file had this in the file did not have that. And when were trying to talk together about the importance of debriefing information I remember clearly that he said you're the expert, all I need is a list from you of the 10 best things to do and I only have time to do the work, I don't have time to process it.

He was very stubborn about the fact that he was not going to engage in that kind of discussion. One of the things that I think is very important as a willingness on the part of team members to have that kind of discussion, and to have it in such a way that it does not turn into a gripe session or gossip section because that is possible as well. If you have someone who is very frustrated or has negative development, someone who is legitimately frustrated over a very poor situation for a victim might exhibit that not a good critical thinking analysis type of style there it what is the cause of this and how can we make it better? But instead devolve into more of a negative gripe session.

Oddly enough I received an e-mail about something like that today from someone who had come across a piece of information in their discussion that without further investigation would seem to cast a rather negative light on a particular practitioner. He was asking my advice about whether that individual should be approached and asked in the course of this audit why did you do this for why did you not do that?

I replied that would not be a very good thing to do in an audit because of that that person on the spot and what are you want to do if the answer? Are you want to put that in a report? Because a Qaeda bust out one person. I suggested that more information was needed about that particular area and that you ask all of that group practitioners, whether it was a group of natural officers, or a group of investigators, and ask about that particular situation in a general way so you are not singling out one person to gripe at or put in a negative light.

You know this is making me think of a couple of interesting challenges in terms of team composition I have encountered over the years. One being that if you are in a small, rural community you may not have a lot of options for he was coined to be on your team. You might have a couple of people in an agency. So there is not a lot of options.

And another similar problem that manifests in a different way, that is a couple of larger jurisdictions, the cousin where they were situated with some specialty in domestic violence cases, or assign it to specific units, were assigned by who did not have the critical thinking or open to critique kind of qualities as much as we would like. I wonder if you have any strategies for managing that we end up with people on your team that can be challenging in that way?

I would say smaller is better. A good effort is not necessarily dictated by having numerous people on a team. If you are in a position like that or you have a limited number of people in that analytical kind of skill, I would consider keeping the effort narrow in the first instance. In other words, if you have a huge project covers the whole wide world of domestic violence or criminal justice in your community, that is going to require a bigger, broader team and thus more of a problem you just gave an example of.

If, on the other hand, if Kevin narrowly focused Roger and I could think of another couple of examples where they were nice projects that were very narrowly focused, one of particular was about domestic violence since thing that was it -- sentencing and that was it. That was a very small, narrowly focused team with a great many people on it that they did a great job.

Others I can think of that were very narrowly focused has to do with the issuance and enforcement of protection orders. There are many answers to your question, one would be not starting out too big in the first place, the forces you to have that brought people who will not always be persons of your choice.

Interesting challenges, but again, Praxis is available to talk to people about strategizing with any of these questions that have come up and Rhonda I am sure can help as well. With that I think we're pretty much out of time. Lucy and I turn it back over to you, Rhonda thank you so much for sharing your insights, Lucy could you give us closing comments?

You covered a whole lot of territory, for those of you going to the Institute May 12 through the 15th, certainly for the audit coordinator and for your team members, that is a really good Institute look into and you will get lots of details over the last several days. We have put up a lot of different materials on the website that are available, and there is also technical assistance available. The Institute, and also there is a series of webinars and we will be back on June 2. The topic will be What Does It at me when the audit is grounded in the lived experience of survivors? You might want to join it again on June 2. You will be given an evaluation in a minute so please fill that out and give us feedback. If you have any questions go ahead and call Denise or Tyron Woods who is the program manager, they're both available for technical assistance. Thank you for joining us.

[ Event concluded ]