The Pretext

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Focus: Social Engineering

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2009: Dalai Lama hacked

2019: Dalai Lama hacked

The Pretext

The identity used in the approach, and their supposed reason for making the request.

Good Pretexts: A Guide

1. Research pays off

- Know the organisational structure
- Who will be in contact with whom?
- Know the individual's interests and personality.
- Target the approach for the best reception.

Good Pretexts: A Guide

2. Seem the part

- "Sound professional" – or however you *should* sound.
- Dress for the part.
- You can download a logo!
- Small details help lower people's guard.

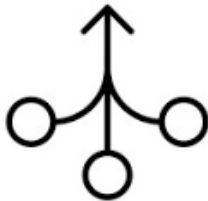# Good Pretexts: A Guide

3. Use the truth

- You can't bluff with an empty hand.
- A real expert can spot a total liar.
- Use parts of your real experience.
- Not your full identity!

Good Pretexts: A Guide

4. Keep it simple

- Don't over-plan your identity.
- You have to remember your lie.
- Forgetting your own background is suspicious.
- Flexibility is valuable.

Good Pretexts: A Guide

5. Appear spontaneous

- Don't be obviously working from a script.
- Respond like your assumed identity should.
- Need to think on your feet.

Don't Get Arrested

Deceptively eliciting personal information from organisations can be a **criminal offence**. Do not do this unless you have good legal cover (e.g., a penetration testing contract).