

Missing Person: Suzy Morales, Case Study

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The investigation of a missing persons case demands a comprehensive and thorough approach in order to maximize the recovery of evidence and increase the chances of a successful resolution. The steps and techniques I'll be using in this investigation come directly from the materials provided to me this semester. For this case study I will go through what actions I should take and how I can build probable cause in order to search evidence.

Because I was assigned to the Suzy Morales case the first location I would arrive at would be her apartment, after her roommate, 'JZ' reported her missing. I know the first 48 hours of an investigation are crucial and would begin the investigation right away. I would first determine that this crime is likely a criminal matter instead of a civil one, because Suzy is unexpectedly missing. Next, I would ask for a physical description of Suzy at the time of disappearance, most likely would be asking JZ because he is still present on the scene. I would ask details like her race, height, weight, eye color, identifying marks, clothing, and more. I would also try to determine if she has an altered mental state at this time due to her age, substance use, or any mental illnesses.

Next, the next step would be to conduct a search of her apartment. Not only would I be checking to make sure that Suzy wasn't still in the apartment, I would also be looking for potential evidence that a crime has taken place at the location. I also would seek any evidence that would suggest she disappeared on purpose or unexpectedly (like missing clothes, car keys, phone and her wallet).

From a digital evidence perspective I would also take note of any potential electronic devices I think are necessary to investigate such as their shared computer, Netgear Router, Alexa/Speaker devices in the apartment and any of hers or JZ's personal devices(tablet and

watch) Additionally, any surveillance footage from the areas surrounding her apartment and other places she frequented would be a priority as well.

Then I would begin conducting more thorough investigations into witnesses and making more investigative inquiries into the places she frequented, and interviewing neighbors and people she was close to. I would make sure she wasn't seen at any place she frequented like work or any friends' houses. While going through the investigation I would prioritize being objective.

I would start with JZ because he reported her missing and was likely the last person to see her. I would ask him why he believes she's missing. Next, I would investigate any work colleagues, family members, friends, neighbors, and ex-boyfriends Paul and Chris. I would ask these subjects a multitude of questions, and focus on trying to find any disputes she recently had or if there would be any reason she wanted to leave.

In order to search the mentioned devices I will need to build probable cause based on my investigation. After completing the above steps in my investigation, this is what I would describe; During my investigation into the disappearance of Suzy Morales in Farmington Hills, I found that the circumstances surrounding her life at the time of the disappearance raised concerns, particularly her roommate JZ. When initially interviewing JZ. I noticed scratches on his arms, which he claimed were from stumbling in a park. I also spoke to her ex-boyfriend, Paul, whose alibi checked out, and he claimed that Suzy and JZ have been arguing and that Suzy told him JZ's life was falling apart and he had lost his job. According to Paul, the day Suzy disappeared, they were arguing about the rent, and Suzy asked him to move out, and she was scared enough that she locked herself in her room and called Paul. Upon searching the house preliminarily, I found multiple devices including a shared desktop, that could house pertinent information if either of them searched something specifically relating to Suzy. Another friend of

Suzy's I interviewed claimed that JZ was obsessed with her and even got cosmetic surgery to look younger so he could impress her. Additionally, surveillance footage I viewed revealed that she last paid her rent and was never seen again. No one I interviewed claimed they knew of where she could have gone with the exception of JZ, who said she went on a date. However, no surveillance footage proved this and none of her friends told me she was planning on going on a date with anyone. Everyone I interviewed maintained that she had no reason to disappear and this is corroborated by the fact that she missed an event she was looking forward to. Based on this evidence, I believe JZ may be responsible for her disappearance and is lying about her whereabouts.

I believe a crime has taken place and probable cause has been established. The court should permit me to search the electronic devices located at Suzy's apartment and also JZ's financial records and personal devices as well, as they are crucial for advancing the investigation.