



*No More Trafficking connects people and resources to collaboratively create and deliver training and solutions to end all forms of human trafficking and exploitation.*

*We believe this dream is possible when we all unite on mission together.*

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## The Critical Intel Questions

by: *Suzanne Lewis-Johnson, CEO*

We have an intelligence problem in the anti-trafficking arena. I don't mean that we lack brain power. Nor am I referring to the need to effectively share, protect, and deconflict law enforcement case information.

I'm talking about failure to base anti-trafficking messaging and efforts on complete and accurate information. Consider, for instance, the expert who spoke years ago at a conference when I served as FBI Crimes Against Children Task Force Coordinator. The speaker, with an impressive résumé, advanced degree, and direct-service experience, showed images of ads running in the host geography, telling attendees these images depicted children offered for sale in their backyard.

Those images did not depict children. Detectives and FBI specialists had combed through every image, painstakingly working to identify each person. The speaker seemed to accuse law enforcement of not caring about these alleged children and cited additional data that was inconsistent with first-hand evidence and intelligence.

The most fundamental intelligence questions are so basic we take them for granted, and yet, we all need a reminder. We need to ask the critical questions: What don't I know? And: How do I know what I know is True?

Asking the right questions to identify gaps in information (rather than making assumptions and ascribing intent to support foregone conclusions), then directly connecting with those who bring additional context, facts, and perspective, can prevent severe harm. Logical leaps and false assertions, repeated over and over, create opportunities for traffickers to fuel distrust of those who help victims and create chasms – instead of cooperation – between professions.

Eventually, the same talking points repeated by the "expert" and others led to ads moving overseas, placing data we'd used to remove the vulnerable from dangerous situations out of our reach. Politicians and human trafficking "experts" called it a win, while the sale of the vulnerable proliferated. It simply became more hidden. A pattern that continues to repeat. We can end it by routinely asking the critical intel questions.

***"Logical leaps and false assertions, repeated over and over, create opportunities for traffickers to fuel distrust of those who help victims and create chasms – instead of cooperation – between professions."***

## CALL TO ACTION - *What you can do today to protect your family and community*

*As part of a monthly No More Trafficking series, we'll build on No More Trafficking CEO and former FBI Agent Suzanne Lewis-Johnson's comments during media opportunities and speaking engagements. Use the video tools and content below to facilitate community groups and professional groups and to begin conversations at home, work, school, sports arenas, and wherever you go, to protect against trafficker tactics and bring freedom.*

### **Combat Traffickers' Primary Weapon: Hang up the Phone!**

Have you ever played telephone? That game where you whisper a phrase to someone beside you, repeating it around a circle? How often does the phrase become something completely different by the end? When you add in logical leaps and the trafficker tactics of accusation and manipulation, you get what often happens in trafficking situations and in the anti-trafficking arena: rampant misinformation that takes efforts to bring freedom off track.

When a criminal case goes to trial, hearsay – that someone said they'd been told by the victim or another witness – isn't enough. The person who experienced it, said it, or saw it has to appear on the witness stand. Then they get cross-examined. First-hand evidence needs to be presented, scrutinized, and corroborated to reach a beyond-a-reasonable-doubt standard. That's what the rules of evidence require to establish Truth.

A similar approach in the anti-trafficking arena and in every situation can transform our culture and bring freedom. Traffickers' weapon, evil's primary weapon, is deception. To eliminate this trafficker tactic from our culture, we need to intentionally model how to find Truth. I said in a NewsNation segment that "There is one Truth. Truth doesn't have two sides." Conversations that bring in the full spectrum of available perspectives, based on first-hand information, will help us to best understand the problem and bring solutions.

### **Going Deeper.....**

- Find video and related material on our website at [www.nomoretrafficking.org](http://www.nomoretrafficking.org).
- Email us at [info@nomoretrafficking.org](mailto:info@nomoretrafficking.org) if you need help finding the resources.
- Please preview the content before introducing it to others.



### **Start a Conversation**

#### **Consider where you've seen false or incomplete information affect situations.**

- Did haste get in the way of confirming information...did fear of an uncomfortable conversation?
- Did gossip play a part? Did venting get confused for facts?
- Did the right people come together with first-hand perspectives from various vantage points?

#### **Look at the consequences of reliance on misinformation.**

- Who paid the price? What was it? Did anyone accept responsibility?
- What was the ripple effect? Is it still going? Could anything reverse the ripple?
- How can you avoid falling into this trap of passing along or relying on false information?