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Course Description

This module accompanies the Model Policy on Investigating Sexual Assaults established by the IACP National Law Enforcement Policy Center. The purpose of the policy is to provide officers and investigators with guidelines for responding to reports of sexual assault, assisting victims, collaborating with local health and service agencies, and conducting interviews with victims, witnesses, and suspects. Because of the special needs involved in sexual assault investigations, this policy is an all-inclusive document that covers first response, investigation, and prosecution.

Estimated time for completion: 8 hours

OVW Grant Funding

The OLTI was created and continues to be supported with funding from the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. However, the opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.

Expert Contributions

OLTI training content is created and updated with input from professionals in a variety of disciplines, including law enforcement, prosecution, health care, victim advocacy, and related fields. Please see the acknowledgements page of each module, for a list of the individuals who served as contributing authors or expert reviewers.

Course Evaluations

At the end of each module participants are asked a number of questions, including the overall quality of the module, as well as its difficulty. They are also asked to indicate how likely they are to apply the information they learned on the job. Their responses are summarized in the following charts, and illustrated with the quotes.
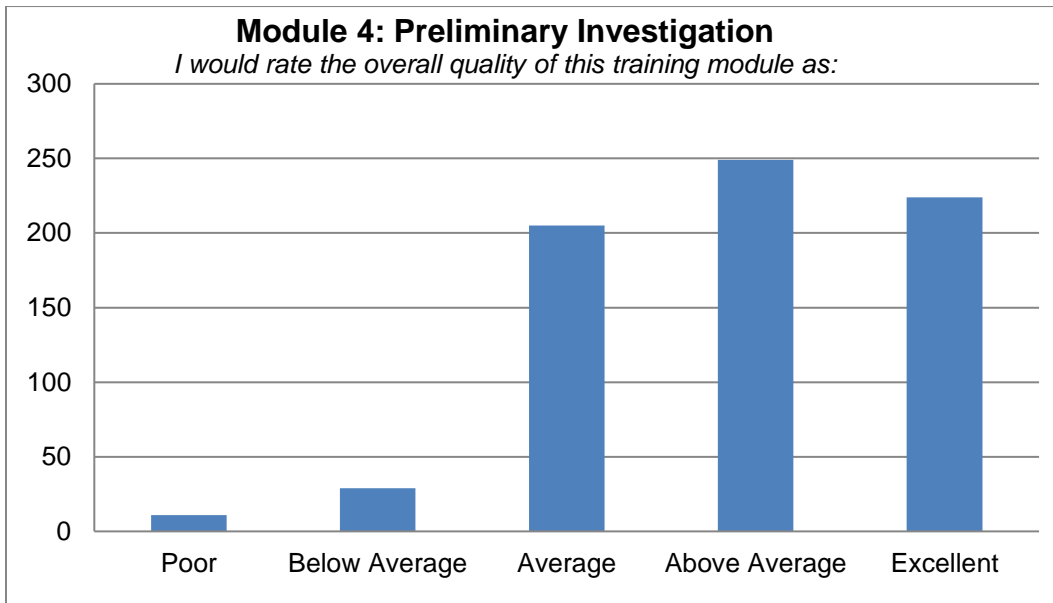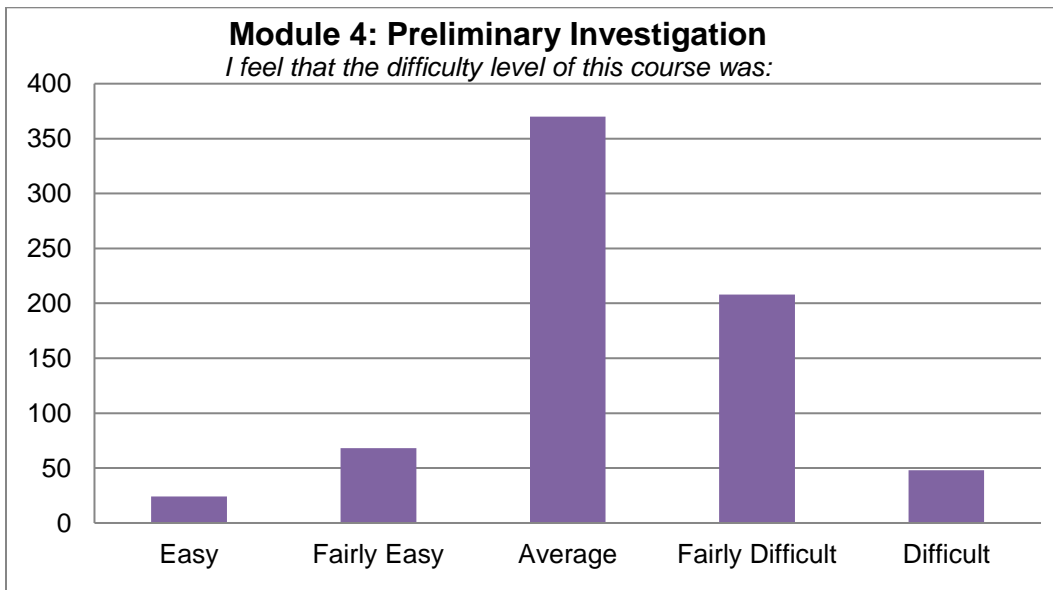
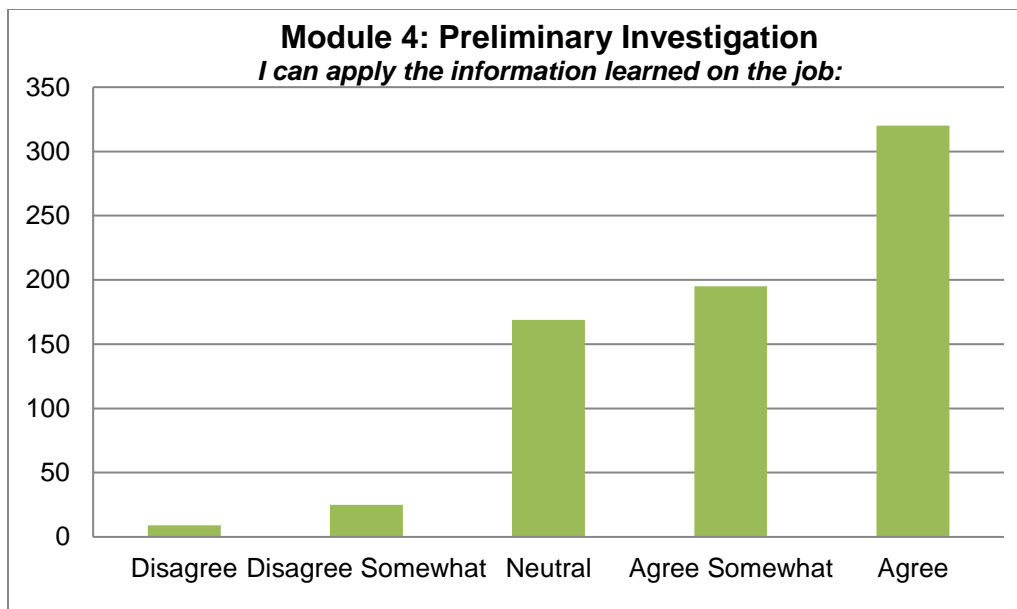*What did you find most helpful in this module?*

The course material was a good "refresher" course and definitely increased my knowledge base.

It was a valuable overview of the investigative process.

Module 4: Preliminary Investigation
I would rate the overall quality of this training module as:

[Bar chart with categories Poor, Below Average, Average, Above Average, Excellent on x-axis and values 0 to 300 on y-axis. Poor ≈ 10, Below Average ≈ 30, Average ≈ 205, Above Average ≈ 250, Excellent ≈ 225]

66% rated the module "excellent" or "above average."

Module 4: Preliminary Investigation
I feel that the difficulty level of this course was:

[Bar chart with categories Easy, Fairly Easy, Average, Fairly Difficult, Difficult on x-axis and values 0 to 400 on y-axis. Easy ≈ 25, Fairly Easy ≈ 68, Average ≈ 370, Fairly Difficult ≈ 208, Difficult ≈ 48]

Module 4: Preliminary Investigation
I can apply the information learned on the job:

A bar chart titled "Module 4: Preliminary Investigation" with y-axis ranging from 0 to 350 in increments of 50. Categories on the x-axis: Disagree (~8), Disagree Somewhat (~25), Neutral (~168), Agree Somewhat (~195), Agree (~320).

72% "agree" and "somewhat agree" that they can apply what they learned on the job.

Course Objectives

At the end of this training module, the learner will be able to:

1. Recognize the background material and supporting documentation that provides a greater understanding of the developmental philosophy and implementation of the model policy.
2. Apply a conceptual analysis of the legal elements of a sexual assault offense.
3. Apply field investigative procedures and best practices for working with victims of criminal sexual violence.
4. Develop policies for law enforcement agencies that take into account the requirements and circumstances of individual communities and agencies.

Course Outline

I.   Recognize the background material and supporting documentation that provides a greater understanding of the developmental philosophy and implementation of the model policy

II.   Apply a conceptual analysis of the legal elements of a sexual assault offense in order to:
   a. Determine the category of sexual assault case being handled,
   b. Predict the defense most likely to be raised
   c. Guide an investigative strategy toward overcoming that particular defense

III.   Apply field investigative procedures and best practices for working with victims of criminal sexual violence, including:

        a. The dispatcher or call taker response
        b. The initial officer response
        c. The preliminary victim interview
        d. The forensic examination of victims of sexual assault
        e. The follow-up victim interview
        f. Drug-facilitated sexual assault cases
        g. Contacting and interviewing the suspect
        h. The sexual assault forensic examination of the suspect
        i. DNA technology
        j. The determination whether a case is a crime, unfounded or a false complaint
        k. Polygraphs and other interrogation techniques

IV. Develop policies for law enforcement agencies that takes into account the requirements and circumstances of individual communities and agencies