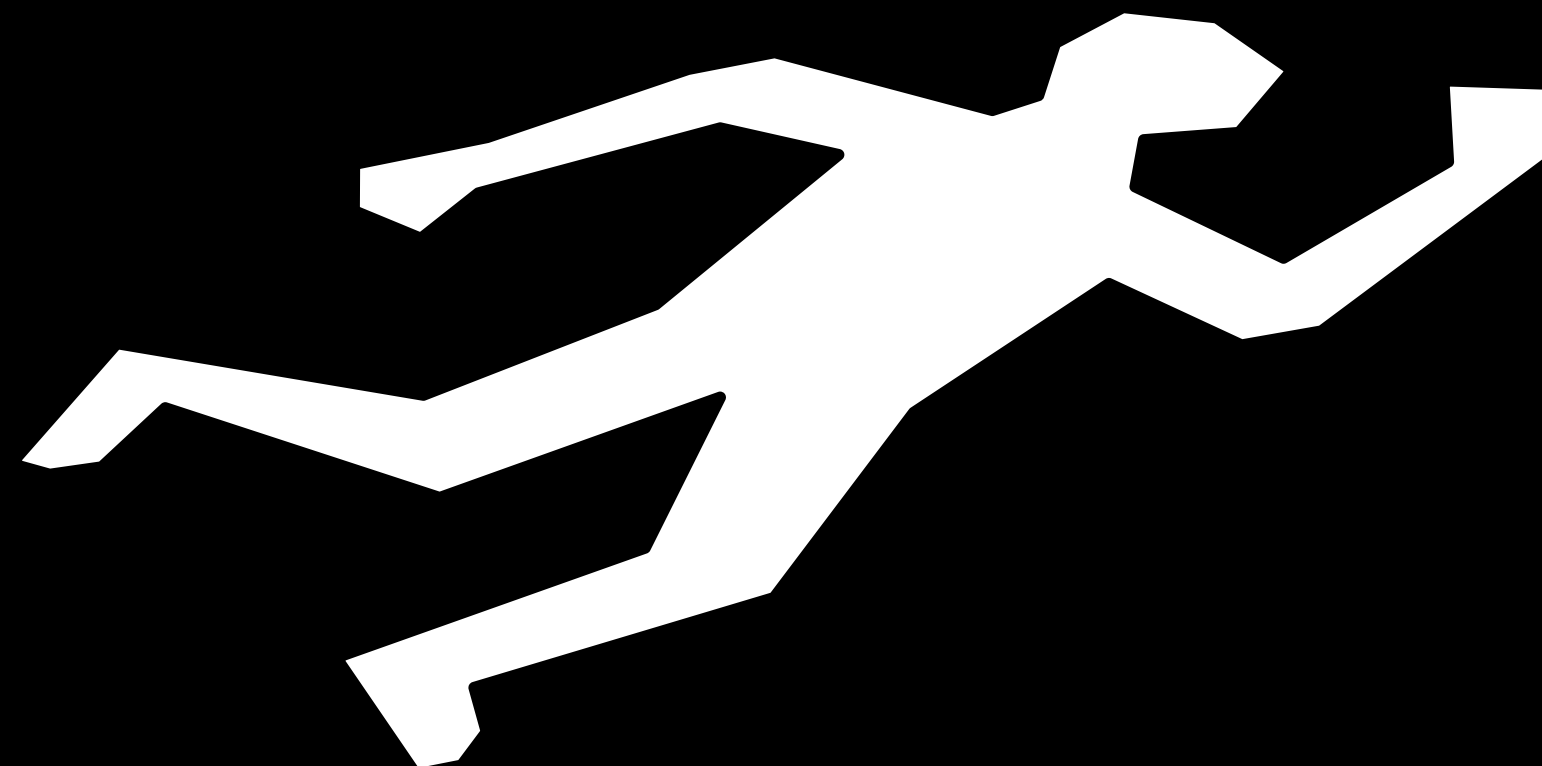


# **Strategic Use of Evidence: What It Is — and What It Isn't**

**Dr. Maria Hartwig & Capt. Christian Cory (ret.)**



# An Origin Story



# The SUE Technique

1. Planning

2. Questioning

a. exclude all alternative explanations

3. Disclosure...possibly



**Planning:**  
**What is my evidence**

Devil's Advocate

Challenge Assumption(s)

Rival Causes

Reasonable Conclusion?

Information missing

If this proves untrue, how would that alter the plan?

Alternative Scenarios

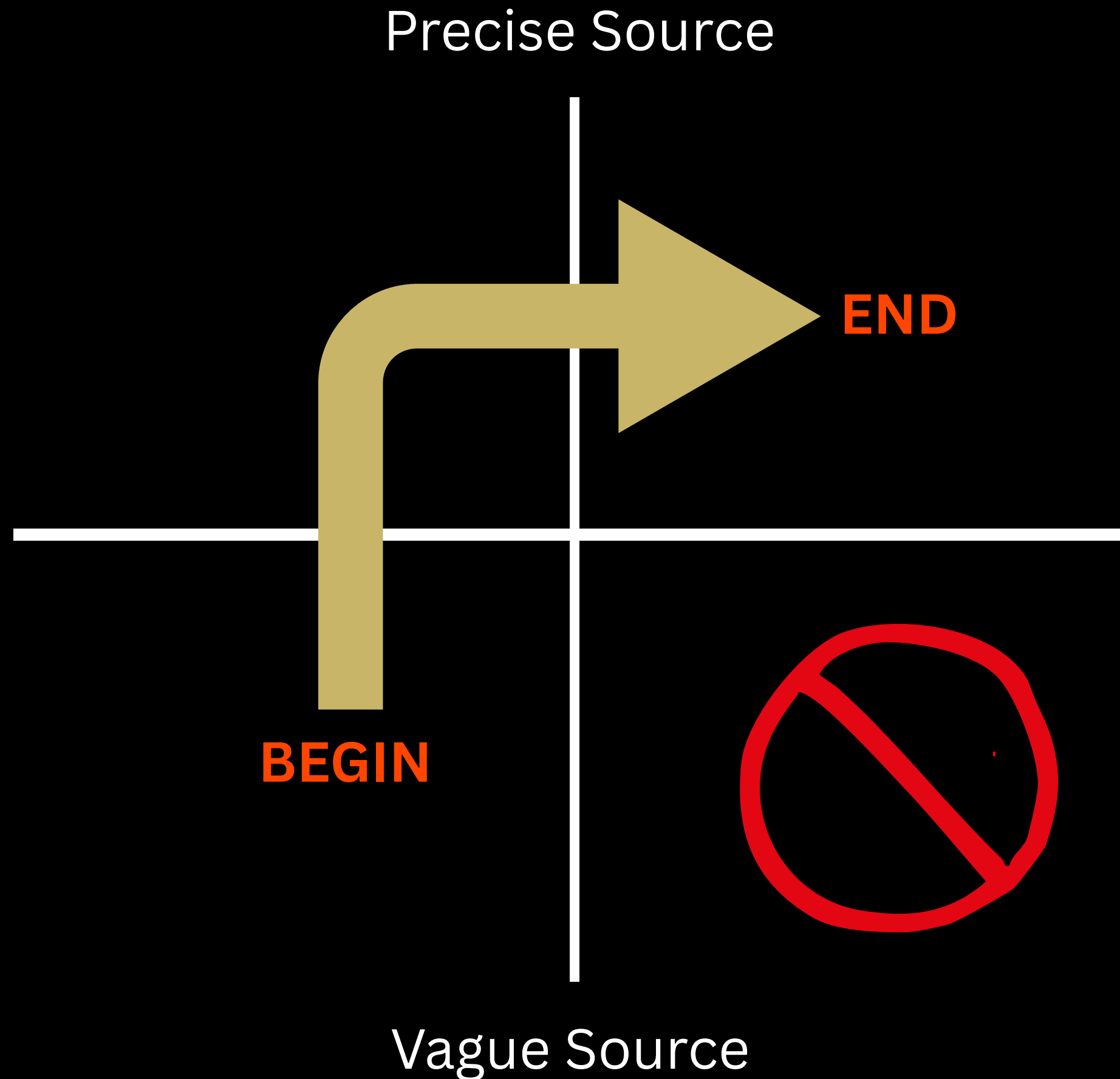


# Questioning Objectives

# Evidence Framing Matrix

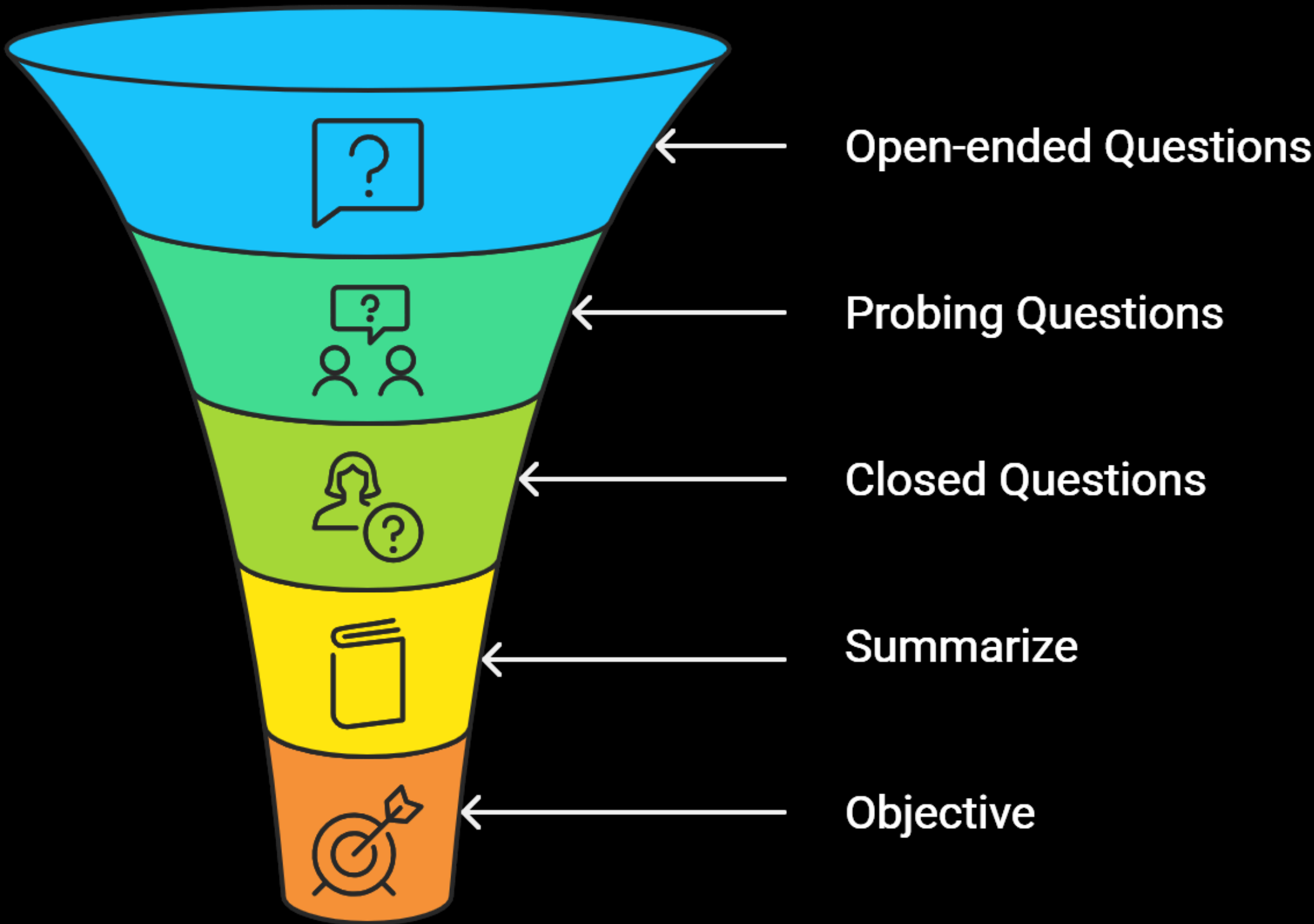
Low degree  
evidence  
specificity

High degree  
evidence  
specificity



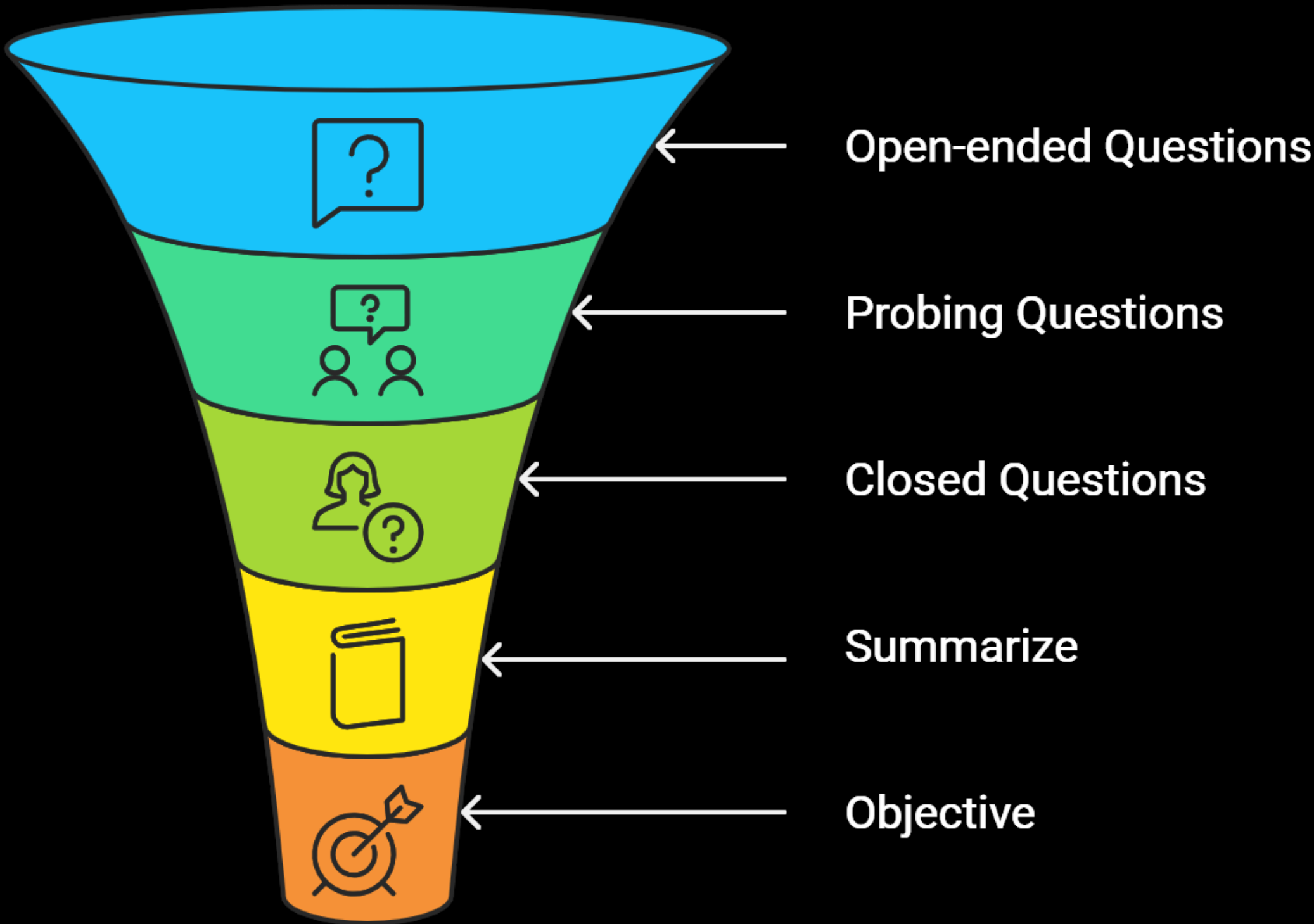


# SUE Questioning Technique



**The linear nature is conceptual.**

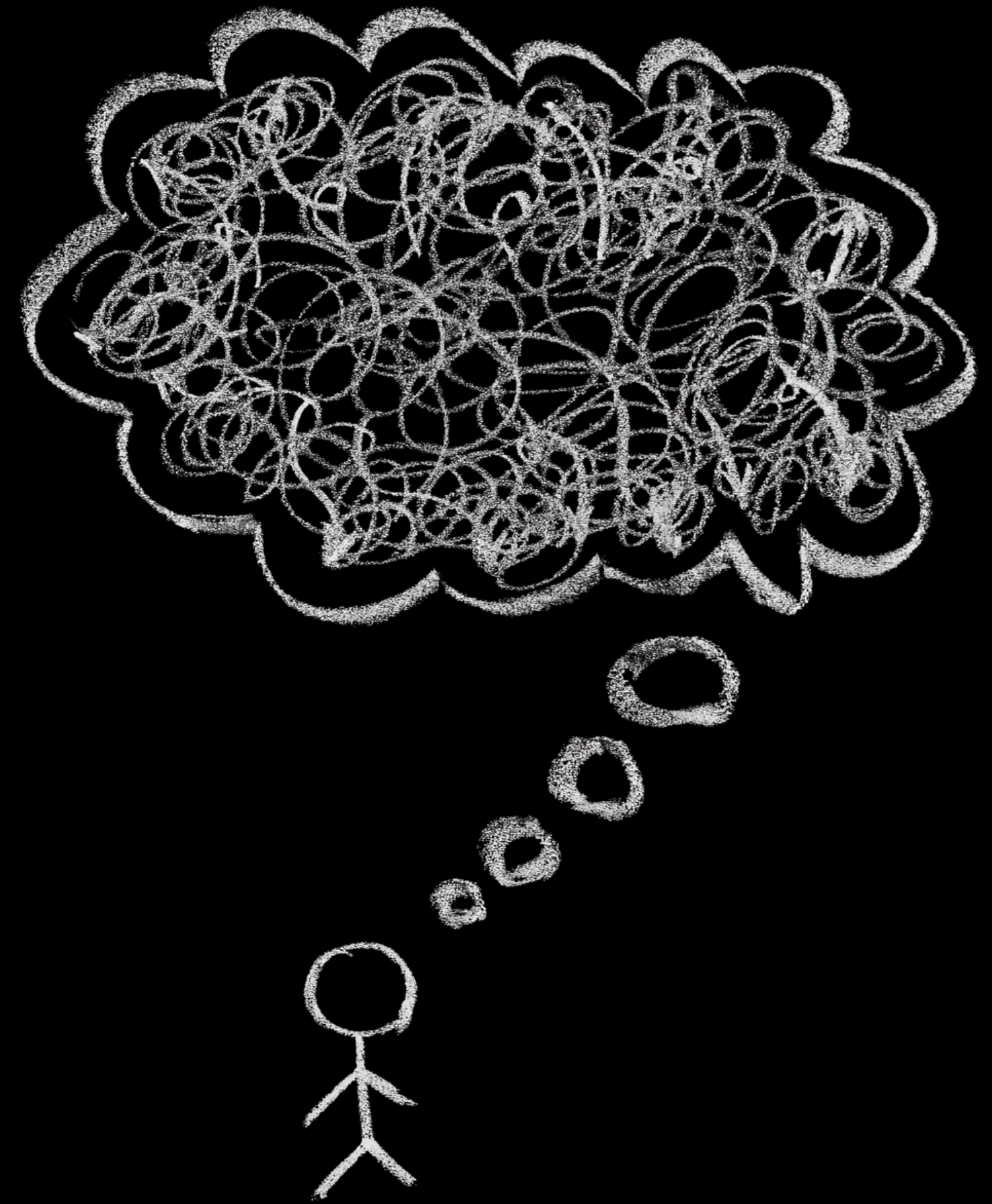
**This will vary in the dynamic environment of an interview.**



**This is not a step-by-step process**

**If you hit the objective, summarize and move**

# Misconceptions



**Misconception 1:**  
**"SUE = Late Disclosure"**



**What people think: SUE means holding evidence until the end.**

**What's missing: SUE is about questioning suspects in a state of ignorance or uncertainty about what the investigator knows**

# SUE Equals Late Disclosure

- This conflates SUE w/ accusatory interviewing
- Disregards planning
- Skips past sound questioning strategies
  - the backbone of the technique
- No false (nor true) exculpatory statements

# Misconception 2: "SUE Without a Questioning Strategy"



**What people think: Just hold the evidence back and disclose it later.**

**What's missing: Without questions that invite commitment to alternative explanations, there are escape routes**

**Exclude all possible explanations**

- **Evidence held in silence accomplishes nothing**
- **Statement-evidence inconsistencies only appear after they have said something**
- **Having evidence is not the same as using it strategically**

# **Misconception 3: "All Evidence at Once"**



**What people think: Once you've caught an inconsistency, lay it all out.**

**What's missing: Each piece of evidence is a separate opportunity for information.**

- **Disclosing piece by piece allows re-questioning after each one**
- **You can observe how the account shifts under new information**
- **One disclosure event collapses multiple cycles into a single confrontation**

# Misconception 4: “Repeated Questioning”



**What people think: Ask the same question several different ways to lock in multiple denials before disclosing evidence.**

**What's missing: This is not SUE — it's a confrontation pattern, likely a misreading of original training material.**

- **One commitment is enough to test against evidence; you don't need three or four**
- **Repeated questioning on the same point signals what you're after**
- **It can create defensiveness and tips the interviewee to the area of concern**
- **The interviewee adjusts, hedges, or shuts down—exposing your hand without gaining diagnostic value**
- **SUE relies on the interviewee not knowing what you have; this approach broadcasts it**

**What SUE requires**



**Done right, SUE is:**

**Planned — built into pre-interview preparation - “Baked In”**

**Sequenced — questions that invite commitment to a narrative before evidence is introduced**

**Diagnostic**—each evidence piece used to test and gather more information, not just confront

**Flexible** — disclosure timing matched to the goal and interview, not a fixed set of rules



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