



Chris Jagger

# Spies and CI's: Apples and Oranges?

In the fall of 2014, my colleague and dear friend, Professor Ruben Arcos of Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in Madrid (and Chair of SCIP Spain), invited me to lead a short seminar at the SCIP European Convention in Amsterdam. I've been teaching 'dynamic thinking' in intelligence analysis in his MA program for several years.

## ARE WE ALIKE?

Ruben's passion for the world of CI had already inspired me to learn more back in 2011 - but I don't profess to be an expert in the CI field. Similar to security intelligence, CI appears to be as broad as it is deep, with a spectrum of analytical roles and responsibilities, many tailored uniquely to each organization. You are, or perhaps should be, a

unique product of your unique environment.

In preparation for the seminar in Holland, I set myself a simple research question – how alike are we? Much of my own career has been spent in the field of security intelligence, firstly as a researcher and analyst, and latterly as a senior manager responsible for delivery of classified operations and the production of various types of analytical reports. In this short article I'll share my thoughts with you, but also, in the light of the complexity of our work, I must leave it to the reader to make their own connections to where we may share common ground.

I decided to break my question down into simple categories; the wider working environment; why do we do it; how do we do it; people; challenges.

## THE WIDER WORKING ENVIRONMENT

This is where I located what I believe to be our first similarity. The role of intelligence and security analyst is forever evolving in response to an increasingly unpredictable range of global threats.

The business environment in which you work is, at times, very changeable and uncertain. Often to stay ahead of game, companies must think and act beyond today's market standards. To do so requires CI analysts who can think strategically, innovatively, and communicate uncertainty.

## WHY DO WE DO IT?

In short, we both gather and analyze intelligence; and neither of us can agree on how to define it!

This particular question can be divided into two parts. From a higher political perspective, we gather security intelligence to protect our societies and our interests overseas. From a more personally driven perspective, I believe that many of my colleagues do what they do because they are proud to participate in what they hope is an important and valued public service. Security intelligence analysts are, unfortunately, competing against those who wish to do us harm. The perpetual challenge of staying one step ahead keeps us focused and motivated.

aims and objectives. Although the data we collect and the methods we use for collecting are often very different, the systems we use for evaluating information are very similar. I suspect there is much we could learn from each other's communities in this regard, and I believe we should.

Quite appropriately, we both work in a heavily regulated environment. Laws and procedures govern what we can and can't do — and the rules are constantly changing. We both have ethical responsibilities to respect and adhere to these laws to the letter. But in order to remain dynamic, and to avoid the risk of the procedures from stifling us, we have to challenge the status-quo; this is not about stretching the rules, it's about maximizing our opportunities within the framework in which we must operate.

## PEOPLE

Both security and CI analysts need to build trusting human connections. They must also establish, trust and influence up, down, and across their organizations. They both deal with complexity and, to achieve their desired effects, must be able to influence key decision makers within their organizations. To do so requires a set of special skills, acquired through a combination of education, training, and experience. Teamwork and highly tuned collaboration is a must in both environments.



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The higher purpose of the CI analyst is to support your organization by delivering actionable, timely, and relevant intelligence so you can compete, lead, and stay ahead. When CI analysts believe in the contribution their companies make to society, I suspect that the personal motivation is very much the same.

## HOW DO WE DO IT?

We crave, thrive, and survive on collecting, analyzing, and reporting information. To do so demands a systematic approach, an intellectual cycle, which keeps us focused and moving forward towards our

In addition to strong research, analysis, and reporting skills, both sets of analysts must be able to think on their feet in fast moving environments. They must be able to think ahead of today's curve, to challenge the status-quo, and to hypothesize about multiple possible futures. They must also possess well-honed communication skills in order to deliver their complex advice with simplicity and clarity. In this light, a fundamental skill of both types of analyst is to trust and influence key decision makers.





## CHALLENGES

Much of what we do requires a painstaking attention to detail. We both seek the needle in the haystack that can be used to deliver an injection of information crucial to the protection of our societies and survival. Maintaining a hunger for information and a desire to answer questions, whilst keeping an open, critical, and patient mind, is indeed a great challenge for analysts. Our work can be intellectually exhausting.

I often hear others give the analogy that intelligence analysis is like building a jigsaw. This assumes that there are pieces of information out there, somewhere, they fit together perfectly. The job of the analysts is to find these pieces and put them together. This analogy is limited and deserves a wider perspective.

I believe that analysis is as much an art as it is a science. It is my humble view, and this applies to both of our communities, that intelligence analysis sits on a spectrum of complexity. At one end of the spectrum, we have the jigsaw-type analysis, predictable and routine. At this end prescriptive analytical methods and tradecraft will normally deliver results. At the other end, we have uncertainty, unpredictability and constant change. At this end the role of the analyst is more like an artist, each day receiving a new collection of fragmented colored glass and doing their best to piece it together into a mosaic.



Both communities of analyst must be capable of assimilating and evaluating large quantities of information often under strict time constraints. The information can be colored with bias, inaccuracies, and/or intentionally misleading. Some of the information is cracked, cloudy, and possess razor sharp edges. Our analysts must be quick to identify these weaknesses, risks and vulnerabilities.

Our analysts must be independent thinkers who instinctively challenge the status-quo. They may have to stand up against the corporate flow and redirect its thinking. They must sometimes give unwelcome advice. They are paid to think, and this sometimes means they must think the unthinkable.



A photograph of a woman and a man in business attire. The woman, on the left, has blonde hair and is wearing a light grey button-down shirt. She is smiling and looking down at a document. The man, on the right, has dark hair and is wearing a light blue button-down shirt. He is also smiling and looking at the document. They appear to be in a professional setting, possibly an office or meeting room. The background is slightly blurred, showing what might be a window with blinds.

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*Starting out at New Scotland Yard in Capital of London, and discovering a talent for analytical thinking, in 1999 Chris joined the UK intelligence community. Since then Chris has spent much of his time overseas, holding a variety of exciting positions, latterly senior - some operational, and others policy orientated; including as an adviser on intelligence, crime and terrorism to NATO's top level staff. In 2011 Chris was invited to develop a training course for the UK intelligence community in dynamic thinking. He now runs an education consultancy called 2creatEffects which has courses embedded into a number of private sector, governmental and academic companies and institutions around Europe.*