

Excerpt from Chapter 1

Cover Story: Talking to Save One's Life

A good cover story is a life net: like Scheherazade, undercover agents talk for their lives. One trainer suggested that not just undercover agents but cops as an entire occupational category “are the best liars in the world. That’s why we say, undercover officers usually get promoted real fast. They’re so used to bullshitting people that they can walk into an interview board and completely bullshit them. ... All it is is you know the right things to say and how to say them.” He said,

Cops lie twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Every single call that a cop goes on, he’s gotta lie to people. He has to make them believe either that he’s the baddest guy out, the most sympathetic guy out, the most compassionate guy out ... either to give them this perception so that they relax in his presence or to get the truth out of them.

It’s a far different thing to work for a hypersuspicious criminal audience, which demands veracity, than for a paying audience for traditional theatre, which as a rule willingly suspends its disbelief. As Jerry VanCook blithely put it, “There is one major difference ... between doing Shakespeare in the park and working undercover: the audience that doesn’t find your portrayal of Othello convincing may show their disapproval by throwing tomatoes at the stage—the bad guys you haven’t convinced tend to throw bullets.”

Of the trilogy that comprise identity—what one “has,” what one “knows,” and what one “is”—the latter takes probably the greatest smarts. It is the basis of contemporary undercover training, which focuses not on disguise make-up nor even how to simulate drug use while on a case, but how to talk the talk in a way that won’t get a person killed. In the building and in the consistent and plausible performance of a cover story, one sees the most virtuosic exhibitions: the ability to create and sustain a total world.

Undercover training, particularly in the 1990s, focused on producing the language of the target culture. A successful undercover performance started from a deep knowledge of jargon that included an understanding of its cultural relevance. A good undercover had to make explicit all kinds of tacit cultural knowledge, such as the childhood songs and schooling experiences of his generational and geographic cohort, or shared historical occurrences. He had to know the attitudes of those with whom he wished to camouflage, as well as how those attitudes would be expressed. He had to be ready to perform

all the little points of knowledge and experience one possesses purely from being brought up or living in a country ... [one will be expected] to be familiar with a nursery rhyme, a proverb, or a song; to know the names of some famous sportsmen or film stars; to show an awareness of the common attitudes of the community which reflect, amongst other things, class and regional differences, whether related to food and wine, religion and customs—all this is entailed in the attempt at blending into the background.¹

A good cover story seamlessly blends elements of one's own biography with fresh elements that play directly into the case one is trying to build. Like magician Dariel Fitzkee, the undercover "cleverly, skillfully and dexterously mixes the true with the false." Nowhere is this truer in identity work than in the development of the cover story for undercover narcotics agents working in the last third of the twentieth century. As he prepared to enter a target's world, the undercover scripted the backstory, or complete background details, of the play he was about to enter as a new character. Neither the identity nor the scenario design—which are closely related—could leave openings for suspicion. Instead, they must give the illusion of air tightness through the set of constructive and evasive techniques undercovers collectively refer to as "backstopping."

Two properties govern every aspect of undercovers' narratives: plausibility and coherence.ⁱⁱ The undercover operator's manipulation of identities, motives, instigations, and stagings is like a magician's handling of objects, objectives, and circumstances:

There is hardly a trick in magic that does not somewhere during its performance require something to be disguised as dissimilar to what it truly is. It disguises a condition, as in the secretly empty or secretly occupied hand. It disguises a manipulation, a movement or an operation, such as with the card houlette or the production box. It covers special preparation, special requirements, special restrictions. It overcomes difficult obstacles. It changes the spectator's sense of significant situations and suspicious handicaps. It disguises the secret presence or absence of something. It disguises purposes, reasons and clues which might be suspicious.ⁱⁱⁱ

In the undercover's preparation of a cover story, one backstops for the evasions and sidesteppings one is likely to need to perform.

Joseph D. Pistone (a.k.a. "Donnie Brasco") chose jewel thievery as his criminal specialty, as

I needed a specialty that allowed me to work alone and without violence. I couldn't be a stickup man or a bank robber or a hijacker or anything like that. We had an okay from the department to get involved in certain marginal activities, but you had to avoid violence. As a jewel thief, I could say I worked alone. I could come and go as I wanted, and come up with scores that everybody didn't have to know about because I committed my "crimes" in private.

For a jewel thief and a burglar, it was not unusual for a guy to work alone. And since if you pull off the job correctly you don't confront your victims, there is a minimal chance for violence. That specialty gave me an out whenever anybody would want me to pull a violent job.^{iv}

Traces of identity need to be plausible enough not to be checked and sealed tightly enough to leave no aroma if they are.

Coherence is built in with the undercover acronym "K.I.S.S.," or "Keep It Simple, Stupid." As one experienced undercover trainer frequently intoned to his students, "Failing to plan is planning to fail." The less that needs to be kept coherent, especially once one is in the moment of performance, the better. But little things must be attended to; the cover story should be ready to address any disparity between the undercover persona and every physical sign he presents, down to the vehicle he drives.

Preparing to drive an undercover vehicle is like preparing a fake provenance, or set of documents for a forged art work that establishes the direct line of transmission from one trustworthy hand to another. It can be as materially detailed as going to an auto salvage dealer and buying discarded license plates from a car that is of the same make and model as the car one plans to drive, researching who was the last owner of the vehicle, and working one's purchase of the car from that owner into the cover story.^v

Like a fugitive, the undercover needs a name, an occupation, and a geographic history. Many sources recommend that the undercover change his last name, but retain his first as the basis of the new identity. Then, if an old friend sees him and calls out his real name, his natural, instantaneous head turn will not be out of keeping with his role. Retaining one's initials can be a safeguard against mistakenly signing the "wrong" ones while under.^{vi}

The right choice of name can help make sense of evasions or of strange behavioral or bodily signs that the undercover knows he will be presenting. One undercover operator used a Muslim name and neatly sidestepped demands that he engage in drug use with sellers to establish his credibility, since it was well known that Muslims don't believe in using drugs: hey, he was just a distributor. Another undercover used the tattooed initial so evident on his arm as the first letter of his undercover name. The body, he knew, also has to substantiate any claims made. Don't say you're a bricklayer if you don't have calluses on your hands; don't say you're a competitive body-builder if you have hair on your legs. Con artist Cecil Brown Smith made a good living (to the tune of £6 a week in 1904) posing as a paralyzed beggar, until a London detective observed him enjoying a dinner of oysters and ale and then bounding aboard a train headed for the suburbs.^{vii}

A vital part of the identity is being able to furnish the right *other* names, those of contacts held in common with the target. Handing a bad guy a contact's name—so long as it's the right name—is the best way to open the door of a relationship under a false identity. Once he had made contact with a big dealer, Vizzini "used Tutter over and over as a reference. It was a magic name, an open sesame, that helped lead me to smaller fry in the Istanbul underworld."^{viii}

One's work knowledge is never faked, and in fact becomes equated with the identity itself. As one of my interviewees, a trainer, puts it, "Whatever you've done in the past is your identity." Through a close friend, one undercover had grown quite familiar with the funeral business, and chose to play a role as a worker in a funeral parlor owned by his "father." Another undercover, a devout Catholic, undertook a supporting undercover role as a priest. An undercover student who applied this technique directly to a class simulation exercise decided to build his undercover identity on his existing knowledge of the grocery business, a choice that also fit in tidily with the target's cover business in meat-packing.

For another interviewee, the head of a private undercover investigation company, whose first undercover occupation was in running the cigar shop that was actually his own business, the complete assumption of a work role when working undercover—rather than just referring to it in conversation—provides the "reason for being there" with the bad guys.

Undercover work identities need to be multi-layered, in part because the bad guy's are. Often, the bad guy has a business that is performed as a cover for those he knows to be in law enforcement; the cover business hides his behind-the-scenes criminal work. With a trunk law-enforcement identity, the undercover may be one level up even on the bad guy, since he too has a legal cover occupation and one or more illegal occupations that explain why he seeks concourse with the bad guys. VanCook's persona, Mick Jordan,

might be a drug dealer one day, a gun runner the next, and a burglar the day after that, but he had the most fun when he got to play hit man. ... Mick had been arrested

for everything from possession of marijuana to manslaughter. He'd done a little county jail time but had no felony convictions. ... That he'd always beaten the rap insinuated that Mick had a certain animal intelligence that I wanted him to possess.^{ix}

The layering of cover identities may be necessary to maintain a cover at all. For a Beirut gun trafficking assignment, Vizzini determined that the best cover was a "cover within a cover": in this case, dealing with the reasonable possibility of high-level intelligence and counterintelligence from his own government, Vizzini drew on his already-developed role, Mike Warner; even his own agency believed that he was going to Beirut to cover for another agent for them.^x

Vizzini kept in stock several different identities, each of which had been developed separately. He studied this cast of characters any time a new assignment came up. In Marseilles, Vizzini presented to his contact the full range:

I told him I had several which seemed to fit the situation; he could take his pick. I had forged Italian seaman's papers under the name of Pasquale Lombardi. I also had a United States Merchant Mariner's document issued by the Coast Guard. It was made out to Joseph Angelo Vento and had a "Z" number, which meant that the papers were in order and the bearer was cleared to sail. ...

We decided on the Vento cover. I would be a purser waiting to rejoin my ship, the S. S. *Mormacsea*, scheduled to dock in Marseilles about two weeks hence. This kind of cover seemed most suitable for the assignment. For one thing, merchant seamen transported most of the heroin which was illegally getting into the United States, at the going rate of \$500 a kilo, and pursers had more standing on shipboard than stewards or other functionaries.

We agreed that I would be a big spender with a mysterious source of money. I would check into the best hotel in town.^{xi}

Vizzini's cover could be selected for maximum adaptability to the range of international situations in which an American could plausibly appear. It also enabled him to keep the option of leaving the country under another of his cover identities.

The occupational history is only complete once it has been complemented by an avocational background. Here again, one pulls from one's own personal interests and areas of knowledge. The ability to carry on a conversation, to show the regular-guyness of one's character, can help steel an undercover through some of the early tests of identity he'll face. One is more likely to be suspected of being a cop if seen as unwilling to kick back and enjoy the kind of idle banter that establishes which people, places, and activities the bad guy and the newcomer have in common. It is perhaps worse if the undercover appears indifferent to the bad guy, particularly if he reports to have made the contact in the first place on the recommendation of a mutual friend. Having the same hobbies as the cops themselves, undercover personas can be pretty interesting guys: an undercover instructor's dominant undercover identity, like the instructor himself, was a history buff, widely read on the Civil War. In this sense, the undercover operator is simultaneously not himself and not *not* himself.

After the name and occupational identity, a geographic history must be built up. Here again, the places with which the operative is actually very familiar make the best choices. Some sources consider it a rapport-building bonus if he can use a place that is also part of the bad guy's history;

others find it useful to be able to build a story around the places one knows well that are unlikely to be checked out by the bad guy.

Pistone found it easy to keep the geographic part of his cover for Donnie Brasco from catching up with him. To help him backstop his early childhood history, the FBI's research department had conveniently turned up an orphanage that had burned down:

We came up with the idea that I would be an orphan. Without a family it's harder for people to check up on you. If you had a family, you would have to involve other agents to speak up for you as family members. If you're an orphan, the only thing they can check on is if you lived in a neighborhood or if you have any knowledge of the particular neighborhood. I had knowledge of areas in Florida and California because I had done some work there.

We knew from our research people about an orphanage in Pittsburgh that had burned down, and there were no records left of the children raised there. That was perfect for me. One of the agents had lived in Pittsburgh, and I had grown up in Pennsylvania.^{xii}

James J. Ness, a "policeman-cum-professor-cum-policeman," shifted his geographic identity to be a believable fit when he went undercover:

The Cairo area is primarily rural and agricultural and I did not know enough about agriculture to pass as a farmer; besides, most farmers were known locals. However, since I raise Quarter horses I do know about horses so my cover was an itinerant horse trainer from Murphysboro, Illinois, working for a firm in Indiana. Murphysboro is far enough from Cairo to keep curious people from going through the trouble of checking, yet it is close enough to be considered a local.

Occupation and geographic data were the basis of Ness's undercover identity.^{xiii}

A geographic history can quickly become dicey; perhaps this is one of the reasons that the bad guys tend to require it as they probe the identities performed for them. The undercover needs to be pretty canny as he strikes a balance between building up the kind of detail that lends credibility and plausibility and making sure he drops no information that can later be falsified.

It's quite a fine line. An experienced undercover would never say that he had gone to a local high school, where the bad guy could easily get hold of the relevant yearbooks and not find a corroborating picture in any of them. Likewise, biographical elements should not have him virtually certain to have crossed paths earlier in life with one of the bad guys that he'd never met before:

... If, for example, the agent claims to be from a certain city, and to have attended a certain school, it would be compromising to have a member of the group confront him and announce that he lived in the same place, went to the same school, and didn't remember him.^{xiv}

The popular image of the undercover identity that is birthed afresh for each operation is actually regarded by many working operatives as inefficient and impractical. In one undercover training course in the early 1990s, students were encouraged to create identities that would be versatile and long-lived. They were not expected to fill out a new identity for every operation, but rather to grow a

single new trunk identity that would be supple enough to last them for a few years and whose branches or offshoots would deal with the needs of different situations. Within a given trunk identity, the undercover name ideally has a number of plausible variants that can be used in different undercover operations—simultaneously, if need be. One undercover instructor had had long-term success with a long, foreign-sounding last name that could be shortened in various ways to create memorable nicknames.

Likewise, the chosen occupation does best if it permits its owner to play roles at a range of different social classes to encompass all the types of assignments one may come up against. It's a good idea here not to let oneself get too heavily pinned down and to be sure of having the knowledge base to support claims of occupation.

An experienced undercover explains how it's done:

I use one identity, one cover story every time. ... All I do is change the costume or change the coloration.

Like Barbie & Ken?

Bingo! I'm always the same guy, no matter what I'm playing.

In all his incarnations, the undercover's trunk identity was involved with the selling of hot dogs, yet had to have the flexibility to

be the owner of a business, drive a very fancy car, be the top dog. Yet if I have to get down and dirty and buy crack, I can also say that I'm a counter man and all I do is slap together hot dogs and sell them over the counter at \$4.50 an hour. And I know the business. I know my business. I know a little bit about the restaurant business, because one of my best friends is a retired policeman ... who actually owns a couple of hot dog stands.

That the undercover had worked as a butcher during college gave him the confidence and the real knowledge on which to base this particular occupational stance for his undercover persona.

Of course, his assertion that he works for "Tony's Beef and Dog," always had to be backed up. He needed a business card with a real phone number on it and someone who would answer the phone on the other end appropriately: in this case, his old friend would simply reply that he was in the field and would ring him back. If any of the other employees answered the phone and took a request for the undercover, they were all instructed to just hand the phone to the owner, who could make the appropriate reply.^{xv}

The longevity of this undercover's trunk identity is telling: the cop got more than fifteen years' mileage out of it, with all of its variations. Naturally, the undercover persona had many of the same dimensions as the undercover officer himself: same height, weight, and birth date. He also happened to enjoy many of the same vices—fine cigars and wines—"because I want to do things that I enjoy and that I have knowledge of." (The undercover did research the class identities of those he planned to play the role with and varied the brand preferences of what he smoked and drank to fit in with those he was trying to infiltrate.) He maintained that, because it's just too difficult—and treacherous—to remember separate identities, undercover officers and their agencies tend to hang onto these flexible trunk identities as long as they can.

Undercovers employ a variety of means to help them commit the details of their stories to memory. Like many teachers of stage actors, VanCook advises that the best way to create a character who is as “deep, well-rounded, and complex” as oneself is to write out a detailed biography for him.^{xvi} The biography may include experiences and probably includes expertises that the undercover actually had, but casts them in the light of the character:

The first undercover identity I ever created was Mickey Jordan. “Mick” was born in Ozark, Missouri, a little town about eight miles south of Springfield and my college roommate’s hometown. I’d spent enough time there to know the area quite well, and after writing what turned out to be a 300-page biography of Mick’s life, I knew him, too. I knew what kind of grades he’d made in high school, that he’d played defensive tackle on the high school football team, and that he’d been a drummer in a highly unsuccessful rock-and-roll band that did little more than practice in the lead guitar player’s garage and disrupt the neighborhood every Sunday afternoon. More importantly, I knew how to talk about being a defensive tackle and a bad drummer, since Jerry VanCook had done these things as well as Mickey Jordan.^{xvii}

The undercover should “write out the complete history, every item of it and every word of it several times, and then memorize it. He must learn each significant detail of the fictitious identity so that he can reply to it as may be necessary and then have an associate drill him on every aspect.^{xviii} Thorough, deep memorization ensures there is that internal consistency, or coherence, to the story, that the undercover has ready access to the answers to any questions as anyone who came naturally and truthfully to the role.

Together with an experienced partner at his agency, one agent writes out everything that he knows about the role. He keeps the document at the center of his desk and reads it through each day. For him, even a weekend’s worth of reading and thinking are sufficient rehearsal for the kinds of roles he creates: “You see that [page] often enough, you talk like that person long enough ... and you actually have to step out of it when you get home.” He believes that there is no other way to “practice”; you just have to get out and perform it.

The richest part of planning a fictive undercover identity is curiously interactive, existing in a realm that somehow combines the undercover’s actual physical and personality qualities and his own hobbies with invented ones, then regroups all of them as a complement to the bad guy’s profile and the psychological needs the undercover has ascribed to him. This relational aspect of the undercover role stems both from the undercover’s understanding of his own identity and from those characteristics law enforcement views as significant in the profile of a particular target or bad guy—for example, his propensity toward violence, how quickly and on what basis he forms friendships, and his safety threshold. The undercover will also want to have background information on the target’s family, relatives, and associates, and to know about his character or temperament, vices, hobbies, occupation, criminal specialty and modus operandi.^{xix} The point of gathering and working off this detailed information on the target is to anticipate and create performance conditions under which he—like the successful con artist—can control much, if not most, of what happens.

The most important part of the relational history is the pretext that permits the paths of the bad guy and of the character the undercover plays to cross. Particularly crucial is some kind of match between the bad guy’s personal history and that of the undercover officer’s fictional identity. In constructing an identity essentially out of the projective identifications of his target, the undercover can implicate his deepest desires and wishes, carving out a shortcut to an intense and productive history together. When the undercover appears as the fulfillment of the target’s unconscious wishes,

he stands a strong chance of succeeding in his mission, especially if he can manage the target's conscious and subconscious attention. Vizzini's ability to infiltrate the Sicilian Mafia hinged in part on his own Sicilian heritage but also importantly on his American identity as Major Michael A. Cerra, United States Air Force, which was calculated to provide the expatriate Lucky Luciano with the connection to the United States that he was known to long for. Although Luciano had been deported from the United States to Italy, he remained active in organized crime and had a certain homesickness. Each feature of the undercover identity had its place in the plan for evoking particular responses from the target, for tugging on quite specific heartstrings:

The Bureau was counting on my experience, plus my Sicilian background, to pull me through. The plan was to masquerade as a lonely Air Force pilot, maybe not fussy about turning a fast buck on the side; a man who in the line of duty would travel extensively on Air Force business ferrying military planes between the U.S. and Europe, and be accepted by Luciano, who was well known for his longing for the States and things American.^{xx}

One undercover instructor tells a memorable tale of a cover story by an inexperienced narc—himself, just starting out. He had decided that he would present himself as the owner of a sprinkler systems concern, and made up a name on the spot, “Sprinkler Heads of Florida.” The dealer quickly became suspicious and asked the narc to show him his advertisement in the telephone book. Shuffling anxiously for an answer, the narc replied that it was his brother's business and his brother didn't advertise in the St. Petersburg phone book, just in Tampa's. Unfortunately, the dealer happened to have a Tampa phone book on hand.

The narc shifted again. He said that his brother didn't advertise through print at all, after all, but by word of mouth. No deal.

As this undercover developed his technique, he learned a great deal from a more experienced narc for whom he served as backup about developing a plausible cover story in advance. This performer presented himself as a caterer to a major drug trafficker whose daughter happened to be planning a wedding. When the bad guy started asking for advice about where he should hold the wedding, the narc was ready with props and research. He took out a pad and pen and asked detailed questions: How many guests did he want to have? How much did he want to spend per head? Would he want the caterer to hire the band, or did he prefer to hire the band himself? Within forty-five minutes, the trafficker had taken the narc into his bedroom and shown him his pilot logs and manifests for his buying trips to Colombia and Bolivia. Within a week, he had fronted him nine kilos of marijuana, while accepting payment for only one. The story was presented as an exceptional example of a narc's establishing trust by appealing to the bad guy's needs and motives; the fact that he was able to fit so smoothly into the bad guy's world made shorthand of the process of building trust.^{xxi} Thus, the best cover story is one that balances a keen appraisal of the self with an assessment of the needs of a given context: as Buckwalter writes, “The secret of undercover operations is the private investigator's ability to live a cover identity convincingly in acceptable association with those whom he has been assigned to investigate.”^{xxii}

The diffusion of a cop's constructed undercover identity makes the best sense once one recognizes that bad guys are people with full lives, too, as one undercover reminds his students: “I always tell the guys, crooks have friends. They have places that they go, they have wives, they have kids, crooks do things outside of the life of being a crook. I mean, they're always thinking about being a crook, but they still have to go to the grocery store.”

A magician must always assume that “his spectators are fully his mental equals—perhaps, even, his superiors.” Inevitably, it’s vital for a cop’s safety for him to assume that any sort of research he can run on a bad guy can also be run on him, so he must backstop with internally consistent data on any legal, financial, or historical claims he makes. And “the depth of the cover required will depend on the thoroughness of the investigation the opposition is likely to make.” The undercover must anticipate how the bad guys, or investigators they hire, would actually research the veracity of statements by, for example, looking at vessel and vehicle files, post office records, video and pizza delivery databases, medical information databases, and fish and game licenses. Since many criminals have access to the National Crime Information Center database, he would be well advised also to back up any criminal history he claims with an entry there. The undercover may even need to plead guilty to a charge and spend a certain amount of time in jail establishing contacts with other prisoners to give weight to the contacts he claims.^{xiii}

The development of an undercover identity involves anticipating the strategic perceptions, moves, and conclusions that the bad guy might produce. There’s also a recursive element in such development: you need to have a sense of what the bad guy would want you to believe about himself, should he have succeeded in penetrating your identity. This way, you can be on guard about how he represents himself to you, should he not know that you know that he knows.

ⁱ E. Cookridge (1966), quoted in Goffman 1969:24.

ⁱⁱ Goffman discusses the aesthetic dimensions of plausibility: in certain situations, a story that feels slightly open-ended in just the right ways will be more believable than one that has all the corners knotted and tied (1969:20).

ⁱⁱⁱ Fitzkee 1945c:144.

^{iv} Pistone 1989:41.

^v VanCook 1996:34, 37.

^{vi} *Ibid.*, 1996:12.

^{vii} Nash 1989:2782.

^{viii} Vizzini, Fraley, and Smith 1972:106.

^{ix} VanCook 1996:15.

^x As told by Vizzini, Fraley, and Smith 1972:131, 175ff.

^{xi} *Ibid.*, 118–19.

^{xii} *Ibid.*, 40–41.

^{xiii} Ness 1989:107–08.

^{xiv} Rapp 1986:65.

^{xv} Similarly, when Vizzini played a role as Pasquale Lombardi, he made sure that: “when the phone rang in my penthouse suite it also rang on a private extension at Bureau headquarters. If nobody answered after five rings, a sleepy sexy female voice would come on and say, “Pronto ... No, Pasquale isn’t here ... I don’t know when he’ll be back.” (The voice belonged to Monica Atwill, [a] pretty girl at the Bureau.) I was supposed to be very big with the ladies and she was part of my cover” (Vizzini, Fraley, and Smith 1972:59).

^{xvi} The preparation of a written character biography is common among actors and has even made its way into the living-history movement as a research and preparation tool in the development of historical characters. Actors hired to work as living-history interpreters at Plimoth Plantation, where seventeenth-century American life is re-enacted for visitors’ education and entertainment, are required to combine plausible imaginative work with historical research into the actual lives of the characters whose identities they assume. Developing a notebook with essential aspects of character is central to the development process. At Plimoth Plantation, the “Personation Biograph” includes an annotated drawing of the costume to be worn, a specimen of the dialect the character will speak, a sample of how his or her signature will look, a list of who else in the relatively

limited community of the Plantation comprise the character's friends and associates, a syllabus of what the character has read, and notes detailing the character's moral positions, habits, and bases of knowledge (See Schechner 1985:n.p.).

^{xvii} VanCook 1996:13-14.

^{xviii} Buckwalter 1983:138.

^{xix} Department of the Treasury 1978:12.

^{xx} Vizzini, Fraley, and Smith 1972:32.

^{xxi}A potential problem down the road, however, with this undercover's presentation of the catering business as his own could be that the bad guy might appear out of the blue in some kind of jam and demand that this small business owner front him some money. And it does help the undercover play for time if his cover story can support a line like, "I can't spend that kind of money without checking with my boss. I'll get back to you."

^{xxii} Buckwalter 1983:138.

^{xxiii} Fitzkee 1945c:223; Rapp 1986:62-63; VanCook 1996:16.