

JOHN A. MARTIN

# THE MODERN INVESTIGATOR

## CAREER LAUNCH KIT

**Your Guide to Launching and Growing  
a Career in Private Investigations**

**FREE**  
PROFESSIONAL  
GUIDE

**The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not.**

# Welcome to The Modern Investigator™

Thank you for downloading The Modern Investigator™ Career Launch Kit.

My name is John A. Martin, and like many people entering this profession, my path into investigations was anything but traditional.

Before entering the world of security and investigations, I spent years building a career in hospitality, ultimately serving as an Executive Chef, Food & Beverage Director, General Manager, and Regional Manager. Those roles taught me invaluable lessons in leadership, attention to detail, customer service, operations, and problem-solving—skills that would later prove invaluable in investigative work.

Over time, I transitioned into private security, firearms instruction, and eventually private investigations. Along the way, I earned multiple professional licenses and certifications, worked in a variety of security and investigative assignments, and gained firsthand experience in surveillance, report writing, case management, and professional operations.

Like many investigators, I quickly learned that success in this profession requires much more than watching people or taking photographs. Great investigators are professionals. They are observers, communicators, problem-solvers, and lifelong students of their craft.

The investigative profession is changing rapidly. Technology, artificial intelligence, digital evidence, and new investigative tools are reshaping how investigations are conducted every day.

However, one thing remains true:

***The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not.***

Whether your goal is to become a licensed private investigator, improve your surveillance skills, start your own agency, or simply learn more about the profession, this Career Launch Kit is designed to give you a strong foundation.

Inside these pages, you'll find practical guidance, career roadmaps, equipment recommendations, sample reports, artificial intelligence tools, and professional resources to help you begin—or advance—your investigative journey.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your professional development.

Stay curious. Stay professional. Never stop learning.

Respectfully,

**John A. Martin**

Founder, The Modern Investigator™

Private Investigator | Security Professional | Firearms Instructor

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***"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."***

# Why Listen to Me?

## Meet John A. Martin

My path into investigations was anything but traditional.

Before entering the world of private investigations, I spent years building a successful career in hospitality leadership, serving as an Executive Chef, Food & Beverage Director, General Manager, and Regional Manager. Those experiences taught me invaluable lessons in leadership, operations, communication, and attention to detail—skills that would later become essential in investigative work.

Over time, I transitioned into private security, firearms instruction, and private investigations, earning multiple licenses and certifications while developing expertise in surveillance, report writing, case management, and investigative operations.

Today, I work as a professional investigator and educator with a mission to help investigators become more professional, productive, and profitable through the integration of traditional investigative principles and modern technology.



THE MODERN  
INVESTIGATOR™

### Professional Credentials

- ✓ Licensed Private Investigator
- ✓ Security Professional
- ✓ Firearms Instructor
- ✓ Executive Leadership Background
- ✓ Founder of Gotham Investigations™
- ✓ Founder of The Modern Investigator™

### Areas of Experience

- Surveillance Investigations
- Insurance & SIU Investigations
- Security Operations
- Firearms Instruction
- Case Management
- Report Writing
- Investigative Technology & AI

# My Mission

The investigative profession is evolving rapidly. Technology, artificial intelligence, and modern workflows are changing how investigators operate every day.

However, the fundamentals remain unchanged:

Observation. Integrity. Documentation. Professionalism.

Through The Modern Investigator™, my mission is to equip investigators with the tools, knowledge, and systems they need to build successful and ethical careers in an ever-changing profession.

My first surveillance assignment lasted 12 hours. I spent most of the day convinced nothing would happen. Then, in the final fifteen minutes, the evidence we needed appeared. That day taught me one of the most important lessons in investigations: patience is often your greatest skill.

***"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."***

## What's Inside This Guide

- Career Roadmap & First 90 Days Timeline
- Choose Your Path — 6 Investigative Specialties
- Income Pathways & Growth Ladder
- Equipment Checklist & Gear Recommendations
- Common Mistakes New Investigators Make
- Sample Surveillance Report (Case File Format)
- 5 AI Prompts Every Investigator Should Know
- Industry Resource Guide & Professional Directory

# Is a Career in Investigations Right for You?

Private investigation is more than a job—it's a profession built on observation, integrity, critical thinking, and continuous learning.

Investigators come from all walks of life. Former military personnel, law enforcement officers, security professionals, business leaders, and individuals from completely different careers have successfully transitioned into investigations.

The question isn't necessarily where you've been.

The question is:

Do you possess the traits of a successful investigator?

## **You May Be Well-Suited for Investigations If You:**

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- ✓ Enjoy solving problems and puzzles
- ✓ Pay attention to small details others overlook
- ✓ Remain calm under pressure
- ✓ Communicate clearly and professionally
- ✓ Have strong ethics and integrity
- ✓ Enjoy research and fact-finding
- ✓ Are patient and persistent
- ✓ Can remain objective and unbiased
- ✓ Enjoy writing and documentation
- ✓ Adapt well to new technology

## **A Profession with Many Paths**

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The investigative profession offers numerous career opportunities, including:

- Surveillance Investigations
- Insurance & SIU Investigations
- Corporate Investigations
- Background Investigations
- Executive Protection
- Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT)
- Security Operations
- Legal Investigations

No two investigative careers look exactly alike.

## The Reality of Investigative Work

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Investigations can be rewarding, but the profession also demands:

- Long hours
- Detailed documentation
- Continuous learning
- Ethical decision-making
- Adaptability
- Professionalism

Success in this field is earned through discipline, experience, and a commitment to excellence.

## The Good News

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Many of the skills required to become a successful investigator can be learned and developed over time.

The best investigators are not born—they are built through training, mentorship, experience, and dedication.

### Ask Yourself:

- Can I remain objective when emotions run high?
- Am I willing to commit to lifelong learning?
- Do I take pride in professionalism and integrity?

*If you answered "yes" to these questions, a career in investigations may be right for you.*

#### Modern Investigator Insight

*"Great investigators are not defined by their background—but by their professionalism, curiosity, and commitment to the truth."*

# Career Snapshot: What Does a Private Investigator Actually Do?

Private investigators perform a wide variety of services depending on their specialty, experience, and area of practice. No two days are exactly alike.

Some investigators spend hours conducting surveillance from a vehicle. Others analyze records, interview witnesses, write reports, or support attorneys and insurance companies.

At its core, private investigation is about one thing:

**Finding facts and documenting the truth.**

## Common Duties of a Private Investigator

### Conduct Surveillance

Observe and document a person's activities from lawful public locations while gathering evidence through photographs, video, and detailed notes.

### Prepare Reports

Investigators are professional fact-finders. Clear, objective, and accurate report writing is often one of the most important aspects of the profession.

### Conduct Interviews

Interview witnesses, clients, and other individuals to gather information and clarify facts.

### Perform Research

Review public records, databases, social media, and open-source intelligence (OSINT) to support investigations.

### Support Legal Proceedings

Assist attorneys, insurance carriers, businesses, and individuals by documenting facts and providing investigative findings.

### Leverage Technology

Modern investigators use cameras, mapping tools, case management software, and artificial intelligence to improve efficiency and productivity.

# Areas of Specialization

The investigative profession encompasses many specialties. As you develop your career, you may choose to focus on one or more of the following areas:

## **Surveillance**

Mobile and stationary observation, video documentation, activity logging

## **Insurance/SIU**

Workers' comp, liability claims, fraud detection, AOE/COE investigations

## **Corporate**

Internal theft, employee misconduct, due diligence, compliance

## **Background**

Pre-employment screening, tenant checks, asset searches

## **OSINT**

Open-source intelligence, social media analysis, digital footprints

## **Legal Support**

Process serving, witness location, trial preparation, evidence gathering

## **Executive Protection**

Threat assessment, secure transport, event security planning

## **Skip Tracing**

Locating missing persons, debtors, witnesses, and heirs

# A Day in the Life of an Investigator

Every day is different in the investigative profession. Here is an example of what a typical surveillance day might look like:

- **5:00 AM** Review case file, check weather, plan route to subject's residence
- **6:00 AM** Arrive on location, establish surveillance position, test equipment
- **6:30 AM** Begin active surveillance, document all activity
- **9:00 AM** Subject departs residence — initiate mobile surveillance
- **11:00 AM** Subject arrives at location of interest — document and photograph
- **1:00 PM** Subject returns home — maintain position for additional activity
- **3:00 PM** End surveillance per client authorization
- **4:00 PM** Return to office — download media, begin report writing
- **6:00 PM** Submit completed report and media to client

*"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."*

MODERN INVESTIGATOR INSIGHT

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## Ready For The Next Step?

Join the Modern Investigator Insider List and receive:

- ✓ Career opportunities
- ✓ Investigative resources
- ✓ Industry updates
- ✓ AI workflows
- ✓ New training releases
- ✓ Early access to Modern Investigator products

Join Free At:

[www.TheModernInvestigator.com](http://www.TheModernInvestigator.com)

# CAREER ROADMAP

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"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

## 1

# Education & Training

A formal degree isn't always required, but the right education gives you a competitive edge and builds credibility with clients and employers.

- Criminal Justice or Criminology degree (Associate's or Bachelor's)
- Paralegal studies or pre-law coursework
- Military intelligence or law enforcement academy training
- Online certifications in fraud examination or digital forensics
- Continuing education in surveillance technology and OSINT
- Industry-specific training (insurance, legal, corporate)
- State-approved PI training courses (where required)

**PRO TIP**

Don't wait until you have every credential. Start with one certification and build from there. Employers value demonstrated initiative over a perfect resume.

## 2

## Licensing Requirements

Most states require a PI license before you can legally operate. Requirements vary significantly by jurisdiction, so research your specific state early.

- Research your state's licensing board and specific requirements
- Complete required supervised hours (typically 1,000-6,000 hours)
- Pass the state licensing examination (where applicable)
- Submit fingerprints and pass a background check
- Obtain required insurance and bonding
- Maintain continuing education credits for renewal
- Consider reciprocity agreements if working across state lines

**PRO TIP**

Start tracking your supervised hours from day one. Many aspiring investigators lose months of qualifying experience because they didn't document it properly.

## 3

## Building Experience

Hands-on experience is irreplaceable. The best investigators combine formal training with real-world fieldwork to develop instincts that can't be taught in a classroom.

- Seek entry-level positions at established PI firms
- Volunteer for skip tracing and database research tasks
- Shadow experienced investigators on surveillance assignments
- Build a portfolio of successful case outcomes
- Develop expertise in one specialty before branching out
- Document everything — your case log is your professional resume
- Accept challenging assignments that push your skill boundaries

**PRO TIP**

Your first 100 cases will teach you more than any course. Focus on learning, not earning, in your first year. The income follows competence.

## 4

## Growing Your Network

Investigations is a relationship business. Your network determines your access to referrals, mentorship, subcontract work, and career advancement opportunities.

- Join professional associations (ASIS, WAD, state PI associations)
- Attend industry conferences and local chapter meetings
- Connect with attorneys, insurance adjusters, and HR professionals
- Build relationships with other investigators for referrals
- Maintain an active LinkedIn presence with industry content
- Offer to mentor newer investigators — teaching deepens expertise
- Develop relationships with law enforcement contacts (ethically)

**PRO TIP**

One strong professional relationship can generate more business than a year of marketing. Invest in people, not just skills.

# Final Thought

Private investigation is not merely a job.

It is a profession built on integrity, observation, and trust.

Master the fundamentals, embrace technology responsibly, and commit to lifelong learning.

**Your investigative journey starts today.**

# The First 90 Days

## Your Investigator Launch Plan

Beginning a career in investigations can feel overwhelming. The good news is that every professional investigator started exactly where you are now. The key is not trying to do everything at once. Instead, focus on consistent progress.

DAYS 1-30

### Build Your Foundation

#### Your Goals:

- ✓ Research your state's licensing requirements
- ✓ Identify training opportunities
- ✓ Join professional associations
- ✓ Begin learning investigative terminology
- ✓ Study report writing fundamentals
- ✓ Follow experienced investigators online

#### Recommended Actions:

- Visit your state's licensing website
- Explore training providers such as NITA
- Begin networking with professionals
- Start building your professional library

Remember: Your first month is about learning the profession.

DAYS 31-60

### Build Your Toolkit

#### Your Goals:

- ✓ Acquire basic equipment
- ✓ Practice observation skills
- ✓ Learn surveillance fundamentals
- ✓ Study investigative reports
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with AI and technology tools

## DAYS 31-60 (CONTINUED)

### Recommended Actions:

- Purchase essential equipment gradually
- Conduct observation exercises in public settings
- Practice writing sample reports
- Learn basic OSINT techniques

Great investigators aren't simply good observers — they are excellent documentarians.

## DAYS 61-90

### Launch Your Career

#### Your Goals:

- ✓ Apply for internships or positions
- ✓ Seek mentorship opportunities
- ✓ Develop a specialty
- ✓ Continue professional education
- ✓ Create a long-term career plan

#### Recommended Actions:

- Apply to investigative agencies
- Attend industry events and networking opportunities
- Identify areas of specialization
- Continue building your professional reputation

Remember: Careers are built one assignment at a time.

# First-Year Milestones

## Key Benchmarks for Your Investigative Career

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MONTH 3

### Foundation Complete

Licensing requirements understood, basic training complete, professional network started, first equipment acquired.



MONTH 6

### Skills Developing

Observation skills sharpening, report writing improving, first assignments completed, mentorship established.



MONTH 9

### Specialization Emerging

Area of focus identified, advanced training underway, professional reputation building, consistent work flow.



MONTH 12

### Career Launched

Specialty established, client relationships built, professional credentials growing, long-term plan in place.



# Choose Your Path

## Six Career Paths in Private Investigation

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The investigative profession offers diverse career paths. Each requires unique skills and offers different rewards. Review these options and consider which aligns with your strengths and interests.

1

### Surveillance Investigator

Mobile & stationary observation, documentation, video evidence

2

### Corporate Investigator

Internal investigations, fraud, due diligence, compliance

3

### Insurance Investigator

Claims verification, fraud detection, field interviews

4

### Legal Investigator

Case preparation, witness location, evidence gathering

5

### Digital / OSINT Investigator

Online research, social media, data analysis

6

### Government Investigator

Federal, state, or local agency investigations

# Your Career Will Evolve

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Many investigators begin in one specialty and later transition into others. The most successful professionals remain flexible, continue learning, and embrace new opportunities.

Your first specialty doesn't have to be your last.

## **Modern Investigator Insight**

The best investigators don't just build cases — they build careers. The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not.

# What's Inside the Full Career Launch Kit

Everything You Need to Launch Your Investigative Career

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This free guide is just the beginning. The full Career Launch Kit includes professional-grade tools and templates to accelerate your career.

1

## Equipment Guide

Complete gear recommendations for surveillance, OSINT, and field work

2

## Surveillance Templates

Professional observation logs, activity reports, and chain-of-custody forms

3

## Report Package

Ready-to-use investigation report templates that impress clients

4

## AI Prompt Library

50+ prompts to supercharge your research and case analysis

5

## Business Startup Kit

Business plan templates, pricing guides, and client contracts

6

## Resource Directory

Curated databases, tools, associations, and training programs

## Join the Modern Investigator Insider List

Get early access at [www.TheModernInvestigator.com](http://www.TheModernInvestigator.com)

# Investigator Income Pathways

## Understanding Your Earning Potential

A career in investigations offers numerous opportunities for professional growth and advancement. As with many professions, earnings vary based on experience, specialization, geographic location, and whether an investigator works independently or for an agency.

There is no one-size-fits-all career path in investigations.

### Entry Level

New investigators, agency employees



### Mid-Career

3-5 years experience, specialized skills



### Senior / Lead

Team leadership, complex cases



### Independent / Owner

Own agency, multiple revenue streams

Many investigators begin in one specialty and later expand into others as they gain experience and expertise.

# Surveillance Investigator

## Career Path Detail

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Surveillance investigators document activities through lawful observation, photography, and video. This is one of the most common entry points into the profession.

### Common Assignments

- ✓ Workers' Compensation Investigations
- ✓ Activity Checks
- ✓ Insurance Investigations
- ✓ Fraud Investigations

### Career Growth Opportunities

- Senior Investigator
- Lead Investigator
- Field Supervisor
- Independent Contractor

### Potential Advantages

- Flexible scheduling
- Diverse assignments
- Outdoor work environment
- High demand across industries

# SIU Investigator

## What They Do

Special Investigations Unit (SIU) investigators work for insurance companies to detect and investigate potentially fraudulent claims. This includes workers' compensation fraud, auto insurance fraud, property damage fraud, and disability fraud.

## Key Responsibilities

- Conduct surveillance on claimants
- Review medical records and claim files
- Interview witnesses and claimants
- Prepare detailed investigative reports
- Coordinate with law enforcement when necessary
- Testify in legal proceedings

## Skills Required

- Strong analytical and critical thinking
- Excellent written and verbal communication
- Knowledge of insurance law and regulations
- Surveillance expertise
- Attention to detail

## Typical Salary Range

Typical Salary Range: \$55,000–\$95,000+ annually, with experienced SIU investigators and independent contractors often exceeding six figures.

## Path to Entry

Most SIU positions require a PI license, prior investigative experience, and knowledge of insurance claims processes. Many investigators transition from field surveillance into SIU roles after 2-3 years.

**Modern Investigator Insight:** "Fraud evolves. Great investigators evolve faster."

# Corporate Investigator

## What They Do

Corporate investigators protect organizations from internal and external threats including fraud, theft, embezzlement, intellectual property theft, and workplace misconduct.

## Key Responsibilities

- Conduct internal investigations
- Perform background checks and due diligence
- Investigate workplace complaints
- Protect intellectual property
- Support HR and legal departments
- Conduct digital forensics

## Skills Required

- Business acumen and corporate understanding
- Interview and interrogation techniques
- Digital forensics knowledge
- Report writing and presentation skills
- Discretion and confidentiality

## Typical Salary Range

\$65,000 - \$120,000+ depending on company size and scope

## Path to Entry

Corporate investigation roles often require a combination of investigative experience, a relevant degree (criminal justice, business, accounting), and professional certifications such as CFE or CPP.

**Pro Tip:** Corporate roles often come with executive-level compensation, benefits, and the prestige of working with major organizations. Build your network early.

# OSINT & Cyber Investigator

## What They Do

OSINT (Open-Source Intelligence) and cyber investigators gather and analyze publicly available information from digital sources to support investigations. They specialize in social media analysis, digital footprints, dark web monitoring, and electronic evidence.

## Key Responsibilities

- Conduct social media and online investigations
- Perform deep web and dark web research
- Analyze digital footprints and metadata
- Support fraud and identity theft investigations
- Create intelligence reports from open sources
- Preserve digital evidence for legal proceedings

## Skills Required

- Advanced internet research techniques
- Knowledge of OSINT tools and platforms
- Understanding of digital privacy and encryption
- Data analysis and pattern recognition
- Critical thinking and verification skills

## Typical Salary Range

\$60,000 - \$110,000+ depending on specialization and clearance level

## Path to Entry

OSINT roles often favor candidates with IT backgrounds, cybersecurity certifications (OSCP, CEH), or intelligence community experience. Self-taught researchers with demonstrated skills can also break in through freelance work.

**Pro Tip:** OSINT is one of the fastest-growing specializations in investigations. Building a portfolio of research case studies can help you stand out to potential employers.

# Legal Investigator

## What They Do

Legal investigators work alongside attorneys to gather evidence, locate witnesses, and build cases for litigation. They support both criminal defense and civil litigation teams.

## Key Responsibilities

- Locate and interview witnesses
- Gather evidence for court proceedings
- Serve legal documents
- Conduct background investigations
- Prepare case summaries for attorneys
- Testify as expert witnesses

## Skills Required

- Knowledge of legal procedures and terminology
- Strong interviewing and interpersonal skills
- Excellent written communication
- Understanding of rules of evidence
- Patience and persistence in locating subjects

## Typical Salary Range

\$50,000 - \$90,000+ depending on firm size and case complexity

## Path to Entry

Legal investigators often come from law enforcement, paralegal backgrounds, or PI firms. Building relationships with attorneys and demonstrating reliability on smaller cases leads to consistent referrals.

**Pro Tip:** Attorneys value investigators who understand deadlines, court rules, and chain of custody. A paralegal certificate can give you a significant edge in this specialty.

# Agency Owner

## What They Do

Agency owners operate their own investigative firms, managing cases, clients, employees, and business operations. This is the entrepreneurial path in the investigative profession.

## Key Responsibilities

- Manage client relationships and case assignments
- Hire, train, and supervise investigators
- Handle business operations (billing, marketing, compliance)
- Maintain licensing and insurance requirements
- Develop business strategy and growth plans
- Ensure quality control across all cases

## Skills Required

- Business management and leadership
- Marketing and client acquisition
- Financial management and budgeting
- Human resources and team building
- Strong investigative background

## Typical Revenue Range

\$100,000 - \$500,000+ depending on agency size, specialization, and market

## Path to Entry

Most agency owners spend 5-10+ years as investigators before launching their own firms. Building a strong reputation, client base, and understanding of business operations is essential before making the leap.

**Pro Tip:** Start building your business skills early. Take courses in marketing, accounting, and management while you're still working for someone else. The transition will be much smoother.

# Equipment Checklist

## Core Equipment

- ✓ Professional camera with zoom lens
- ✓ Laptop computer with report-writing software
- ✓ Smartphone with quality camera
- ✓ Binoculars (compact and full-size)
- ✓ Notebook and pens
- ✓ Charger and portable power bank
- ✓ Dashcam or vehicle-mounted camera
- ✓ GPS navigation system

## Vehicle Equipment

- ✓ Reliable, inconspicuous vehicle
- ✓ Tinted windows (where legal)
- ✓ Vehicle organizer for equipment
- ✓ Emergency kit (first aid, flashlight, tools)
- ✓ Fuel gift cards for extended surveillance

## Documentation Tools

- ✓ Report templates
- ✓ Case management software
- ✓ Voice recorder (where legal)
- ✓ Timestamp app or device
- ✓ Secure file storage (cloud and physical)

**Insider List Bonus:** Members receive the complete Equipment Buying Guide with vendor recommendations.

# Equipment Checklist (continued)

## Specialty Equipment

Certain investigations may require additional equipment depending upon the assignment:

- ✓ Pretexting materials (where legal)
- ✓ Burner phone or Google Voice number
- ✓ Specialized cover clothing
- ✓ Mapping software
- ✓ Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT) tools
- ✓ Camouflage or field clothing where appropriate

**Important:** Investigators must always comply with state and federal laws regarding recording devices, pretexting, GPS tracking, and surveillance activities. Laws vary significantly by jurisdiction.

### Professional Tip

You do not need to purchase every piece of equipment on day one. Start with the basics:

1. Camera
2. Laptop
3. Phone
4. Notebook
5. Binoculars
6. Charger and power bank

Build your kit as your experience and assignments grow. The best investigators are not necessarily those with the most equipment—but those who know how to use their tools effectively.

# COMMON MISTAKES

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"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

# Common Mistakes

## **Mistake #1: Skipping Licensing Requirements**

Many new investigators jump into fieldwork without understanding their state's licensing laws. Operating without proper credentials can result in criminal charges, inadmissible evidence, and career-ending consequences.

**Fix:** Research your state's requirements before doing anything else. Contact your state's licensing authority directly.

## **Mistake #2: Poor Report Writing**

Your report is your product. Sloppy, opinion-filled, or disorganized reports destroy credibility and can get cases thrown out. Attorneys and claims adjusters judge you by your written work.

**Fix:** Use templates. Write factually. Remove all opinions and speculation. Have someone review your first 10 reports.

## **Mistake #3: Burning Surveillance Too Early**

New investigators often get too aggressive with positioning, follow too closely, or stay in one spot too long. Once you're burned, the case is compromised and your reputation takes a hit.

**Fix:** Practice patience. Use multiple vantage points. Know when to back off. A partial day of good footage beats a full day of blown cover.

# Common Mistakes (continued)

## **Mistake #4: Not Building Relationships**

Investigations is a relationship business. New investigators often focus solely on fieldwork and ignore networking with attorneys, adjusters, and other professionals who provide referrals.

**Fix:** Attend industry events. Join professional associations. Build genuine relationships with potential clients before you need the work.

## **Mistake #5: Undercharging for Services**

New investigators often undercut the market to win business. This devalues the profession, attracts low-quality clients, and makes it impossible to sustain a viable business long-term.

**Fix:** Research market rates in your area. Price based on value, not desperation. Quality clients pay fair rates for quality work.

## **Mistake #6: Ignoring Technology**

The profession is evolving rapidly. Investigators who refuse to learn new tools, software, and techniques get left behind. OSINT, AI, and digital forensics are no longer optional skills.

**Fix:** Dedicate time each week to learning new tools. Follow industry leaders. Invest in training that keeps you current.

### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

Every successful investigator made mistakes early on. The difference is they learned quickly, adapted, and never repeated the same error twice.

**Insider List Bonus:** Join free at [www.TheModernInvestigator.com](http://www.TheModernInvestigator.com) for professional report templates and more.

# SAMPLE SURVEILLANCE REPORT

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"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

# SURVEILLANCE REPORT

**Case Number:** 2024-SUR-0847

**Date of Surveillance:** [Date]

**Investigator:** John A. Martin, Private Investigator

**Client:** [Client Name / Law Firm]

**Subject:** [Subject Name]

**Location:** [City, State]

## **Weather Conditions**

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Clear skies with scattered clouds

Temperature: Approximately 88°F

Visibility: Good

Traffic Conditions: Moderate

## Activity Log

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0730 hrs — Arrived at surveillance location. Established position with clear line of sight to subject residence.

0845 hrs — Subject exited residence via front door. Wearing dark pants and light-colored shirt. Entered silver sedan (plate noted).

0910 hrs — Subject arrived at commercial gym facility. Entered building carrying gym bag.

1015 hrs — Subject exited gym. Appeared to move freely without visible discomfort or physical limitation.

1035 hrs — Subject drove to retail shopping center. Observed carrying multiple bags to vehicle without assistance.

1200 hrs — Subject returned to residence. Surveillance concluded.

## Observations

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Throughout the surveillance period, the subject displayed no visible signs of distress or physical limitations. All observations were made from lawful public vantage points. Photographic and video evidence were obtained documenting the subject's activities.

## Conclusion

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The subject was observed engaging in activities that may be inconsistent with reported physical limitations. This report contains factual observations only and expresses no opinion regarding medical condition, legal liability, or claim validity.

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### Respectfully Submitted,

John A. Martin  
Private Investigator  
The Modern Investigator™

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# AI PROMPTS FOR INVESTIGATORS

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"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

# AI PROMPTS FOR INVESTIGATORS

## PROMPT 1

### Surveillance Report Drafting

"I conducted surveillance on [date] at [location]. The subject was observed [describe activities]. Weather conditions were [describe]. Please help me organize these notes into a professional surveillance report format with timestamps, observations, and a conclusion. Maintain an objective, factual tone throughout."

**Use Case:** Quickly format raw field notes into client-ready reports while maintaining objectivity and professional standards.

## PROMPT 2

### Background Research Organization

"I am conducting a background investigation and have gathered the following information from public records: [list findings]. Please help me organize this into a structured background report with sections for personal information, employment history, legal records, property records, and social media presence. Flag any inconsistencies or gaps that may require further investigation."

**Use Case:** Organize large volumes of public-record data into a clear, structured format that highlights key findings and investigative gaps.

#### Insider List Bonus:

Join free at [www.TheModernInvestigator.com](http://www.TheModernInvestigator.com)

# AI PROMPTS FOR INVESTIGATORS

## PROMPT 3

### Interview Preparation

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"I need to interview a [witness/subject/claimant] regarding [type of case]. The key facts I already know are [list facts]. Please help me develop a structured interview plan with open-ended questions, follow-up probes, and a logical sequence that builds rapport before addressing sensitive topics. Include questions that test consistency of their account."

**Use Case:** Develop thorough, professional interview strategies that maximize information gathering while maintaining ethical standards.

## PROMPT 4

### Case Summary & Timeline

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"Here are the key events and dates from my investigation: [list events with dates]. Please organize these into a clear chronological timeline and write a concise case summary paragraph. Highlight any gaps in the timeline that may need further investigation. Format the timeline for inclusion in a professional report."

**Use Case:** Transform scattered case notes into organized timelines and executive summaries for clients and attorneys.

# AI PROMPTS FOR INVESTIGATORS

## PROMPT 5

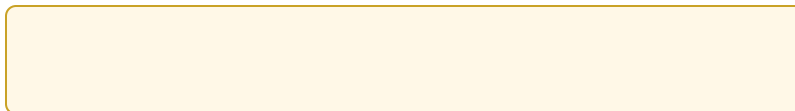
### Professional Development Planning

"I am a [new/experienced] investigator specializing in [area]. My current skills include [list skills]. My career goals for the next [timeframe] are [list goals]. Please create a professional development plan that includes recommended certifications, training courses, networking strategies, and skill-building activities. Prioritize by impact and feasibility."

**Use Case:** Create actionable career roadmaps tailored to your specialization, experience level, and professional goals.

## IMPORTANT REMINDER

Always review AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, and compliance with legal and ethical standards. Never input confidential case information into public AI tools. Use enterprise-grade, secure platforms when handling sensitive data. AI is a tool — your professional judgment is irreplaceable.



# INDUSTRY RESOURCE GUIDE

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"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

# PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

1

## ASIS International

The largest global organization for security and investigation professionals. Offers CPP and PCI certifications.

[asis.org](http://asis.org)

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2

## ACFE (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners)

Premier anti-fraud organization offering the CFE credential. Essential for fraud investigators.

[acfe.com](http://acfe.com)

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3

## NALI (National Association of Legal Investigators)

Focused on legal investigation professionals. Offers the CLI certification for experienced investigators.

[nalionline.org](http://nalionline.org)

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## TRAINING & CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

4

### **NICB (National Insurance Crime Bureau)**

Offers specialized training in insurance fraud investigation, vehicle theft, and disaster fraud for law enforcement and SIU professionals.

[nicb.org](http://nicb.org)

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5

### **IRMI (International Risk Management Institute)**

Comprehensive risk and insurance education including investigation-related coursework and professional development.

[irmi.com](http://irmi.com)

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6

### **PI Education / State Licensing Boards**

Each state has specific licensing requirements. Research your state's Department of Consumer Affairs or equivalent regulatory body.

[Check your state board](#)

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## OSINT & DIGITAL INVESTIGATION TOOLS

7

### Maltego

Visual link analysis tool for mapping relationships between people, companies, domains, and digital footprints. Industry standard for OSINT.

[maltego.com](https://maltego.com)

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8

### TLOxp / IRB Search

Premium skip-tracing and public records databases used by licensed investigators for locating subjects and asset searches.

[tlo.com](https://tlo.com)

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9

### Shodan / SpiderFoot

Network intelligence tools for discovering internet-connected devices and automating OSINT reconnaissance across multiple data sources.

[shodan.io](https://shodan.io)

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## ESSENTIAL READING & PODCASTS

10

### **The Art of Intrusion — Kevin Mitnick**

Essential reading on social engineering and investigative thinking. Provides real-world case studies of how investigators and hackers approach problems.

[Available on Amazon](#)

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### **PI Magazine / PI Buzz Podcast**

Stay current with industry news, case studies, and interviews with experienced investigators. Great for networking and continuing education.

[pimagazine.com](http://pimagazine.com)

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### **The Modern Investigator Blog & Newsletter**

Career-focused content for aspiring and professional investigators. Tips, strategies, and industry insights delivered weekly.

[www.TheModernInvestigator.com](http://www.TheModernInvestigator.com)

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# LICENSING & COMPLIANCE

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"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

# LICENSING & LEGAL DISCLAIMER



## IMPORTANT NOTICE

The information contained in this Career Launch Kit is provided for educational and informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice, and no attorney-client or professional-client relationship is formed by reading this material.

### Licensing Requirements Vary by Jurisdiction

Private investigator licensing requirements differ significantly by state, province, and country. Before beginning any investigative work, you must:

- Research your specific state or jurisdiction's licensing requirements
- Verify minimum age, education, and experience prerequisites
- Complete any required training hours or examinations
- Obtain proper insurance and bonding as required
- Register with the appropriate regulatory authority
- Maintain your license through continuing education

### No Guarantee of Employment or Income

This guide provides general career information and income ranges based on industry research. Actual earnings depend on location, specialization, experience, market conditions, and individual effort. No specific income or employment outcome is guaranteed.

### Ethical and Legal Boundaries

All investigative activities must comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. This includes but is not limited to privacy laws, surveillance regulations, recording consent laws, and data protection requirements. Unauthorized practice of investigation without proper licensing may result in criminal penalties.

**Insider List Bonus:** Join free at [www.TheModernInvestigator.com](http://www.TheModernInvestigator.com)

Disclaimer: Laws and regulations change over time. Always verify current requirements with the appropriate licensing authority.

## LICENSING & LEGAL DISCLAIMER (CONTINUED)

### **State Licensing Resources**

To find your specific state's requirements, contact:

- Your state's Department of Licensing or Division of Professional Regulation
- Your state's Private Investigator Licensing Board
- Local PI associations for mentorship and guidance

### **Recommended First Steps**

1. Identify your state's regulatory body for private investigators
2. Review all licensing prerequisites (age, education, experience)
3. Determine if your state requires sponsorship by a licensed PI
4. Research reciprocity agreements if you plan to work across state lines
5. Consult with a licensed attorney for jurisdiction-specific legal questions

### **Disclaimer of Liability**

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Disclaimer: Laws and regulations change over time. Always verify current requirements with the appropriate licensing authority.

# WHAT'S NEXT?

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You now have the roadmap. The next step is yours.


## **YOUR ACTION PLAN**


- ✓ Review your state's licensing requirements
- ✓ Choose your specialization path
- ✓ Build your first 90-day plan
- ✓ Join a professional association
- ✓ Start networking with experienced PIs
- ✓ Invest in your first training certification
- ✓ Join the Modern Investigator Insider List


"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

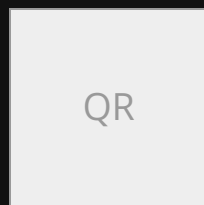
# CONNECT WITH THE MODERN INVESTIGATOR™

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 [TheModernInvestigator.com](https://www.TheModernInvestigator.com)

 [john@themoderninvestigator.com](mailto:john@themoderninvestigator.com)

 @TheModernInvestigator



Scan to join the Insider List

# YOUR INVESTIGATIVE JOURNEY STARTS HERE

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You now have the knowledge, tools, and roadmap to begin building a meaningful career in private investigation.

"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

# JOIN THE MODERN INVESTIGATOR INSIDER LIST

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Join free and receive:

- ✓ Career opportunities
- ✓ Investigative resources
- ✓ Industry updates
- ✓ AI workflows
- ✓ New training releases & early access

[www.TheModernInvestigator.com](http://www.TheModernInvestigator.com)

No spam. Unsubscribe anytime. Your career, your pace.

## A FINAL THOUGHT

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When I started in this profession, I had no roadmap. No mentor. No guide that told me what to expect, what to avoid, or how to build something meaningful. I figured it out the hard way — through trial, error, and a lot of late nights.

This guide exists so you don't have to do it alone.

Whether you're just exploring the idea of becoming an investigator or you're ready to take your first case, I want you to know: this is one of the most rewarding professions you can choose. It demands integrity, curiosity, and resilience — but it gives back purpose, autonomy, and the satisfaction of knowing your work matters.

The profession is changing. Technology is evolving. New specializations are emerging every year. But the fundamentals — ethics, attention to detail, critical thinking, and service to others — those will never go out of style.

I'm rooting for you. And I'll be here when you're ready for the next step.

To your success,

**John A. Martin**

Founder, The Modern Investigator™

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"The profession is changing. The fundamentals are not."

# Ready For The Next Step?

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Join the Modern Investigator Insider List and receive:

- Career opportunities
- Investigative resources
  - Industry updates
  - AI workflows
- New training releases
- Early access to Modern Investigator products


Join Free At:


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# Join The Modern Investigator Insider List


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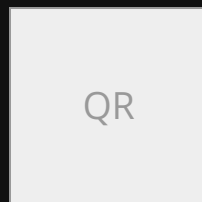
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