Ryan Kapaun - The PR Analyst

Mindy: [00:00:00] Welcome to Analyst Talk with Jason Elder. It's like coffee with an analyst, or it could be whiskey with an analyst reading a spreadsheet, linking crime events, identifying a series, and getting the latest scoop on association news and training. So please don't beat that analyst and join us as we define the law enforcement analysis profession one episode at time.

Jason: Thank you for joining me. I hope many aspects of your life are progressing. My name is Jason Elder and today our guest has 22 years of law enforcement analysis experience. He started his career with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety and is now with the Eden Prairie Police Department. He is worked on the 2008 Republican National Convention in St.

Paul, Super Bowl 52 in 2018, and the United Healthcare CEO funeral in 2025. He's here to talk about, among other things, law enforcement analysis, writing. Please welcome Ryan Kapaun. Ryan, how we doing?

I am doing amazing. Thank you so much [00:01:00] for having me.

I am glad to have you. I am definitely interested in talking about writing and presentations in law enforcement analysis.

That gets to be a little bit of my soapbox here on the podcast. Looking forward to your perspective on, the subjects. All right, so let's get started from the beginning, though. I don't wanna get too far ahead of myself. How did you discover the law enforcement analysis profession?

Ryan: Yeah, so I went to the University of Minnesota Duluth on the shores of Lake Superior for degree in communications, hoping to write press releases, do marketing, maybe work for a political campaign. And in college I got a job working for the Minnesota Duluth superior, the Duluth Superior Dukes, which was a minor league baseball team.

And I. Started as an intern and they let their media relations person go about a month into my internship and promoted me to be director of media relations. So [00:02:00] I did that for two years till the team relocated to Kansas City, moved back to the Twin Cities, and was looking for something related to my degree in field and applied for a job with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety as an information officer, where that job was kind of advertised as, being more kind of press releases and writing promotion of some certain grants for the

Department of Public Safety. But as government bureaucracy happens this was shortly after nine 11 and the Department of Public Safety had just created their Department of Homeland Security within the Department of Public Safety, and they hired a B or moved a, B, CA.

A Bureau of Criminal Apprehension investigator over to start that division. And they needed somebody to help him. And so the closest job description that they had of a job that was open was that information officer job. So [00:03:00] I applied and got the first crime analyst job or intel analyst job with the state of, so with the Department of Public Safety without realizing that's what I was applying for you.

You really fell into it, right?

I literally, yeah, I, I did not know. I I had an, and that agent who gave me my job and, and led me on the path of where I am today was so swamped. He needed somebody really quickly. I was in that stack of, of resumes and my wife's aunt, it was girlfriend at the time not wife, but her aunt worked for human resources for the Department of Public Safety for the state of Minnesota.

And so that agent Jeff Luther had come to her and is like, Hey, I gimme like the one or two people I should interview. I got, I don't have time to mm-hmm. To sit through a ton of interviews. And she said, well, here's these ones that are in of note. And then this one is also dating [00:04:00] my, niece. And he said, yeah, that one looks good.

And I met him at, at a breakfast diner in, St. Paul. And did an interview over like an omelet. Then he said, I'll get back to you when I can. And before I'd gotten home, he called and offered me the job. Nice. Yeah. It's

Jason: it's called up there

Ryan: in Minnesota. You just needed a warm body.

He did just need a warm body. So I, I helped create the Intel Center for the State of Minnesota which is now the Minnesota Fusion Center, and worked there for several years before the City of Eden Prairie

Jason: hired me away.

All right. And I do want to get into that development with the, with the state and then to Eden Prairie.

But real quick, way back when you were working for the baseball team, some of these minor league baseball teams or minor league teams really get into some wild marketing. Employees to get people [00:05:00] in the seats. And so I'm just kind of curious what was some of the, things you got into when you were, working for the baseball team?

Ryan: Yeah, so that team was in the same league as the St. Paul Saints, which up until recently was owned by Mike Veeck and Bill Murray. So there was a lot of things that the St. Paul Saints were doing kind of revolutionary with in-game stuff and promotions. Mm-hmm. And so we were trying to compete with them in Duluth.

Duluth is like two hours north of, St. Paul. And we just had a really, really small staff, so it was everybody doing everything. Mm-hmm. I was the director of media relations writing the. Game notes and the game programs and baseball cards. But there were times where I was the public address announcer and doing in-game on field stuff to, to help out.

But it was a lot of bands in the parking lot or bands in, the stadium. On off nights. A couple times we had boxing [00:06:00] matches and like ultimate fighting on home plate, trying to sell some more tickets and sell some more beer. There was certainly dollar Dog nights and dollar beer nights, which would get crazy as, as you'd expect.

Mm-hmm. But there wasn't, it didn't get too crazy of promotions that I can remember, mainly because we were just such a small staff.

Jason: I find it interesting 'cause this the stereotypical analyst. Is introverted may shy away from the spotlight, may be uncomfortable, at least in the very beginning with public speaking.

So I find it interesting from your point of view, you were seeking this as a career being a, a pr rep. With your experience there, with the baseball and then eventually going into the Department of Safety, I mean, going from that vision of really wanting to be in pr, really dealing with the public to then like, oh, okay, maybe [00:07:00] you're in a situation where now you're dealing with data, not necessarily the public.

You know? Talk a little bit about that transition and maybe how the, the PR stuff helped you once you started to get into the analysis.

Ryan: Yeah, I think that background actually really became a benefit for me in early in my career, certainly. But now having a lot more distance from that time of realizing how important those couple years were of that transition from college writing of trying to fill five pages or 10 pages on a particular topic to writing a profile on a baseball player, in which I only have so many column inches that need to fit into that spot.

And writing press releases about game game sheets and things that are happening during the games for the media, for the radio guys, and being as brief and as concise as possible, but also getting all of the important things that I wanna share. Into their hands so that [00:08:00] they're, they're sharing that info.

And really, like, that is so similar to what I'm doing when I'm writing information bulletins for, for patrol officers of taking that concept of a press release of who, what, where, when, why, when was a graphic design look like, was a headline look like. I only need you to read that headline and read that first sentence to know what's important.

And if you keep reading amazing, you're gonna get great stuff out of it. But if you don't, I still got the concept that I wanted to get across and, and that was true for baseball stuff and it's true today for when I'm writing about a burglary series.

Jason: Alright. Nice. Let's get into you walking into the minnesota Department of Public Safety, and as you said, you started to establish the center a little bit. So just go into that fir those first year or so of walking in the door and what you were able to accomplish.

Ryan: Yeah, that man, that first year was really just the flood of information coming [00:09:00] from federal intelligence agencies to the states because of them getting dinged for not sharing info pre nine 11, and then post nine 11 in the years after, after nine 11 of just a flood of information.

So what the state of Minnesota decided they needed was kind of a gatekeeper for that information of weeding out what's not important versus what's important for law enforcement in Minnesota. So my job was to dismiss the hurricane intel briefs that the federal government was sending. To make sure that our law enforcement wasn't, wasn't being bombarded with those, knowing that when they opened something from the fusion Center, that it was gonna be pertinent and, and timely for them.

But not only were we doing that, I had to help create the database of how were we gonna get that info to, to the beginning was to police chiefs across the state of Minnesota and sheriffs to get them that information. How would we create [00:10:00] that mechanism to, to deliver that? And so we created initially it was an email database, well that's difficult to, to maintain.

And so then it was working with third party vendors to figure out is there a secure website where we can host this data and, and sending that out. But that comes with its own issues of law enforcement data. What can we house on a third party vendor's website versus what needs to go out separately, more, maybe more securely.

And really that, that balance of what can we share and what can we not share?

Jason: For the listeners, we're talking 2003 to 2007 timeframe here. Correct. So not a lot of social media going along at this time. And a lot of departments are just getting websites and as you mentioned, it's the, it's the period of time post nine 11 where sharing, of data and training and just an explosion in [00:11:00] terms of information being out there for law enforcement, just for not only Intel, but also training opportunities.

, There would've been a lot going on. That was a, that was a big gate to keep for you.

Ryan: It was in, in getting not only the mechanism to push that information out, but also helping create those public private partnerships of how do we get information to us of what.

Those corporations we're seeing. So Minnesota is home to a lot of Fortune 500 companies but also several fortune 1000 companies and how do we get that info and as well as all of our critical infrastructure, especially in the Twin Cities metro area. So when, I don't know if you remember the 35 W Bridge collapse in, Minnesota, I believe that was in 2007, that the Army Corps of Engineers, we had been sharing information with them on just critical infrastructure stuff.

So they had my contact info when the bridge collapsed. And the Army Corps of Engineers has offices right next to. Right on the, the Mississippi River [00:12:00] next to where the, the bridge collapsed. So there's a famous video that was seen of the bridge literally collapsing into the water and outside the Army Corps of Engineers, I was the first one in the world to see that because we had a partnership with them and they had my contact info.

So they called me right away and said, how do we send this video to you? We think you can figure out how many cars were on the bridge when it went down. But it was because of those relationships that we'd established that, that they felt comfortable in sending that off

Jason: to us.

Yeah. And were you able to figure out how many vehicles were on the bridge?

Ryan: That was such a crazy day. I had actually driven over that bridge about an hour hour and a half before it collapsed. Wow. On my way home. And then got the call as I was running some errands and got back into the office and , I did help the emergency operation center, try to figure that out, but it also was getting that video.

To as many stakeholders that we needed to to help kind of [00:13:00] figure out where the cars were, how many cars were on there for the emergency responders that were responding to the scene.

Jason: , When you're sending this out, , is this email,

Ryan: in that particular one with that video?

I can't remember exactly how, 'cause we were in Minneapolis, mm-hmm. Our offices were in Minneapolis and we were trying to get to the emergency operation center. I don't exactly remember. It was probably trying to get email chunks of the video out at that time.

Jason: Yeah. And then what was the cause of the bridge collapsing? I, I vaguely remember this. Yeah,

Ryan: it was under construction at the time, so. I believe the term was gusset plates, that there was just some plates kind of holding the bridge together, ended up failing mm-hmm. From years of weather deterioration, but also then the weight of the construction and, and rush hour traffic across it at that time.

Oh man. That's awful.

Jason: Yeah.

. All right. I'm trying to put myself in your shoes during this time period, I'm wondering, was there a, a frustration with the data [00:14:00] flow? Because obviously you're trying to establish relationships with people and when pertinent, get the data out as quickly as possible, but obviously the data that you're dealing with is, is probably very different in different formats.

Just like all analysts deal with that. It's the data's crazy and not uniformed, and so you're trying your best to work with the data. And push the data out at the same time.

Ryan: Yeah. It was a really difficult time of also just different stakeholders. Mm-hmm. So what's important to law enforcement and police chiefs and sheriffs in northern Minnesota along the Canadian border is completely different than what's important in a major metropolitan area.

Mm-hmm. And so it was trying to not only figure out how to disseminate stuff and, and what you were gonna disseminate, but what was pertinent to different regions and different individuals and also how much info to share. So I remember times where we would [00:15:00] want to be putting together threat briefings about a presidential visit, and it had been reported in the Minneapolis Star Tribune in the newspaper that the president was coming to town.

And so we would be trying to figure out where he would be going and, and helping the cities where he would be, come up with threat assessments and then get pushback from the federal government that, well, that's not official yet, so you can't publish that or broadcast that out. And you're like, well, it's in the newspaper, like the 10 o'clock news is reporting.

He is gonna be here on Tuesday. So there's that frustration at the time of just what, what was important to to me might not be important to a big city police chief, but it might be important to a suburban police chief or, or a rural police chief.

Jason: Yeah. So how much autonomy do you think you had during this time?

I had, . So much

Ryan: autonomy to, to pick and choose because I started as a first analyst, but then we grew and, and hired several more analysts in the Intel Center. Mm-hmm. [00:16:00] But because I was a first analyst, I was able to set templates and formatting and, and subject matter.

And so looking back at being whatever I was at, at the time of 25 years old, 26 years old, and being to kind of dictate what I believed was important intelligence for mm-hmm. Law enforcement officials yeah, I, I had a lot of autonomy on, on formatting and, and what I, the content of what I was putting out.

Jason: I think that says a lot about your judgment. So obviously if it wouldn't, I wouldn't imagine it would take very long if you were making those around you look bad that you would have such autonomy for very long. Sure. Given some of the high profile information, and as you said, you get into politics and it's that's a, that's a game in itself.

Ryan: Yeah. Yeah. And that at the time our governor was, I think ran for president and so, or, or was mulling a run for president around that time. So it was, it was super important that that information [00:17:00] be correct and timely. And because it was not only a reflection on, on me and my superiors, but ultimately on, on the administration and the state

Jason: Before we go on to Eden Prairie, is there , anything else you wanna share regarding your time with the department? Public of safety?

Ryan: I learned so much about myself of just breaking news and world events and trying to filter out what is that, how is that world event important to what's happening in Minnesota?

Mm-hmm. And then how do I take that complicated event and parse that down to a couple paragraphs of what I think is important and what I think are. Law enforcement, Minnesota need to know about that event. And that really did help me a lot. One, once I got to a, a local law enforcement agency.

Jason: Yeah, I find that fascinating too, because I remember as an analyst working and doing more case support type stuff and then having a manager come [00:18:00] in that says that once wanted a lot of strategic analysis and wanted us to be finding stuff that happens halfway around the world and how it impacts our local jurisdiction.

And I remember that feeling that that was like such a daunting task. 'cause it just what was in front of me at that point was a lot of local cases, a lot of local information that was just local, let alone what was going on in the the state. The United States or even a different different country altogether.

So it's, and that we were, that would've been around the same time that we're talking about here, that I was asked to do that. So that was, it's fascinating that you were able to establish that, flow from the big old world down to the smallest jurisdiction.

Ryan: I mean, sometimes it was hard though of mm-hmm.

Just because at the time Al-Qaeda bombed a, a train station in Madrid. Does that really have meaning [00:19:00] for law enforcement in, in Minneapolis and St. Paul? And so sometimes you're drawing meaning on it because you think you should, but then you're taking a step back as you're writing it and you're like, I don't, I don't know what my point is in, in writing this outside of, oh, an event happened halfway across the world, but does that mean that there we're also under a threat or not?

And so soon after nine 11 that there was that feeling of, well, everything could be a threat and should be a threat. So you almost have to over-report on it.

Jason: Yeah. 'cause it's, six in one hand, half a dozen in the other. If you report it and it's nothing, people like.

Or wondering why, but if you, if you didn't report it and it turned out to be something, people are wondering why?

Ryan: Well, and that's what and, and for analysts in the Fusion Center, I remember a lot of our arguments of what to include in bulletins was, was around that. Is that mm-hmm. If there's a, a large gathering the All-Star game in, in Minneapolis, certainly that could potentially be a target, right?

Mm-hmm. It's on a world stage, [00:20:00] but is a twins game two weeks later that also is a sellout against the New York Yankees. Is that equal to as a threat? Should that get mentioned or That just happens 81 times during the summer, so it's not a big deal. And those were, were struggles that we went back and forth with in those early days of what was of note and what's just an everyday occurrence.

Jason: ,

You just got me thinking. It was also right around this time where the Department of Homeland Security would come up with those color markers. Yep. Yes. Right. The different we yellow shades of like orange. Yes, yes. And it was like, and it was just that, that moment where like see something, say

something there was different, different campaigns and to, to try to to go, just go about doing your everyday business or high alert or there was just, they were trying their best to come up with a system that folks could understand, but still somehow be actionable.

And I, I don't, I don't think they still have it, so I don't think it, [00:21:00] it did what it was supposed to do.

Ryan: No, because it, well, every time you're at high alert and then nothing happens, everyone's like, well, did we need to be at high alert? But was it negated because you were on high alert. And so it's really hard.

I mean, it's no different than, than crime data on the local level of it. Did you actually prevent it from happening or did it just not happen?

Jason: Yeah,

Ryan: that's,

Jason: that's interesting. Hmm. Alright, well let's, move on then to Eden Prairie. And so this transition from going from the state to this local jurisdiction, how did that come about?

Ryan: It was a supervi, well, captain from Eden Prairie Police Department was on loan to the state of Minnesota to help create the Intel Center mm-hmm. And get it started with policies and procedures. And he realized that the future of law enforcement was going to be. Kinda Intel led policing in that Eden Prairie, which is now a agency of about 75 [00:22:00] officers 15 miles southwest of, of Minneapolis that they needed to lead the way and hire a crime analyst.

So I believe I was the first or second suburban crime analyst in the state and probably one of the first 10 crime analysts in the state of Minnesota. But because I knew him, I was able to help kind of create that position profile that certainly fit my. My background. So it was a pretty easy hiring process for me.

Jason: But then, then I guess what about the transition though? And, and maybe that's what you're getting at. You were able to ac custo, customize it for you. Just that, that transition going from the state level to to Eden Prairie, because just for the listeners, how, how big is Eden Prairie?

Ryan: So it's about 60,000 people with a suburban mall.

And I think there's three Fortune 500 companies headquartered in Eden Prairie. We also have the third largest Somali population in the [00:23:00] state of Minnesota. And a large Indian population fairly affluent neighborhoods. But it was as far as transition, it certainly helped that I was the first analyst mm-hmm.

Hired by Eden Prairie. Because just like my job with the state, I was able to create the position into what I had in my head mm-hmm. Without having to follow in somebody else's footsteps and hear well, that's not how that person did it, or this is how we've done it. So it was every new product that I did was, you know a success just because they had nothing to compare it to.

But it was a struggle for me initially of go looking at that global and statewide level and creating information and bulletins intel for patrol officers and what. Helped me the most was when I would write those intel bulletins of being in roll call when they're passing it around and seeing it, and really focusing on their body language of did they spend a lot of [00:24:00] time on that or did they just glance at it because I was in the room but didn't really care about it.

And I realized that when I was focusing on those kind of global, like events that I had focused on with the state, that those were the ones that weren't getting a whole lot of you know. Extra gaze on, on the piece of paper. But when I was focusing on the more local level stuff, that naturally that's what they were more interested in.

Where's the warrants, where's the burglary suspect? Where are the thefts gonna occur? What's the background on that, that domestic assault that we had the other night? Mm-hmm. And so that really became my focus on, on that. That really micro level or if there were global events, how did that, I had to figure out, back to that press release of how to get their attention of how I think that global event pertains to their job and their job in the next 12 or 24 hours.

Jason: Hmm. And then interesting. 'cause I, I, I found as I talk with analysts over the years and in [00:25:00] similar situations to you where they were the first analysts at a police department and, and sometimes the, the fir it's the fir their, they're our first time analyst. This, at least in your case. Mm-hmm. At least it was, this was your least your second go around.

And, but I, I, that aspect of just creating the position and, and figuring it out, and in hindsight in my career, I, did a lot better being part of like an established team. As opposed to trying to cut my own path. And, but some people really enjoyed being in that situation where they were able to make it their own,.

And sounds like that you were in that same boat.

Ryan: Yeah. , As the Intel Center grew I still am, am really good friends with several of the analysts. That started with me at the Intel Center, but because I was the first one and I had my ideas of how it was gonna go it was sometimes a struggle for me [00:26:00] to, have some other people in the room with some other opinions about the projects that I wanted to work on.

And so I've, I've found it actually a little bit easier for me, not of, not sharing, but of, of being the one to kind of take the lead on, on, especially now on, on cases. And just to be able to be a part of kind of everything.

Jason: Hmm. So you talk about the struggles in the beginning. And I think analysts talk about this a lot, that the frustration of either no one reads the emails, no one reads the bulletins.

I think Steve Gottlieb once said he purposely put the bulletins on colored paper so then he could check the garbage can after patrol to see how many were in there. You could easily see 'em. But for you though, as you, as you talked about this, I am fascinated to know, given your background, we're going back to the fact that you, you went school was communications, you, you have that [00:27:00] discipline of pr.

What was your process of going through and said, okay, this is, this stuff isn't working, going through and, and basically working it out until things started to work?

Ryan: Well, it was making sure I was. Doing Ridealongs early on. Mm-hmm. And just kinda getting a feel for what they were interested in and what the problems were that maybe I could help solve.

Mm-hmm. And it was that, again, that body language of every time I wrote an advisory, I would make sure it was done before. We have a roll call at, we have several roll calls throughout the day, but there was always one at two o'clock in the afternoon. So I would make sure that that advisory or bulletin would be done right before two o'clock.

And then I would personally hand it out and just read that body language and knowing that nobody ever or rarely would turn to the second page. So it was obvious to me that it had to be on one page. [00:28:00] Mm-hmm. And then I don't do a lot of maps because. They know where the if I am writing about robberies of gas stations in, in the metro and the gas stations that are being

robbed at three in the morning, well, they know which of the two gas stations are open 24 hours a day in Eden Prairie.

I don't need a map to map that out for them. So that freed up space in my head on, on the page of other information that I could include. So it really ended up being not only what am I writing and getting back to that kind of baseball stuff of, and that press release stuff of who I where when, but also that graphic design mentality of what does my advisory look like and how can it be.

Incredibly functional. So I want it to look similar every time, knowing that when they're going, I write about a burglary series and they're going to a burglary [00:29:00] or an alarm call, and they remember that I wrote something about that burglary series, and they're bringing it up in their squad laptop, driving 70 miles an hour to, to that burglary that I've trained their eyes of where they need to look of where is that suspect always on top, on the left picture of the vehicle is always on the top, on the right, because that's gonna pop up first in, in their laptop.

And then in the headline is, is there weapons that's always capitalized or in read and certain things that are in bold and they really just need to read. Like a press release that first sentence or that first two sentences. And then everything below that on that page is really justifying how I got to.

Writing that first sentence.

Jason: Yeah. Well, I like, I like the standard as you said, it, it trains their eye. I think that the first point that you make, almost, outweighs the graphic design in a way, you need to understand what information that they're looking for, what information is most pertinent to them.

And you did that by [00:30:00] getting to know them. Yes. And so the information gr granted, yes, a good, a good bulletin has to have, a solid graphic design. But I think honing your skills in to say, okay, this is what they're after, this is what they want to know. This is what they need to know. It could be the best graphic designed in the world, and if it's information that they don't care about, it's they're not getting past page two, just as you said.

Ryan: Sure. And it, it also is where. I have certain products that I write a monthly comp stat, the, the bulletins some, certainly some, some monthly stats.

But from the beginning my focus on on the bulletins was my audience is for this product is patrol officers. Mm-hmm. And so it's really trying to deliver it just

for everybody in the department sees my stuff, but what specifically do those 35 40 officers need to see and what is that [00:31:00] information that, they want?

And they've been really good over the years of, of sending me that info. Maybe they're on a suspicious call that really end up being like a dumpster diver in the middle of the night, but they just got a weird feeling about. Maybe something else that they couldn't prove. Mm-hmm. And I'm getting those emails daily from two in the morning of them just saying, Hey, check this body cam, see if there's something more to that.

And a lot of times that's the information that I use to turn around to send out to, to the rest of the department.

Jason: Yeah. So I mean, and it's, and it, I mean, I think that's one of the, I think one of the, one of the beauties of working in such a small jurisdiction where you're dealing with 30, as you said, 30 officers, there is, while you are maybe the sole analyst and have to be the jack of all trades, almost everything goes through you.

So you're, you're aware of so much more of taking the temperature of the town because everybody's going through you [00:32:00] asking for stuff so you can remember what you did last month or two years ago , and it might be important now do you feel that way?

Do you feel that like, hey because it's smaller, it was a lot easier on you to kind of deal with all these, requests.

Ryan: Absolutely. I, I feel bad for analysts that are in really large departments that are sending maybe really good information out to 500 officers or a thousand officers, but you're not getting that immediate feedback of, was this helpful or not helpful?

Just because you're, you're separate from them and. Being in a mid-size agency, smaller agency I'm able to, to really get that immediate feedback of was this helpful or not helpful? And taking that information and using it for, my next, product.

Shawn: Hi, this is Sean Fisher and at my work we're known as the Nerdery. We're [00:33:00] proud of it. Embrace who you are.

Angela: Hi, this is Angela Becker Hines, and I just wanna remind you to give yourself a break. As analysts, we strive to have all the officers in our department

utilize our skills, and we typically want to be everything to everyone and do everything we can each day, but.

Work is much more manageable and less stressful if you embrace the fact that it's okay to take some time for yourself and maybe even to say no once in a while, in analysis and in life, you have to give yourself a break or you risk burning out and then you're no good to anyone. So just remember it's okay to give yourself a break.

Matt: Hi, I'm Matt Sessions learning and research consultant with the Cambridge Center for Evidence-Based Policing. And my public service announcement, is around pet peeves. And my pet peeve is when people say they love coffee and they only drink either fancy milk-based coffees with syrup. Or they just drink instant coffee.

I will even turn down an instant coffee if it's the only thing available and I'm [00:34:00] gonna have to put up with a no caffeine headache because I'm so stubborn around this, and I will die on that hill.

Jason: Alright, well let's get into a case then.

This brings us to your analyst badge story and for those that maybe knew the show, the analyst badge story is the career defining case or project that an analyst works. And so we're talking it's about 2015 now and you are working on a business burglary series.

Ryan: Yeah, I we had a series of business burglaries around the metro where the criminal was breaking into businesses kind of shortly after sunset and strip malls and office parks where it would not be abnormal to have.

A car parked out front, but also most of those businesses were closed, so it was easy for him to see whether anybody was still at the business or not. And I was putting together, I I, I [00:35:00] like to be the lead analyst for, for metro wide stuff to be helpful for, for other police agencies. And, and, but also more importantly for, for Eden Prairie, so that we have the best intel in-house.

And I was able to piece together kind of a, a, a timeline and start to forecast where I believe that the, the suspect was gonna hit. And when I went to my supervisor who wanted to do surveillance. To on the suspects to try to get a tracker on the car, but also to, to catch him in the act. I said he's gonna hit sometime this week but I can't tell you what day.

So if we are only gonna focus on one day, I am almost positive, 90% positive that he is gonna hit on Sunday. And if we do surveillance, it's gonna be sometime between 11 and, and three o'clock or four o'clock. And so that's when we did, we set up and did surveillance, and I was off by 10 minutes. The suspect hit [00:36:00] 10 minutes before 11.

But we were up doing surveillance since our, our detectives were there to, to catch him in the act. But I got, a lot of crap for that, of, of being, being wrong as they said. But it, it did help as a badge of an analyst badge of being held up of, of my value to the department, but also not only of, of helping catch a burglar, but of the efficiency of people's time.

Mm-hmm. To be able to forecast out where he was gonna hit and, and when he was gonna hit.

Jason: What made you so confident it was gonna be Sunday?

Ryan: It was well it was also Super Bowl Sunday, so we knew that. Mm-hmm. Really no one was gonna be it was gonna be quiet and not around, but mm-hmm.

When I had kind of figured out the pattern that he had hit I think the four previous Sundays he was, he was one of those burglars that was hitting a hundred businesses in a month or a month and a half. So he is fairly prolific. And that's where my confidence was, was, [00:37:00] was in, in just that pattern from the previous month.

Jason: Now, given that it was a burglary and it's happening on the weekend, why were you con confident that he was actually burglarizing on Sunday? Was the data such that people were figuring out, discovering it that it must have happened between this time and this time on a, Sunday?

Ryan: Yeah.

Some of it was just on Monday morning when they'd realized that the place was burglarized, that they would say it happened sometime over the weekend, but it was going through that pattern of, of sometimes there was surveillance video. Mm-hmm. To kind of narrow down when he was doing it, and then just knowing his.

Pattern of that. So even the ones that were just, it happened sometime over the weekend that we had good enough data for me to be able to say, well, even

though it happened sometime over the weekend, I'm pretty sure it happened Sunday, early afternoon. Yeah, yeah. I,

Jason: I, I really enjoy the, the burglaries. Not that, not that I wish for victims to be burglarized or anything, but I, I find them [00:38:00] fascinating that, that, that they're us, especially when you have a, a series and there's a pattern there's the, profile and, working its way out, just as you did here.

I, I really do find them. Fascinating.

Ryan: I agree. I love a good burglary series. A lot of times it's because you're trying to figure out kind of what that.

That pattern is usually, there's decent data, especially now of, of surveillance video. So you have really good timestamps of when it happened, but it also seems like burglars are kind of creatures of habit and so mm-hmm. Even if they're caught, once they get back out, they're gonna go back to that same type of victim of Yeah.

Whether it's residential burglars seem to do residential burglaries and business burglaries seem to do burglars, seem to do business burglaries and they don't overlap with each other. And we, we've had several burglars that we've caught three or four times now in my career where it's the same burglar hitting the same type of, of venues almost, where it's getting easy of like, oh, [00:39:00] this type of.

Burglary occurred in this office park during this timeframe. Let me go see if, if that burglar is, is out of custody and out of prison. Sure enough, and, and in this case, this burglar's name was Brian Williams, but we had had him again. This was, that case was 2013 and I think we had him again in 2018 and then again a year or two ago.

So you just know when he gets out, he is just gonna go back to the, those same types of victims.

Jason: Well, that's when you, you you go back to your pr skills and just go to corrections and like, Hey, can you just gimme a heads up when this guy's gonna be released next time?

Ryan: Oh, there's several that, that i, I keep an eye on of when their release date is.

Jason: That's really good. How many burglaries were there total in that case? Remember, I think in

Ryan: all of his series, it's usually been between 102 hundred burglaries that he's done, which, which is what his signature is. So that's how we know. That it's him, that there's [00:40:00] no strip mall burglaries or business park burglaries in the Twin Cities, and then all of a sudden everybody's getting hit.

Oh man. Yeah. So I remember after we had gotten him, I think in that 2013, if I remember correct, when he, he was at a halfway house in Rochester, and then I saw information from Rochester that they were getting hit with. It was like 75 or a hundred burglaries in a really short timeframe. And they had some suspect photos and right away it was helping Rochester PD out that, Hey, I'm pretty sure this is your suspect.

Jason: Well, there you go. Now we know why they go back. It's taken them, if they can get away with it a hundred times before they get caught, they're that's, oh man, that is, that is something that's, that's, that's a lot. Then for the businesses, you could do some target hardening and do some PR there of trying to do a pop project maybe of like, Hey, you might wanna tighten up your security here.

Ryan: Certainly we've done that, but in those types of [00:41:00] businesses, it's always a glass front door. So if you smashing that it's, it's hard to kind of harden it outside of making sure that you're not leaving the petty cash in the top drawer at the reception desk. Oh, man. Yeah. Interesting.

Jason: As I mentioned in your intro you've represented the, the police department and like in a couple of high profile events there, whether it's the national convention or the Super Bowl, or even the, the. United Healthcare, CEO funeral. So I guess just as you're the analyst there in, in those situations, what was your role,

Ryan: In those instances, like for the Super Bowl?

At the time the Minnesota Vikings headquarters were in Eden Prairie. And so that was the home of the Patriots for that week. And so it was providing social media monitoring and intel of certainly world events and any potential threats in, in the Twin Cities that may affect winter Park or the [00:42:00] Patriots.

And then also helping out in the emergency operation center with any potential threats and intel that was happening around all of the events that, that come with the Super Bowl and in the Twin Cities that week.

Jason: Hmm.

Ryan: All right.

Jason: Is that, did they win that one? The Patriots?

Ryan: Oh man. I believe

Jason: the Patriots did win that

Ryan: one.

Jason: , That's, that's a whole other level there, right? When you're talking about such, big events, obviously a lot of security aspect to those events and try to gather intel and a lot of real time decision making going on

Ryan: there is, and you are.

Working with, certainly the federal agencies had their Intel people mm-hmm. In the EOC and Minneapolis and St. Paul and Hennepin, Ramsey counties analysts. So everybody had a piece of it, and everyone is, is sharing intel. So you're kind of helping in that bigger global view, but also in the back of your head, also trying to look out for your home [00:43:00] agency and, and my home city of what Intel is happening.

Maybe events that could be popping up in, in say, Minneapolis or near the game. And how does that affect how security for in that case, the Patriots, but also visitors that were staying in our hotels or just the community in general?

Jason: Yeah. For is UnitedHealth stationed there? They

Ryan: are. So they're their campus, they have UnitedHealth and Optum, which is a subsidiary of UnitedHealth, but it's under their umbrella.

So two really large companies. , Their campus overlaps with us in the city in the north of us, Minnetonka. So I think UnitedHealth on paper, their headquarters are in Minnetonka, but a a lot of their campus is in Eden Prairie.

Jason: Hmm. Now, was that a, was that different for you given the fact that this was based on a murder?

A high profile murder getting into obviously a lot of [00:44:00] politics nationally known as opposed to the other ones super Bowl National Convention, not really stemming from violence per se.

Ryan: Yeah. In, in, in the early days of after the assassination of the UnitedHealth CEO of not knowing where that suspect is.

That incident happened in New York City, so individually I wasn't getting a lot of intel of what the FBI and NYPD knew, and so I was trying to figure out how to convey that intel. To our local law enforcement and then also UnitedHealth and their CEOs and their higher ups certainly live in the community of figuring out what were the threats and what was possible threats or what was e-board warriors that were just posting stuff, but they live on a coast and, and have no means or intent to, to come to Minnesota.

So it was that time was certainly for the [00:45:00] couple weeks after of just a lot of that intel of doing suspect profiles when we could figure out who the individuals were that were posting threats of, did they have the means or not?

Jason: Yeah. Now was he still on the loose when the funeral was going on? Do you remember?

He,

Ryan: god, they overlap a little bit, but he, I think it, he may have been on the loose still when the funeral happened or was, had just been in custody, but I don't know that everybody was totally confident if he, if the suspect had acted alone or had help.

Jason: Okay. Yeah, because I, I mean, I remember he made it outta New York City.

I remember it was a little bit of a manhunt and I can't, but it's, it's bad. It just happened last year. I just, I can't remember how long it was between, obviously it was a couple days, but I'm not sure how long it was from the time of the shooting to the time of the arrest.

. So was this, really the, first time you were dealing with.

Like such a, just like a high profile lots of potential [00:46:00] for, for violence kind of situation, for a lack of better term there? Or was there, was there other instance that you worked on recently?

Ryan: I mean, really in, in the Twin Cities? It was in 2020 of dealing with, in the middle of COVID was dealing with

george Floyd and Derek Chauvin. Mm-hmm. Riots and, and what transpired for a week, week and a half here in the Twin Cities of trying to delve through intel and protests and looting and riots and, and eventually the National Guard coming in of, of kind of that fast pace of things that we're developing sometimes by the minute or the hour, being a lone analyst of trying to parse out what was important to Eden Prairie officers in that moment, and how much is too much info, or how much is not enough info

Jason: From your vantage point, is what's going on in Minneapolis and St.

Paul? Is it is it far enough away or is it [00:47:00] No, , we're we're close enough that we really needed to be on alert.

Ryan: It was certainly close enough. Our officers were being sent in to help cover either Minneapolis respond to stuff because they were a little overwhelmed and or we were moving in to.

Suburbs that were closer to Minneapolis to help cover them while they were sending officers in into Minneapolis. So everyone was kind of moving a little bit closer to. To the epicenter of where major events were occurring. But also there was quite a bit of looting that was happening in the suburbs especially a couple days after everything had happened in Minneapolis and St.

Paul because law enforcement ended up swarming into the center of the cities and then events just came out farther from the middle of, of the metro.

Jason: Yeah. So maybe not something necessarily directly in your jurisdiction, but as you mentioned, you have resources going to help out neighboring jurisdictions [00:48:00] and there's obviously activity where Eden Prairie is, is involved in the response.

Ryan: Well, yes. I haven't, we haven't talked about it yet, but the Twin Cities analyst community is so incredibly supportive of one another. Mm-hmm. So we were, as a collective a hundred analysts were in chat rooms. Sharing intel in real time of not only what was happening in Minneapolis and and St Paul, but what

businesses were being targeted around the rest of the metro and being able to take that info that intel and create actionable intel for our officers.

So every morning analysts around the metro were essentially doing a roll call of, here are the businesses cell phone store was hit in this city here's suspect photos liquor store was hit in this, this city tire shop, whatever it was. Mm-hmm. And I could take [00:49:00] that every morning and send that out to our officers and our command staff of, if we're going to have extra resources in the, in the city instead of just randomly patrolling here are the businesses that have been hit in neighboring cities in the past 24 hours, maybe we should focus our resources on, on those types of businesses.

Jason: Yeah. Now did you find that it was. The, the looting was more coordinated as opposed to like, Hey I'm, I'm gonna go get some liquor. Let's just go, let's just go loot the liquor store.

Ryan: I think in the early days it was certainly kind of whatever was nearby where. Essentially the riots were happening.

Mm-hmm. But as a day or two went on, I did feel like it got more coordinated by certain groups that knew that there were certain businesses that they had had success with, with breaking in and getting products. Yeah.

Jason: Hmm. Kudos for all of you to, for having that.

The chat room still [00:50:00] still going on, right? That's that coming on board you said a hunter analyst. So kudos to all of you for, for coming together and sharing information. It is every

Ryan: day. Analysts in Minnesota. We use Bridge for Public Safety locally I think there's 270 some analysts now across Minnesota, Wisconsin, north and South Dakota.

But obviously the majority of the analysts are in, in the Twin Cities area. But a bank robbery occurs and we all know within sometimes as it's being dispatched out or a school threat occurs and, and we're sharing intel. In real time with each other, but everybody else is seeing it.

So we have that intel. If that call were to come into Eden Prairie, but a neighboring city had something similar, I have that, that information for, for our officers almost immediately. Yeah, the analyst network locally is, is incredible. It is nice. There's no territory issues. Everybody is out to help each other.

Nice. Nice.

Jason: [00:51:00] All right, well, let's move on then. As I mentioned in your intro, I do want to chat with you regarding writing and presenting, that's your discipline part of your education prior to being an analyst. So I, I don't know if you wanted to take it in a certain direction. I, I know you've taught.

This. And so I'll give you the, the floor talk about some of the stuff you're seeing or maybe pet peeves or where, where you can help our listeners.

Ryan: Wow. It's such a big question. It feels like a, a conversation for, for hours. But yeah, I I, I think it does come back to what we've talked about a couple times of just that who, what, where and when of getting straight to the point right away of what you're trying to convey.

Then backing it up after that. A lot of my bulletins are, are not telling officers what to do, but I'm giving them the information to kind of make that decision of what [00:52:00] specifically they should do. So it might be, hey, officers should be aware of a white male suspect in a surgical mask driving a 2010 Chevy White Chevy Malibu committing restaurant burglaries between two and 4:00 AM on, on Thursdays.

And sometimes I'm able to get that specific. And so if they're responding to an alarm call at a restaurant at 2:00 AM on a Thursday and they are red lights and sirens heading to that spot, but they see that white JV Malibu passing them, that they're turning on that instead of waiting to. To find out after the fact from surveillance video.

So it's really just trying to get, it's always the most important spot is first. Second most important is after that, and then from, for my interns it's always a struggle of going from that college writing to, we call it, we joke and, and say it's, it's kind of my style guide, but of again, that officer safety stuff of whenever we're mentioning weapons, that that's in bold and in red.

[00:53:00] And warrant info is, is always in bold. And anytime I mention the word officers, that's always capitalized because that usually, it doesn't need to be according to the AP cell guide, but that's trying to get their, again, drawing their attention to, to their eye. It's really just about taking as complex as you can get and parsing that down to.

To two paragraphs at most.

Jason: Yeah. I, I, I think that's, I think that's the real struggle is what to include, right? I think, I think you can, you can get there, but then you're always concerned, like we were talking about before, is leaving out something that you shouldn't,

Ryan: right. And, and it also depends on, on the context for it.

So what I always tell new interns is certainly somebody's criminal history is important when we're writing. Bulletins and, and background on an individual, but if they've been convicted of murder and second degree assault with a dangerous weapon, their DWI from five years ago [00:54:00] probably doesn't really matter for the patrol officer.

Mm-hmm. So it's, it's about what is the hierarchy of what's most important and those other things. It's really a judgment call and a lot of that comes with experience of what you're gonna include and what you're not gonna include.

Jason: Hmm.

. In terms of your interns, in terms of maybe even some other analysts, what are, what are some, besides what to include?

What are some other things that , you spot in some of their writing?

Ryan: I think it comes back to, again, kind of that visual appeal, but also an organization. So are you, when you're telling a story, how are you telling it? Is it gonna be in chronological order? Is it going to be what you believe is most important to least important?

Sometimes that. It, it depends on, on what you're what the series is or what the events are that you're, you're trying to talk about. Mm-hmm. It's so case by case basis of how far out do you go from [00:55:00] associates? How far out do you go with relatives? For me it's really, it's only if they're they're in the house and I know that they've recently been in the house, or I mean, a pet peeve mine is when analysts are using former addresses of an individual, but you're seeing that they're including an address that they were at 10 years ago.

That's not a mom or dad's house. So possible. So you're just kind of taking up space and it's easy for the reader to start to dismiss some of what might be really important information that you've included, because you've just included too much information.

Jason: You included something that the reader feels is not important and then they lose the trust in the document.

Exactly, yes. Yeah. How about in terms of just classic writing in terms of like set sentence structure and the grammar and, and everything else? Obviously you're your interns, I'm guessing they're. They're younger than 25 growing up Yes. With growing up [00:56:00] with social media and typing with your thumbs .

And so, what do you see in there? I

Ryan: see a tendency to really want to get into the story from a police report, thinking of maybe it's a, we have a PC pickup for a domestic assault suspect, and them really wanting to get into the weeds with kind of maybe what the domestic was about versus what the actions were and what the background is of that individual.

So it's going back into who's the audience? Is it for a a true crime podcast that wants to know every detail about everything? Mm-hmm. Or is it that officer safety of what that officer is walking up to when they're gonna arrest that individual? What do they need to know? About the incident that happened or that person's history.

So I think it's really, I mean, police reports are great to get sucked into because there's almost always really good stories in there, you know? Mm-hmm. Good or bad. Mm-hmm. But I think it's really easy to get sucked into those stories when you're writing [00:57:00] and, and trying to summarize some of those stories, which may or may not be, be pertinent , to the audience.

Jason: Yeah. So, outta curiosity, if if an unturn came to you with a bulletin and it was clearly sent through chat, GPT, what would your reaction be?

Ryan: Oh, man. I would, I would be, I'm not a yeller, but I would, I would be, I'd be pretty, pretty disappointed because of what, what I tell certainly interns, but new analysts is people are making decisions on the information that you provided.

Mm-hmm. So it has to be correct. And there are times where I'm just missing an intel gap. But you have to be forthcoming about that. That Yeah, I, I have all this info, but I honestly, I don't know what they're driving. Instead of me listing out two cars from that they previously had, but they have tabs that are expired from two years ago and they're probably not driving it.

'cause those officers might be [00:58:00] looking for those two cars and miss. A car that they otherwise would've paid attention to if I would've said, I don't know what they're driving, but there's so many times where I've had decisions were made swat wise officer wise of making arrests and officers have to testify to why they did what they did, and they're gonna point to the intel that I provided.

Mm-hmm. Or there's been times where I've testified on the stand about the work that I did and the confidence of the work that I did. So mm-hmm. Getting back to the check GPT stuff, I mean, certainly that, that is starting to come and I'm, I'm seeing a little bit of that and it's mm-hmm. Maybe kind of fine if it's summarizing, but it just isn't there yet.

And I, I mean, people's lives potentially are at, at stake by your work, and so you really can't cut corners.

Jason: Yeah. Well, I, I think too I, I have used chat, GPT. This year a lot to actually write the descriptions for the podcast episodes. Sure. And [00:59:00] it's gotten to the point where it knows what I'm asking for.

It knows the, the things that I look for . And , I'm not a good writer and never been, never been a good writer. And so for, for me, I mean, I can, I. I throw out down a lot of ideas, but it does, it does help out with cleaning up the mess that I made in terms of flow and sentence structure and grammar and all that, in a, in a way it could get to the point where, yeah, the, it's, it's not necessarily just creating everything from scratch, the bulletin, it's basically cleaning up what maybe the intern started.

Ryan: Sure. And I, I can see I, I can see use for that. I mean, a lot of times I am reusing the same template, obviously, from previous bulletins or previous warrant bulletins and, and so in a way that, that would be , maybe more efficient, but mm-hmm. We're also, we're a small enough agency that.[01:00:00]

I can tell you off the top of my head when our last homicides were, where our last robberies were. Mm-hmm. So it would be different I think, if I was in a major city and you just didn't have the physical capability to read every robbery report when you're putting out a bulletin about robberies.

Jason: Hmm. You manage the social media account for the police department? I do, yes. And I find that to be a whole other level of writing. 'cause now you're writing to communicate with the public. Not the patrol officer.

Ryan: It is. And that is I actually was looking at our social media kind of end of year stats earlier today, and I think we had 6.5 million views on posts on Facebook this year.

Wow. And again, it's Who's your, who are you writing to for the audience? And when I talk to other police departments. Our philosophy here is we're communicating with the residents of Eden Prairie. Mm-hmm. And, which seems super simple, but I think sometimes [01:01:00] agencies can start thinking about trying to create things that maybe are gonna try to go viral.

Mm-hmm. Or are, are part of a, a social media trend. And I'm not. Doing those and, and we've done those. But again, it's what's, what's the purpose and who's the audience. But yeah, it is, it is a totally different type of writing based on both the platform and, and the audience. Yeah.

Jason: I, I envision your baseball days, like trying to get, a little clever to try to get eyeballs on the, on the posts.

Ryan: Oh, yeah. Among my jobs when I was working for the baseball team, was writing ad copy for the daily newspaper in, in Duluth. And so every week , I would have to write a different kind of funny ad mm-hmm. About our next home stand or our opponent or the type of year, or the time of year or.

What promotions we were having which was always fun to be creative and, and figure out what, what worked and what didn't work. But you never really knew if in that, in [01:02:00] those days, if what you were writing generated directly to more ticket sales. Mm-hmm. But with social media, it is, it is rewarding to see when you're writing a post of did that get a lot of interactions or not get a lot of interactions and then tweaking that next post to, to maybe trying something different to try to get more interactions.

Yeah.

Jason: Now do you do you allow people to remark on the post? We do, yes. Yeah. So that's sometimes you're getting instant feedback. From people that you have no idea who are,

Ryan: Good or bad. And sometimes when you're a police department, you're posting some bad things that have happened in the community.

Yeah. And it is for me of reminding people inside the PD when there are negative comments, it is rare that those negative comments are. Residents that

are posting it. A lot of times it's people outside of the community that are posting. So again, who's our audience? Who are we trying to communicate to?

And, and those that [01:03:00] are outside the community that are commenting or viewing it, it, it just is the, the nature of social media. But to not take it to personally when somebody from Texas is upset with us for whatever reason.

Jason: I'm sure, I'm sure you get some characters on there. I'm sure you got a, you, is there a favorite, maybe a conspiracy theory or a favorite?

A favorite Oh, favorite post that you ha

Ryan: have in mind there? I always talk about it seems like everything right now in 20 25, 20 26 is can be made into be a controversial post. Mm-hmm. For the, except for animal posts. Anytime we post about ducks saved out of a sewer or a lost dog, or.

Yeah. Horses that got loose outta the one farm left in Eden Prairie. Those always seem to get a lot of traction and, and are almost universally positive comments.

Jason: Yeah, because I could just imagine, , I'm on the Nextdoor app. In my neighborhood, and geez, it [01:04:00] does, it's, it seems like it doesn't matter what somebody's posting it, there's certain people in there that will bring politics into it or all kinds of stuff into, into the conversation, so, oh, that

Ryan: is yep.

Absolutely there's a daily occurrence for us of, of trying to manage that.

Jason: Yeah. But I almost see it similar to your role when you were with the Department of Safety, right? Because there's, again, you are making the judgment. Of what to post. Right. And obviously are trusted not to post something that's gonna make the department look bad.

Ryan: Yes. And, and so we work really closely with our communications department with the city, and then we have a kind of special projects coordinator that does a lot of our log kind of longer blog posts. But yeah, it is, it is about the brand and sometimes it's a little bit back and forth with some of our officers where patrol is doing amazing work on the street and they want [01:05:00] to highlight some of that and mm-hmm.

Certainly we wanna highlight their good work too, but maybe it doesn't always fit into the, the brand that, that I have envisioned what our social media is, is gonna have. So. Mm-hmm. It would be pretty, I can't think of a time that we've ever had a post showing the cache and.

The guns that officers recovered laid out on the table were more likely to be posting about the car seat clinic or the lemonade stand, or a shop with a cop or, or the more positive things that officers are involved in.

Jason: Yeah. Now, from your perspective, doing this for so long, for analysts that maybe they're just starting out, maybe they're just getting assigned social media, maybe they're, maybe they're getting into even press conferences.

Do you have some, maybe even lesser known dos and don'ts when communicating with the public?

Ryan: On the social media stuff, it really is, a lot of, it's just dependent on kind of agency size [01:06:00] that mm-hmm.

The smaller the agency, the more they can kind of get away with maybe more jokes. Mm-hmm. And, and humor where a large metropolitan agency, it would be really hard for them to, to have a lot of humor on their social media page. And so a lot of it really just depends on, on the size of your agency.

But I think it's so important to just continue to promote the positive things that officers are doing in the community. Because there ends up being so much negative news about police officers that the news is, is there to, to jump on when officers are doing caught up in, in something bad or somewhere around the country.

And then it, it. It seems to be a portrayal that it's a blanket of, of everybody. Mm-hmm. 10 years ago, Eden Prairie had two local newspapers that would highlight those things, but those newspapers are gone, and so there's nobody to do that outside of us on our social media.

Jason: Hmm. No, that's, that's, that's [01:07:00] interesting.

No, it's, it's, it is always nice to see some, some good mixed with the bad. Right. Instead of I know if it, this thing, if it bleeds, it leads, but it is, it is kind of nice to, to see some good feeling stories, if you will.

Ryan: It's every, every day in our department we, we see the good things that officers are doing and so, yeah, that's, that's what I like to do is to highlight that.

Jason: Let's talk a little bit about presentations. 'cause that's a, that's another one. That I, I see you, you go to conferences, you, you see good presentations, you see maybe not so good presentations. And and even I, over the years there's some presentations that, man, I, I, going in, I thought I was, I thought this was gonna be a great presentation.

And it ended up just not, again, reading the body language, reading the, the reviews. I know that I didn't necessarily nail it like I thought I, I would. And so [01:08:00] even me in my late forties presenting now year after year after year, still, have room for improvement when it comes to presentations.

Well, the, I mean, there's,

Ryan: that's everybody. There's always room for, for improvement. I think that my, my. Best piece of advice is just enthusiasm. Just is so contagious. So it's hard even if you're not interested in the subject matter of a presentation, if that person that's that's in front of you is engaging and enthusiastic it's hard not to kinda lean in a little bit mm-hmm.

On what they're saying. And so I think it, a lot of it just comes down to your own confidence in the subject matter that you're talking about, and the confidence in yourself that you were chosen to give this presentation for a reason that you are Yeah. A subject matter expert. And to kind of show that confidence that you know what you're talking about, but to be so excited about [01:09:00] what you're talking about, it's hard not to have other people get excited too.

Jason: Yeah. And that people find this funny, but the, that I, my pep talk to myself as I'm about to go up is like. They're, they're sitting there going to listen to me, right? Like they're, here to see me kind of thing during at least this portion of the, presentation. That gets me up to that next, level in terms of, my presentation.

And so it, it, it, I read that, I don't know how many years ago, but that, that definitely has helped that little, that little acknowledgement that, this is who your audience is. And this is, who they're here to see

Ryan: it. It is totally true though, like mm-hmm. It's so simple. But I've given presentations in front of I was invited to a class several years ago to talk about

crime analysis at a college, and I showed up, had all this work done, and there was one student in the room for that presentation.

And I was not told that that was [01:10:00] gonna be that small of a presentation, but it still is that like, okay, well I'm here, you're here. Like, let's talk about what I love and I love being a crime analyst, so I'm gonna try to convince you that you should be a crime analyst too. Yeah. But I've also spoken in front of crowds of 700 people at a conference and mm-hmm.

And it's. Just kind of getting out of your own head a little bit of mm-hmm. Having that nervousness. And if you're, I like, I'm a walker, so at a presentation it's hard for me to be stuck at a podium. I wanna, I want to kind of move around the room and so that I can get a feeling for in what I'm saying, is it hidden?

Are people, like, do they have their heads up looking at you or are they all buried with their phone under the table? Just hoping that your, your 45 minute presentation is over. Yeah. So it's trying to kind of gauge a little bit of that and maybe start asking, you know. Questions of the audience or having a, asking a question and having a long enough pause to try to get that, that [01:11:00] engagement.

And that always seems to help.

Jason: Yeah. Do you know Randy Stickley? I don't. Yeah, , he's like that too. But he, he has the gift of gab though. Like, holy cow. He can, he can talk just about anything. I've just, I've seen him pre present. I've seen him work a crowd at the bar.

Like, I, like he just has the gift for gab and he is what you described there just reminded me of him. 'cause he is the same way. He likes to get out from the podium and have that connection and read the room. Yeah. It,

Ryan: it does make a difference. It makes a difference. Especially like I said, when, when maybe the audience isn't super into the subject matter, but maybe they're, they're into the presenter themselves.

Yeah.

Jason: Yeah. No, it, it's definitely good. How about advice on PowerPoints?

Ryan: I, it's, it's such a simple, so much simple advice to it that I think it just is so obvious, but it's trying not to have too much [01:12:00] text on the screen.

Mm-hmm. Because a lot of times it's gonna be really hard for people to see in, in the back of the room.

I try to have light backgrounds and white backgrounds because you just don't know what the room is gonna be like, or if the sunlight's gonna wash it out. Mm-hmm. A lot of times the bullets are really, really short and they're just placeholders for me to as reminders of what I wanna talk about on, on that slide individually.

I love, especially crime stuff, a lot of times what I'm talking about is interesting crime stories. It's, so people wanna see the body cam video if you can show that or the 9 1 1 audio or as best you can of crime scene photos. So especially when I have cases that have been closed and I can kind of pull a lot of that data for case studies.

I try to have as much kind of audio visual stuff as, as I can have. Hmm.

Jason: Yeah., I've struggled with that one as well because I, I'm usually pretty good at keeping the slides simple. But [01:13:00] I admit that sometimes I get a little bit too caught up and maybe the animation.

Of the, of the slide. 'cause I like to tinker with that, but, and it doesn't, it doesn't necessarily have the impact that I'd like it to have.

Ryan: I try to keep that animation as minimal as I can just 'cause inevitably either it's gonna go wrong or you're gonna forget Yeah. That you had that animation and you're gonna click past it or it's just gonna start right away.

Yeah. But it is like, again, trying to kind of that presentation of trying to move around, but I try to make those slides are just really reminders from. Almost for me than it is for the audience. Yeah, yeah. I,

Jason: I present it, I presented ones with animation and the, the reveal, like it was supposed to be this great reveal in terms of the, the section of the, the speech.

And somehow it played in reverse orders. The reverse, [01:14:00] the reveal was first. Oh. And, and I just had to just to pre, I just pretended that that's the way it was be and moved on. And I was like, oh man, how did that happen? Because obviously I went over it. It didn't do that when I went over it five times beforehand, but, or when you

Ryan: have a spelling error that you've looked at that presentation 50 times and you, and then you finally catch it, but you're up presenting when that happens.

Jason: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. That's, that's a, that's a tough one. But your point is about colors and is, is a good one, especially those that are presenting for the first time, because on your computer screen, that color, it may look very different than on a screen and a projector. Right? Oh,

Ryan: especially when you're in like a hotel ballroom and they've got a 10-year-old projector and you don't know what laptop is gonna be there.

Yeah. Yeah. I try to keep my slides as simple as possible.

Jason: Yeah. Yeah, that's [01:15:00] a, that's a, you get in, you can get in some danger as well that it doesn't it doesn't look quite as good as it did on your home laptop. Right. So, all right. Oh, very good. And then so I, you know what, I forgot to mention it before you mentioned interns, you mentioned that you have interns.

I think you mentioned yesterday when we were in the prep call that your series of. Interns that you've had of all found analyst jobs, is that correct?

Ryan: Yes. So I've had six interns and we're actually in the process of hiring the seventh one to come through, but all six had been hired full-time as analysts by police departments, local police departments, with the exception of my last analyst decided that she wanted to actually be a police officer, but only if she could stay with Eden Prairie.

So she mm-hmm. She's kinda in the academy role right now [01:16:00] to hopefully be hired next summer with, with our department. Yeah. So she, I don't know. Is she an asterisk

Jason: then?

Ryan: She, she is a little bit, but we, once she gets out on the road, she's gonna have a year of investigations experience more than probably all of our new officers that she's gonna have a lot more investigative experience than them. That's true.

Jason: So what do you feel that you are teaching these interns to have such a nice success rate coming out of the internship?

Ryan: I, I think part of it is I am not treating them like interns, but trying to treat them as equals really from day one.

So teaching them my style, of writing and my expectations. But what I tell them is that three months, in four months into this internship, you're going to, they're gonna be doing 85% of what I do on any given day. So what I'm asking them to do is no [01:17:00] different than what I have to do when, you know they're gone.

And so it's, it's high expectations. That they're going to be fully functioning six months into the internship and be able to, to leave and, and be a full-time analyst somewhere else in, in the Twin Cities or around the country. But it's, it's kinda teaching them that concise writing style, that presentation style that I have.

And how to communicate verbally with, with other officers and, and detectives in the department. 'cause you may have a really, really good idea, but it's gonna be how you communicate that, of how people are gonna respond. So it's kind of all encompassing of. Teaching them that stuff. And really the 15% that they're not able to do towards the end of the internship is really the more complicated kinda long-term cases that I'm gonna hold on to just because I may have to testify on that four years from now.

And so it's just easier if, if I keep [01:18:00] those kind of more long-term complicated cases.

Jason: Yeah. How long do you normally have the intern for?

Ryan: Anywhere from the shortest has been, I think six or seven months, but most are about a year.

Jason: Okay.

Ryan: Before, before they leave.

Jason: That's a pretty, that's a pretty good chunk that, I mean, that definitely gives you time to get into all the stuff you just described.

I was, I was thinking like one semester I was just like, wow, that's a lot. You're getting a lot accomplished in like three months.

Ryan: No for, except for the, the last intern, almost every intern has been either near gradu college graduation or has recently graduated from college.

Jason: All right. Very good.

Well keep up the good work teaching the next generation. Thank you. I really enjoy it. Yeah. All right. Well, let's finish up with personal interest then.

And I love it. I sometimes, I just love the fit, right? You're in Minnesota. What would I be thinking that you would be into? Yes. Hockey. You play hockey. You coach hockey, you eat [01:19:00] sleep hockey. So just I, I'm taking, I'm taking it. You, you've been playing hockey for quite a long time.

Ryan: Yep. Since since I was a little kid. My, my dad played hockey, got me into hockey, and then as soon as my kids were old enough to be in skates they both, mm-hmm. Were, were put out on, on the rink to, to play hockey. And I, I still coach my son's team. He is a Bantam now, which is eighth and ninth graders.

So I'm, I'm head coach for his hockey team.

Jason: Yeah. So when, when I, so I've lived in Baltimore, Cincinnati, Nashville. And I've heard of kids playing hockey, but they're very limited in terms of rink time. Like rink time is a big deal. And there's some guys that I, that I know that play as adults, they're playing in leagues where they're playing at like 1:00 AM.

I'm curious to know that up in Minnesota, I mean maybe, maybe the, you're not as fighting over ring time as much because there's more rinks,

Ryan: there is [01:20:00] considerably more rinks in, in Minnesota and especially in the Twin Cities. So I've. I play in two adult leagues. And we do have late times after the kids are done with the ice.

But those late times are usually 10 o'clock or 10 30 is is the latest. I've, I've had games but my son's ice time is a lot of nine o'clock at night, but nothing, nothing past midnight.

Jason: No. But as you mentioned yesterday too, that this has helped you build relationships with other officers, other, other networks because they may be into either coaching or playing themselves.

Ryan: Yeah, a lot of we have several of my coworkers here in the police department, detectives and officers all played hockey and all have kids in hockey. So there's a lot of hockey talk of, drills and coaching experiences. And actually in my cube, I have three hockey sticks and a couple of stick handling pucks that are just available for detectives as we're talking about a case and working, [01:21:00] working a case out of what still needs to be done.

It's kind of the, the thinking stick where detectives will come in and just stick handle with a, a, a stick handling ball and, and a stick as they're working through it with me. Oh, that's, that's great. It's very, very hockey centric here.

Jason: So what position do you play?

Ryan: Well, so I captain one team and I run another league. Mm-hmm. And so by default, a lot of times I play defense because mm-hmm. Not everybody wants to play defense, but yeah. I do love playing forward. And playing right wing. Mm-hmm. Just to have a little bit more scoring opportunities. But I do find myself playing, playing defense more often than not.

Jason: Yeah. Now do you watch, do you get to watch the pros much or you're you're too busy playing and coaching?

Ryan: Well, I, we watch a, a fair amount. We, I live in St. Paul, so we're mm-hmm. Close enough to we're the wild play. So, we'll, we'll often catch games either last minute where [01:22:00] we can maybe get discounted tickets.

And then the us world Juniors are gonna be held in St. Paul here in a couple weeks. And so we're already planning on going to a couple games, including with my, my son's whole team. So I think we got 40 tickets. Coming up next week. Nice. Nice. No, yeah. Go. USA

Jason: Yeah. For the, for the listeners., If you've never been to a hockey game and, and have the opportunity, I highly recommend it.

It is, I feel that it is a unique experience compared to the other sports. And, and you'll just be able to feel it right away.

Ryan: It is, it's my favorite live sport. Mm-hmm. Because there's just you're on the edge of your seat every time that there's gonna be a shot of not knowing whether it's gonna go in or not.

I've been to other. Pro, all the other pro sports several times. And I always felt like whenever I've attended a pro football game, I've just enjoyed it better being at home with all the stops and stuff. But yeah, I love being [01:23:00] watching a, a hockey game in person.

Jason: Very good, Ryan. All right.

Thank you for being here today. Thank you for all the work and contributions you are doing up there in Minnesota we're gonna finish up with words to the world. This is where you can promote any idea that you wish. Ryan, what are your words to the world?

Ryan: My words to the world are just.

So simple of being kind and making sure that you're giving back. And that's one of the reasons why I love coaching youth sports and also the mentorship and, and internships that I've, I've tried to provide that there were a lot of people that took a chance on me and, and gave me an opportunity to do a job that I could never imagine doing when I was in college.

But now I can't imagine doing anything different. And so it's I wouldn't be here if certain individuals hadn't given me the opportunity. And so I wanna make sure that I'm giving others that, that same opportunity.

Jason: Very good. Well, I leave every guest with, you've given me just enough to talk bad about you later.

[01:24:00] Perfect. But I do appreciate you being on the show. Thank you so much. And you be safe.

Ryan: Oh, thank you so much. I've had a great time.

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