

HOW TO SPOT AN INFILTRATOR



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Introduction

If you are part of an organization that has had some success at fighting for freedom in your country, then there's a pretty good chance you have an *infiltrator* in your group. An *infiltrator* can be a part of your organization, rallies, protests and on your zoom calls. An *infiltrator* could be anything from a government agent to someone in the movement who wants to exploit your organization for their own profit.

The only thing that is more destructive to your group than an infiltrator is worrying about an infiltrator. Nothing will destroy a group faster than when paranoia sets in, and the witch hunt begins.

What are the actions you can take to protect your group from these destructive forces? We'll walk through a few basic steps that will help you bulletproof your organization and keep it from being easily dismantled.

The first thing to keep in mind is that if you are not breaking the law, you have nothing to fear from an agent that would want to gather evidence against you. The most successful groups are aware that their meetings are being monitored by government agents or ideologically opposed people. These groups carry on as normal because they have nothing to hide. The best strategy is to ignore the infiltrator and let them go about their business. The best-case scenario is that the agent learns something from your organization and begins to change their viewpoint.

This is the best strategy because a good infiltrator will be next to impossible to pick out. The alternative is to mistrust everyone in your group, and in the absence of trust, nothing will move forward.

The downside is that this strategy falls apart if your infiltrator is on a mission to do more than gather intelligence. In cases like these, you need to be able to identify and remove these destructive forces.

As mentioned, it can be difficult to spot an agent. Instead of focusing on the person we should direct our attention toward patterns of behaviour. Eventually long-term behaviour patterns will reveal even the best of agents.

Let's look at the different types of infiltrators and use these classifications to help define behavior patterns.

Types of Infiltrators

Empire Builders/Profiteers – People who do not work for another entity and are usually like-minded. However, they are not aligned with your goals. This type of infiltrator is only pretending to be onside to use your resources and build something for themselves.

Narcissists – Like-minded but have a need to control and be important. They are usually on the same side, and believe they are doing good, but are nonetheless, destructive.

Information Gatherers – These agents are working for someone else. They are there to gather intel on your group and your members. They could be government agents, journalists or spies for an opposed group. They are usually non destructive.

Destroyers – These are the destructive forces that have a strong mission to dismantle your group. They are often subtle, careful and hard to handle.

Although there can be subsets, these are the main types of people/agents who can do massive damage to your group.

Patterns of Behaviour

Now that we have identified the types of *infiltrators*, the next step is to use the listed categories to watch for the different behaviour patterns.

Onside Infiltrators

Empire Builders/Profiteers

These are probably the easiest to pick out and deal with. The main pattern to watch for is constant taking without giving. They will sit in a group without offering to help. The difference

between an info gatherer and an empire builder is that the profiteer will also pitch their mission and try to divert resources towards their own projects. It is this diversion without reciprocation that is extremely easy to spot.

Narcissists

They are usually like-minded and may want to achieve the same goals; but, a narcissist is more destructive than a 'controlled opposition info gatherer'. Narcissists will quickly try to take control and lead. They are not collaborative and feel that their ideas are the only ones of importance. They will often try to use shame and belittling to improve their own position. They are often bullies and do not listen to reason. Patterns to watch for include: inconsistent information (constant lies), insults, not willing to give information, manipulation and displays of ego. The only way to deal with a narcissist is to ask them to leave before they get into a leadership position.

Controlled Opposition Infiltrators

Information Gatherers

These agents are hard to identify. They are often quiet and do not want to be noticed. They do not speak at meetings and often do not show up to events. They are hard to spot because they usually fly under the radar. They can be involved for months before anyone notices that they aren't really involved in your projects. Their main mission is to get intel on teams and team members. They are also listening to your plans and reporting back to whomever wants the info. Once noticed, the best way to separate an info gatherer from someone who is shy, not confident, or not committed, is to ask them to get involved. An info gatherer will try to dodge as best as they can. Ultimately, the situations that expose an info gatherer are asking inappropriate questions and overstepping their boundaries to attempt to uncover illegal activities. When your group is not involved in anything illegal, the info gatherer will get impatient and try to dig something up. More often than not; this will be the thing that exposes them.

Destroyers

Destroyers have been saved for last because they are the most destructive and they have many tools that they use to try to destroy your group. Some of the main tactics to watch for include:

Controlling – The destroyer will work their way into leadership. The main tactic is to control the group and steer it in a direction that is ineffective. They will keep directing the group towards goals that do not seem to make sense or get anything done. Unlike narcissists, they will be easy to work with, friendly and are often charming and outgoing. They will be good at convincing people that what they are doing is valuable. The outcome will be like running on a treadmill. A lot of running but you don't go anywhere.

Stalling – This type of destroyer does not try to lead but will often end up on a leadership team or steering committee. Their sole tactic is to argue and cast doubt on every single action plan. They will do their best to keep your team in an endless loop of debate to achieve "paralysis by

analysis". The pattern to watch for is consistent negativity and putting down the ideas of others. There is also a chance that this is just a well-meaning negative person; but, either way, it may not be a personality that is best suited for a steering committee role.

Division – This tactic is used to divide the group. They will often gossip and pit people against each other. They will try to get allies onside and create factions within the group. The pattern to watch for is inconsistent information flowing through your group. If you have different "camps" that are repeating conflicting information, then there is a very good chance that there is someone behind the fracturing of info. Once you identify the fracture your only recourse is to trace the information back to the source. Even starting down this path will often make the divider leave, because they know they are no longer hidden.

Bulletproofing Your Organization

Now that you know what to look for, the final step is to take the proper measures to protect our groups. Ironically, the best defense is to not focus on the infiltrator. The agent's only job is to get you to NOT focus on your goals. If you take the bait, they win.

The best countermeasure is to be clear about what your goals are, why you want to achieve them, and utilize people who are good at keeping the group on track. An infiltrator will be less likely to penetrate and destroy your group, if you have a clear, concise, and effective mission statement combined with a focused goal plan. The clearer you are with your own goals, the easier it is to spot someone who is trying to derail your group.

This is the reason every group should begin with a mission statement session to clearly identify their direction. Once identified, it is imperative that everyone in the group is also clear about direction. This is the best protection against infiltrators that you can provide for your group.