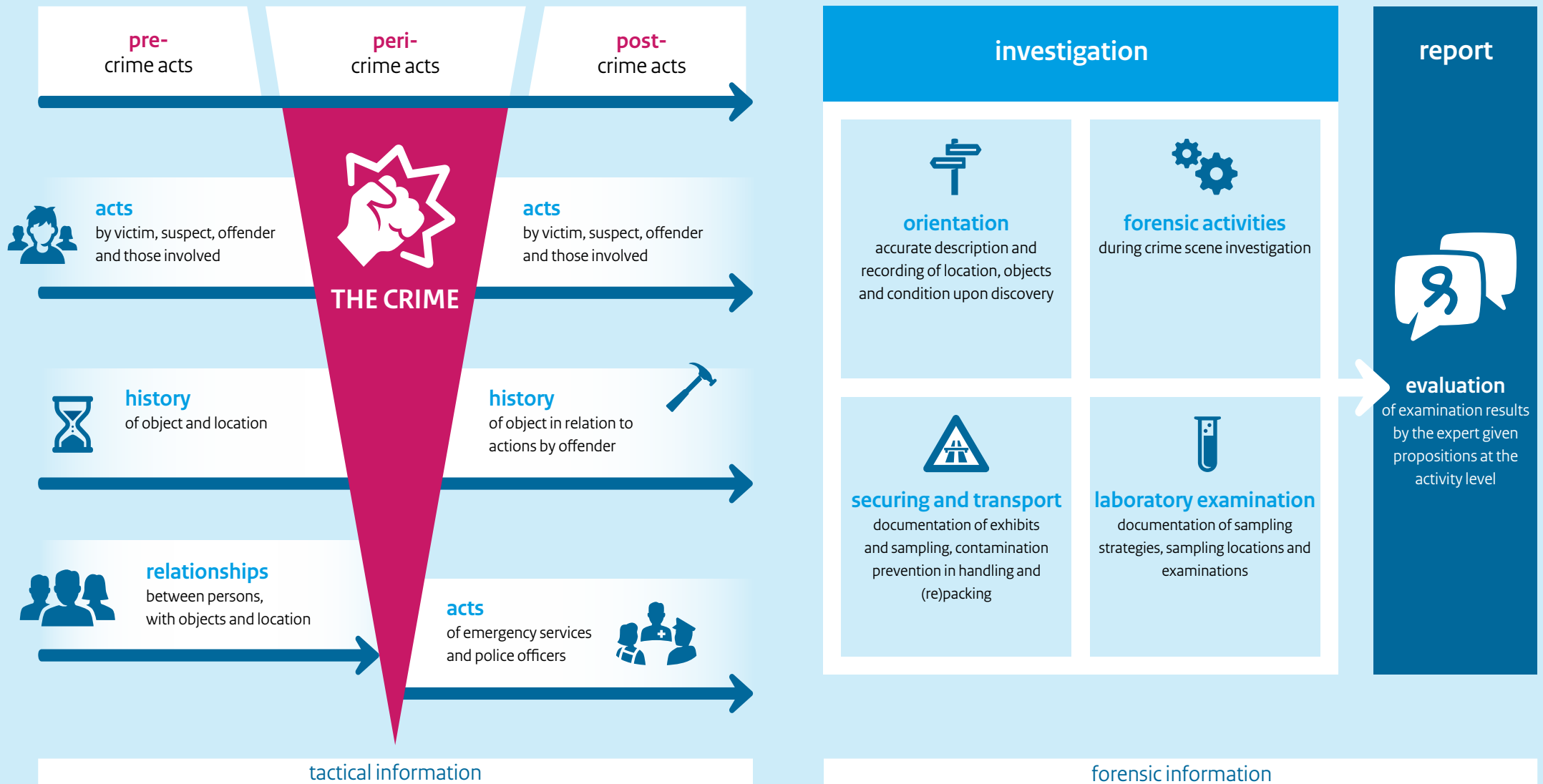




Context information when evaluating examination findings at the activity level





Context information when evaluating examination findings at the activity level

Notes on infographic

Significance of traces

The significance of traces found in relation to a crime is sometimes not clear. Thus traces found, or not found, raise questions about what may have happened. The prosecution and the defence may differ in their views on the matter. This dispute usually involves what actions a suspect did or did not perform.

When these differences of opinion are presented in the form of propositions to a scientist, the scientist may examine how well or how badly the results of the examination fit these propositions. We call this 'an evaluation of the examination results given propositions at the activity level'. An example of propositions:

H1: Suspect dragged the victim by the sock-clad ankles.

H2: Suspect did not drag the victim by the sock-clad ankles. Another person has done this.

Circumstances of the case

To perform the evaluation, a scientist needs information about the circumstances of the case. One can divide this information into four categories:

1. acts allegedly carried out by individuals involved prior (pre-crime), during (peri-crime) and after the crime (post-crime). This also includes actions by third parties and aid workers.

2. The history of the sampled site and objects. For example: who do the objects belong to? Have they been cleaned? And when was that?
3. The relationships between persons involved and between them and locations or objects. For example: did the victim and the suspect know each other? And if so, when did they last have contact with each other? How often did the suspect visit the victim's home? And with what objects did he make contact during those visits?
4. The forensic investigation from the crime scene to the laboratory and an accurate documentation of everything that happened to the objects or samples. For example: what does the location look like? Where exactly were objects found? How were they secured? How were they packaged and transported? Where exactly were the samples taken and why? What examination was carried out, and how?

Evaluation

For the evaluation, the scientist uses this information together with scientific literature and knowledge and experience of with previous forensic examinations to assign probabilities to how the trace material may have behaved given the different scenarios. The scientist records this in a report.

The scientist can discuss with you exactly what information is needed regarding the investigation in your case.