



**Brian Willingham, CFE**  
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## Professional Experience

A licensed private investigator with over 20 years of investigative experience in surveillance; pre-transaction due diligence (domestic and international); corporate fraud; in-depth open source and public record research; white-collar criminal defense; and complex litigation support.

### Diligentia Group (Katonah, New York)

President and Founder, August 2009 through Present

Founder and president of Diligentia Group, a boutique investigative firm serving law firms, financial institutions and decision-makers with information and facts through resourceful examination and investigative methods to accomplish the client's objectives.

### Gryphon Strategies, f/k/a Gryphon Investigations (White Plains, New York)

Director and Partner, March 2001 through Jul 2009

Served as an investigator, director and partner for Gryphon Strategies (f/k/a Gryphon Investigations), overseeing a team of investigators, coordinating investigative efforts, monitoring workload, and distributing new casework.

### Major League Baseball (New York, New York)

Assistant Photo Editor, May 2000 through March 2001

### New York Football Giants (East Rutherford, New Jersey)

Intern, Communications Department, August 1999 through January 2000

### Photo File, Inc. (Yonkers, New York)

Assistant Photo Editor, 1994 through 1998

## Education

### University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Bachelor of Science, *Cum Laude*, May 2000

## Professional Affiliations, Training and Activities

- New York Private Investigator License, Diligentia Group Inc., ID Number 11000149418
- Certified Fraud Examiner since October 2010
- Social Media Filtering & Digging for Docs and People, February 2020
- Reid Technique of Interviewing and Interrogation, February 2004
- Co-Authored a Private Investigator Code of Ethics
- Author of Master Class on Open Source and Public Record Research

## Presentations and Webinars

- *How to Utilize Open Sources / Public Records for Investigation in the United States* at the 24th Annual ACFE Fraud Conference (June 2013)
- *Background Investigations - Beyond the Basics* for I-Sight (2013)
- *Investigator's Guide to Searching Court Records* for I-Sight (2014)
- *Handling Ethical Issues in Investigations* for I-Sight (2015)
- *Attorney's Guide for Conducting Internet Investigations* at Pace Law School (2014) and for SMI Aware (2016)
- *Open Source Intelligence Webinar* for PI Education (2017)
- *Open Source Intelligence Research* for the Society of Professional Investigators (2017)
- *Background Investigations 101* for PI Education (2018)
- *The Business of Investigations—How to make money as a Private Investigator* for PI Education (2018)
- *Ethics and Professionalism for Private Investigators* for PI Education (2020)
- Two-time presenter at Montclair State University to Entrepreneurship students (2022 and 2023)

## Other Related Experience

- Named one of a handful of young, promising Certified Fraud Examiners under 40 in 2013.
- Conducted training sessions for international investigative firms and a large multi-national insurance company relating to public record and open source research.
- Authored over 200 articles and blog posts for the private investigator community relating to investigative techniques, methods, legal issues, ethics and business practices.
- Attended industry conferences including the annual conference for the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (2013, 2015 & 2017) and the Open Source Intelligence Skills-Building Conference –OSMOSIS (2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 & 2022).

## Selected Publications and Podcasts

### Publications

Willingham, Brian. (2023, February 14), *Two Powerful Business Lessons From One Painful Crossfit Workout*, Pursuit Magazine.

<https://pursuitmag.com/two-powerful-business-lessons-from-one-painful-crossfit-workout/>

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<https://pursuitmag.com/my-biggest-struggles-with-running-a-pi-business-and-how-i-overcame-them/>

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<https://pursuitmag.com/what-a-down-year-taught-me-about-marketing/>

Willingham, Brian. (2020, June 10), *For Love Of The Game*, Pursuit Magazine.  
<https://pursuitmag.com/origin-stories-for-love-of-the-game/>

Willingham, Brian. (2020, May 13), *A Small Bank Saved My PPP, But I'm Sticking With The Big Banks*, LinkedIn.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/small-bank-saved-my-ppp-im-sticking-big-banks-brian-willingham-cfe/>

Willingham, Brian. (2020, May 9), *A Mother's Day Lesson To Small Businesses, From A Swordfish*, LinkedIn.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/mothers-day-lesson-small-businesses-from-swordfish-willingham-cfe/>

Willingham, Brian. (2020, May 5), *Selling Ourselves Short Is Not A Good Long-Term Survival Strategy*, Pursuit Magazine.  
<https://pursuitmag.com/selling-ourselves-short-is-not-a-good-long-term-survival-strategy/>

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<https://pursuitmag.com/making-ethical-decisions-in-a-sea-of-unethical-business-practices/>

Willingham, Brian. (2019, January 17), *10 Years of Sales Info From My Private Investigation Business In 8 Charts*, LinkedIn.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-years-sales-info-from-my-private-investigation-8-willingham-cfe/>

Willingham, Brian. (2019, January 16), *Takeaways From 10 Years Of Sales Data From My Private Investigation Business*, Pursuit Magazine.  
<https://pursuitmag.com/takeaways-from-10-years-of-sales-data-from-my-private-investigation-business/>

Willingham, Brian. (2017, December 19), *What 15 Years Of Online Investigative Research Taught Me*, Pursuit Magazine.  
<https://pursuitmag.com/what-15-years-of-online-investigative-research-taught-me/>

Willingham, Brian. (2017, September 8), *Getting Out Of A Blogging Rut*, LinkedIn.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/getting-out-blogging-rut-brian-willingham-cfe/>

Willingham, Brian. (2017, June 29), *Why Attorneys Don't Hire Private Investigators*, Pursuit Magazine.  
<https://pursuitmag.com/why-attorneys-dont-hire-private-investigators/>

Willingham, Brian. (2016, November 16), *The One Thing A Modern-Day Investigator Must Do...*, LinkedIn.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/one-thing-modern-day-investigator-must-do-brian-willingham-cfe/>

Willingham, Brian. (2016, November 3), *20 Ways To Bring Your Investigative Game To The Next Level*, Pursuit Magazine.

<https://pursuitmag.com/20-ways-to-bring-your-investigative-game-to-the-next-level/>

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<https://pursuitmag.com/embracing-past-present-future-investigations/>

Willingham, Brian. (2015, February 18), *5 Reasons Law Firms Are Not Hiring You*, Pursuit Magazine.

<https://pursuitmag.com/5-reasons-law-firms-are-not-hiring-you/>

Willingham, Brian. (2014, June 5), *Growing Your Client Base – A Lesson From Experience*, Pursuit Magazine.

<https://pursuitmag.com/growing-your-client-base/>

Willingham, Brian. (2014, January 16), *5 Marketing Strategies Investigators Can Master By Thinking Like A Dominatrix*, Pursuit Magazine.

<https://pursuitmag.com/private-investigator-marketing-strategies-like-dominatrix/>

Willingham, Brian. (2013, June 27), *A Slave To The Billable Hour*, Pursuit Magazine.

<https://pursuitmag.com/a-slave-to-the-billable-hour/>

Willingham, Brian. (2013, May 1), *5 Reasons Why Every Private Investigator Needs To Write*, PINOW.com.

<https://www.pinow.com/articles/1649/5-reason-every-private-investigator-needs-to-write>

## Blogs

Willingham, Brian. (2023, February 2), *Why Does A Deep Background Cost So Much?*, Diligentia Group.

<https://diligentiagroup.com/background-investigations/deep-background-check-cost/>

Willingham, Brian. (2023, January 26), *3 Investigative Takeaways From An Amazing True Crime Podcast*, Diligentia Group.

<https://diligentiagroup.com/legal-investigation/investigative-takeaways-true-crime-podcast-bone-valley/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/background-investigations/mistakes-george-santos-background-investigation/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/due-diligence/private-equity-background-investigation-george-santos/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/latest-news/a-tribute-to-mary-shannon-little/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/legal-investigation/tools-modern-private-investigator/>

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Willingham, Brian. (2021, November 18), *9 Mistakes Private Investigators Make When Doing Background Investigations*, Diligentia Group.

<https://diligentiagroup.com/due-diligence/mistakes-background-investigations-private-investigators/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/legal-investigation/four-screen-capture-tools-for-private-investigators/>

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Willingham, Brian. (2021, January 19), *The Power Of Sharing Everything You Know*, Diligentia Group.

<https://diligentiagroup.com/latest-news/the-power-of-sharing-everything-you-know/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/legal-investigation/are-private-investigators-permitted-to-cross-state-lines/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/legal-investigation/shady-private-investigator-medical-records/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/background-investigations/what-can-be-revealed-in-a-background-investigation/>

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<https://diligentiagroup.com/latest-news/how-i-became-a-private-investigator-2/>

Willingham, Brian. (2020, May 11), *Do Private Investigators Need To Be Licensed?* (2020), Diligentia Group.

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