



SAFETY CULTURE DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION



INTRODUCTION

Let's start with an irrefutable fact; that today's world (workplaces and personal spaces alike) is less safe, filled with greater risks, and is otherwise more dangerous than the world of even a few years ago.

Now some may be saying..."is that really an 'irrefutable' fact?" Well, let's examine a few metrics that substantiate our initial assertion.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 20,500 workers in Private industry experienced trauma from non-fatal workplace Violence in 2020. These incidents required days away from work.

Of those victims, who experienced trauma from workplace violence:

- **73% were female**
- **62% were aged 25-54**
- **76% worked in the healthcare and social assistance industry**
- **22% required 31+ days away from work to recover**

Also, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 392 U.S. workers Were workplace homicide victims in 2020. Of those victims:

- **81% were men**
- **445 were aged 25-54**
- **28% were Black**
- **18% were Hispanic**
- **30% were performing retail or customer service related tasks**

TOPICS

- Situational Awareness
- Conditioned Response
- Securing Your Facilities
- Communication
- Foreseeability
- Red Flags
- Workplace Safety Culture
- Backgrounds
- Drug Testing

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

"Situational Awareness" is exactly as the words imply. You're aware of your surroundings, whether good or bad. We like to compare levels of situational awareness to the very relatable activity driving a car. These are applicable in personal or work-related situations.

Levels of awareness

- tuned out (driving example: distracted by items - cell phones, nav. system or air pods)
- relaxed awareness (aware of surroundings... calm, but ready)
- focused awareness (good road conditions, but in an unfamiliar area, heavy traffic)
- high alert (stressful...think of driving in a downpour)

**With the increasing levels of violence on our streets and in our businesses it's essential to remain in a state of "relaxed" or "focused" awareness at all times.*

Recognize each situation and venue

- what are the risks
- know your ingress and egress routes
- know your secondary and non-traditional exits (windows)

CONDITIONED RESPONSE PROTOCOL

- **Experts note:** An appropriate response in a highly stressful critical incident must include training and functional exercises to build a conditioned response under stress.
- Schools have demonstrated the reduction in harm through successfully practicing lockout, lockdown, barricade, evacuate – most schools are now mandated to drill by law.
- Understand you will not respond as you think you might under stress unless ***you practice and build a conditioned response.***
- ***Drills help build mental memory*** to help you override the overwhelming physiological response(s) to stress.

Today's movies glorify how the hero performs in a calm and cool fashion in critical moments, but that is rarely the case in the real world... especially for your average person. Adrenaline and survival instincts take over; which if not tempered effectively with conditioned responses (muscle memory and ingrained knowledge), will likely lead to less-than-positive outcomes. Practice, Practice, PRACTICE!

HARDENING THE TARGET

What have we learned that works:

- Schools have the most experience, practice and understanding
 - Lock and alarm the doors to your facilities
 - *Uvalde (unlocked doors) and Virginia Tech (no locks on doors)*
Were examples of 'failure to prepare' that led to loss of life.
- Limit access and have access control which is monitored daily
- Provide tools to barricade in seconds (doors open in or out?)
- Set up the room to more easily barricade in a rapid manner
- Provide tools to counter a threat when necessary – think about this beforehand

Monitor and check security monthly to ensure policies and procedures are being followed

Practice and drill to make certain what you have provided actually works as you planned

55% of employees claim that they are unaware or unsure of employer's emergency preparedness plan(s).

COMMUNICATIONS

The single most important factor in every crisis situation:
(75% of workplace assailants enter through the front door)

- Does your communication work throughout your facility or facilities?
- Do you have communication redundancy in place? (If front desk compromised)
- Do you use radios with earpieces? (ex: if a fire alarm goes off or you are in a manufacturing facility)
- How do you communicate if it is not a fire when the fire alarm goes off
 - Tell them to stay locked down (Parkland FL shooting)
- Do you test the effectiveness of your communications monthly? (If not, why?)

Nearly 80% of companies are unprepared in the event of an active shooter incident. (Even though 62% of respondents view an active shooter scenario as a "top threat.")

FORSEEABILITY

- **More lawsuits are being filed against employers. (Re: mass shooter events)**
- **More frequent mass shootings = greater focus on foreseeability**
- **"Knowing" or "has reason to know" that the acts are occurring or about to occur**
 - **Prior Red Flags (e.g. drug use, statements, actions, social media)**
- **2020 case of Wagner v. Planned Parenthood Federation of America, Inc.**
 - **Court of Appeals noted plaintiffs presented specific evidence that the risk of an active shooter was known to the owner of the facility**
 - **Expert testimony noted security measures could have been implemented which may have prevented the attack or mitigated its consequences**
 - **Court of Appeals found that the shooting was a foreseeable event**
- **Insurance companies are covering enormously high sums.**
 - **\$800 million (MGM and its insurers -Las Vegas mass shooting)**
 - **\$75 million (Miller Coors mass shooting)**
- **Criminal Acts Exclusions are now more common for insurance companies**
 - **Bars coverage for bodily injury or property damage resulting from a criminal act or omission, regardless of perpetrator mental capacity to appreciate the criminal nature or wrongfulness of the act or omission.**

More than 50% of U.S. Workers agree that their company management does not take adequate steps to keep them safe at work. According to a recent survey 42% of workers said they think that their Building management won't consistently enforce health & safety Guidelines and 30% think that management will not invest in technology Designed to make working "in person" safer following COVID-19.

RED FLAGS

- APPEARANCE
- ATTITUDE
- SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS
- PAST DRUG ISSUES / USE
- MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS / CRISIS
- SIGNIFICANT LOSS (PERSONAL OR EMPLOYMENT)
- GRIEVANCE (DISCIPLINE, ANGER, HUMILIATION)
- VERBALIZING VIOLENCE TO OR TOWARDS OTHERS
- RESEARCHING OR TALKING ABOUT OTHER VIOLENT INCIDENTS

A majority (55%) of Human Resources professionals do not know if their organization has a workplace violence prevention program

WORKPLACE CULTURE

Security and safety is unique to each business and each industry

- There is no "one size fits all" safety & security solution.
- Security and safety must come from the highest level of the organization for effectiveness
- Provide training to all employees
 - Workplace violence, harassment, intimidation
 - De-escalation
- Provide information to all employees on any ongoing domestic violence situation
 - All employees must know there is a potential threat to the workplace
- Have multiple ways to report incidents and report anonymously
- Have a plan in place for any suspension or termination
 - Inform all employees regarding any hostile or threatening termination

The average "out of court" settlement for a single workplace violence incident is approximately \$500,000 USD

BACKGROUND SCREENING

- Risk – who you bring into any organization
- Knowledge of past behavior – strongly indicative of future behavior
- In the current rush to hire employees, organizations are sacrificing the safety and security of all employees
- The difficulty and time spent in dealing with a problem employee once hired can be avoided with a comprehensive background check
- It is most definitely worth the time and effort to hire employees with good character

DRUG TESTING

If you have theft in your place of business, you have drug use.

- If you have drug use, you have guns on your premises (on the person or in their vehicle)
- With the level of violence in our society escalating daily, is it worth the risk to not test for drugs?
- The overwhelming majority of violence in the workplace involves the use of drugs
- Drug testing provides a rapid result; can be done for pre-employment, post-accident, reasonable suspicion
 - Those using drugs display behavioral indications (harassment, intimidation)
 - A closely followed drug testing protocol identifies and addresses problem behavior
- The use of drugs is a major red flag and a strong indicator of potential violence
 - The reason for Red Flag laws – guns taken away from violent or potentially violent individuals
 - Red Flag laws apply to individuals who are overwhelmingly involved in drug use
- The safety and security of all persons in the workplace is greatly enhanced with a drug testing program

CONCLUSION

- **Having a secure workplace increases worker retention.**
- **Knowing prior and current employee behavior through safety protocols diminishes the risk of violence.**
- **Foreseeability helps mitigate rapidly increasing liability claims.**
- **Appropriate actions employers should take to minimize risk are being clarified through the courts.**
- **Providing a secure workplace has never been more important.**

From a strictly dollar cost perspective, workplace violence results in Hundreds of billions in lost revenue for American businesses, every year*

Does not account for performance decrease, loss of future business, or reputational damage

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