

AVOIDING AND DEALING WITH VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

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INTRODUCTION

- Define the problem
- Behavioral characteristics
- Preventive measures
- Handling the potentially violent employee
- Homeland security active shooter advice
- Scenarios

THE PROBLEM

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SCOPE OF VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 6 million workers worldwide were subject to physical violence while at work or on duty
- In the United States, approximately 500,000 incidents of workplace violence occur every year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Over the past 14 years, on average, 425 + workers a year are killed in the U.S.
- Between January 2009 and July 2015 there were 133 mass shootings
- Shootings Account for 78% of all workplace homicides
- 83% of these shootings occurred in the private sector

FBI OFFICIAL REPORT ON ACTIVE SHOOTERS



UNDERSTANDING CAUSES AND CHARACTERISTICS

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TYPES OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Physical Violence

- Arson
- Assault
- Harassment
- Homicide
- Rape
- Robbery
- Vandalism

Non-physical Violence

- Verbal
- Visual
- Written

Domestic Violence

SOURCES OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Internal Sources

- Supervisors
- Co-workers
- Contractors
- Vendors
- Service Providers

External Sources

- Criminals
- Applicants
- Customers
- Former Employees
- Social/Family
- Present/Past Friends and Spouse
- Product/Service Related

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

- On the job problems; does not accept criticism; and blames others for his/her poor performance
- Unexplained increase in absenteeism, and/or vague physical complaints
- Increased severe mood swings, and noticeably unstable or emotional responses
- Frequently loses temper; personality conflict with one or more co-workers; or holds grudges
- Increasingly talks of problems at home
- Increase in unsolicited comments about violence, firearms, and other dangerous weapons and violent crimes
- Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Exhibits signs of depression/withdrawal

PRECIPITATING EVENTS

- Traumatic event
 - Death of an person important to the shooter
 - Domestic issues
- Extreme stress
 - Work stress
 - Home stress
 - Financial stress
- Career dilemma, dead end job
- Loss of job

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

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PROPER HR PRACTICES

- Perform background checks when hiring
- Proper policies
 - Anti-harassment policy
 - Anti-bullying policy
 - Complaint procedure
 - Anti-retaliation policy
- Train supervisors and teach them conflict resolution skills (See Attachment 1)
- Uniformly enforce rules
- Tip Line
- Assessment Team

PREVENTION OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

- Preventive measures can reduce chance of an incident occurring in the workplace and reduce exposure to liability if an incident occurs
- Be proactive:
 - Develop a plan in advance to respond to an observed or reported event
 - Pay attention to threatening or inappropriate behavior
 - Increase physical security
 - Limit access to workplace or security checkpoint (i.e. key card)
 - Prohibit employees from bringing weapons into the workplace

BANNING WEAPONS

- Each state has its own firearms rules
- Michigan employers can prohibit employees from carrying concealed weapons in the workplace while they are performing their duties
- Ohio
 - Employers can create policies that restrict or prohibit employees from carrying concealed weapons on employers' property or premises, including in employer-owned vehicles
 - Employers also can, but are not required to, implement policies that allow licensed employees to carry firearms in the workplace, including in employer-owned vehicles
- Check your state law regarding personal protective orders
- Workplace searches

TRAINING

- Educate supervisors and workers generally to be alert to various warning signs
- Encourage employees to report any incidents of threats or other unusual behavior that may suggest the possibility of a future violent act and stress need to be proactive
- Explain penalties for violating policy
- Emphasize non-retaliation assurances
- Cover basic emergency procedures in the event of an incident

HANDLING THE VIOLENT EMPLOYEE

- Managing Employees
 - Supervise
 - Counsel
 - Evaluate
 - Discipline
- Investigate Complaints of Violence

WHAT TO DO IN AN ACTIVE SHOOTER SITUATION

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HOMELAND SECURITY ACTIVE SHOOTER ADVICE (ASI)

- Run
- Hide
- Fight
- CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO

RUN

- If you think you can get to an exit, then do so
- Run away from the sound of gun fire
- Call 911 when safe
- Help others escape if possible
- If you encounter police, **keep your hands visible** and follow commands
- Remember the police do not know if the shooter is trying to escape

HIDE

- If escape is not feasible, find a safe place to hide
- Stay out of view from shooter
- If in an office, lock the door, barricade room if possible
- Keep quiet, silence all cell phones
- If the shooter is nearby, try to hide behind anything available (cabinets desks, closets, etc.)



FIGHT



- As a last resort, if your life is in imminent danger
- Attempt to incapacitate the active shooter (13% of incidents successfully resolved by unarmed citizens)
- Use items around you as weapons
- Act with physical aggression, violence of action
- Fight to create an opportunity to escape

HOMELAND SECURITY ACTIVE SHOOTER ADVICE

- How you should react when law enforcement arrives:
 - Remain calm and follow officers' instructions
 - Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
 - Keep hands visible at all times
 - Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as attempting to hold on to them for safety
 - Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
 - Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises

HOMELAND SECURITY ACTIVE SHOOTER ADVICE

- Information you should provide to law enforcement or 911 operators:
 - Location of the victims and the active shooter
 - Number of shooters, if more than one
 - Physical description of shooter/s
 - Number and type of weapons held by the shooter/s
 - Number of potential victims at the location

SCENARIOS

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EMPLOYEE THREATENS ANOTHER EMPLOYEE

Sue works in the engineering department. While at work, she has an altercation with Mary. According to other employees, Sue and Mary were yelling and swearing at each other. An employee told Sue's and Mary's supervisor that Sue said to Mary "I will knock you the f**k out." Mary did not threaten Sue with any physical violence. When interviewed by her supervisor, Mary could not remember Sue threatening her. Mary said she was just trying to calm Sue down because Mary thought that Sue was having a diabetic episode. The company has a zero tolerance violence policy.

What action should the company take?

- A. Discharge both employees
- B. Sue was the only employee who made a threat so discharge her
- C. Put both on a last chance agreement
- D. We don't have enough facts, investigate further

AFTER THE INVESTIGATION

The company decides to investigate further. While Mary could not remember Sue threatening her, several employees heard Sue threaten Mary. According to the other employees, Sue said to Mary, “I will knock you the f**k out.” All the witnesses agree that Mary never threatened Sue. Sue denies she ever threatened Mary.

Should the company terminated Sue for violation of the anti-violence policy?

- A. Yes, she has violated the zero violence policy
- B. Yes but the company should also discharge Mary
- C. Put both employees on a last chance agreement

EMPLOYEE SCARES OTHER EMPLOYEES

John is a loner. He does not get along with his co-employees and gets into verbal arguments with them but never threatens them. He spends his lunch hour looking at gun magazines. He tells several employees that he owns several rifles and pistols and likes to shoot. He recently broke up with his long time woman friend and has been very angry over it.

What should the company do?

- A. Send John to counseling but do not ask for any reports or other records of the counseling
- B. Send him to counseling and get reports to ensure he is progressing
- C. Send him for a fitness for duty medical exam
- D. Have the company's threat assessment team and an outside threat assessment company evaluate John's behavior



SHOOTER IN THE BUILDING

Ed, the managing director, is located in Conference Room B. He sees Jim walk into the reception area carrying a gun. Ed fired Jim last week for making threats against various employees, including Ed.

What should Ed do?

- A. Pull the fire alarm and evacuate the building
- B. Call 911
- C. Use the loud speaker and tell the employees to evacuate the building or hide
- D. Do 1 and 2
- E. Do 2 and 3

SHOOTER IN THE BUILDING

The engineers work in the engineering bay. They hear shots coming from the reception area.

What should they do?

- A. Try to block the doors into the engineering bay and hide in the engineering bay
- B. Evacuate out the side door and go to the rally point. Wait there for the police
- C. Evacuate out the side door and go home
- D. Find the source of the gunfire and attack the shooter

SHOOTER IN THE BUILDING

John is in conference room A. He hears gun shots In the reception area.

What should he do?

- A. Block the door to the room and hide in the coat closet in the conference room
- B. Exit the conference room and run to the back door
- C. Attack the shooter

POLICE ARRIVE

The police arrive and subdue Jim. Ed announces over the loud speaker that the police are securing the building and employees should come out of hiding.

What should the employees do?

- A. Run to the nearest exit, get in their cars and drive home
- B. Continue to hide until the police come and get them
- C. Walk out of their hiding place with their hands open and over your head

PRESENTERS

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QUESTIONS?



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THANK YOU

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