

Prevention

While violent incidents are relatively rare, they do occur and lives can be lost. There is no strategy that works for every situation, but the likelihood of a successful resolution is much greater if you have prepared ahead of time. The following elements will help organizations reduce the risk of acts of violence from occurring:

- * Prevention of Workplace Violence Policy (All reports of incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately. All reports will be immediately evaluated and investigated; management will take appropriate actions based upon the results of the investigation.)
- * Communication - clear reporting procedures. (Employees should report any incidents to their supervisor or supervisory chain or HRO office. Supervisors and managers should seek assistance of HRO to investigate and initiate appropriate action.)
- * Counseling -Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Family Service Center (FSC)
- * Pre-Employment Screening (interview questions, background / reference checks, drug testing)
- * Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) - (designed to help parties resolve conflicts with help of a neutral third party –identify conflict early and seek informal resolution through mediation, facilitation, or interest-based problem solving)
- * Crisis Management Team—(Interdisciplinary Team which works with management to assess potential for workplace violence and develop plan to address it)

Who to Call for Help?

For Emergency Situations:

(301) 342—3911

For Counseling or Assistance Programs:

Fleet and Family Support Center
(for Military Members)

(301) 342—4911

Employee Assistance Program
(for Civilians)

(301) 757—1868

HRO

(Your servicing Human Resources Advisor) or
Laura Lawson at
(301) 342—6860

Public Safety Police

(301) 342— 3319 or 3230

“Dealing with Workplace Violence: A Guide for Agency Planners” available on the internet at:

[Http://www.opm.gov/workplace/indec.html-ssi](http://www.opm.gov/workplace/indec.html-ssi).



NAVAL AIR WARFARE CENTER
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PREVENTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE



GET THE FACTS

HUMAN RESOURCES
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What are Workplace Violence Behaviors?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and health (NIOSH), defines workplace violence as “Any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting. It includes but is not limited to beatings, stabbings, suicides, shooting, rapes, near suicides, psychological traumas such as threats, obscene phone calls, an intimidating presence, and harassment of any nature such as being followed, sworn at, or shouted at.”

By far the most prevalent incidents are intimidation, “bullying”, and other inappropriate behavior that frighten employees.

MYTHS and FACTS About WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

1. A “profile” of a potentially violent perpetrator is one of the best diagnostic tools a manager has.
2. The leading cause of workplace violence is job termination or threat of job loss.
3. Workplace homicide involving disgruntled employees is a relatively new human resources and security problem.
4. Anger is predetermined at birth and you can avoid workplace violence incidences by not hiring angry people.
5. Employees who resort to violence often have job performance / conduct related problems.
6. Mental disorders or psychological problems are a much larger factor in violent behavior than drug or alcohol abuse.
7. There is no way to tell if a co-worker is disgruntled and prone to violence.
8. Violence is the leading killer of women and the second leading killer of men in the workplace.

1. FALSE.

Generally, past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior. There is no specific “profile” of a potentially dangerous individual. People who do not fit a specific profile may engage in acts of violence. Likewise, people who fit a “profile” may not engage in acts of violence and should not be automatically viewed with suspicion. We must focus on behavioral clues, not characteristics, of a person.

2. FALSE.

There are many different reasons why a person might engage in acts of workplace violence. Any number of factors may play a role—divorce, financial pressure, personality conflict. Any of these might be the “straw” that breaks the camel’s back.

3. TRUE.

The first recognized “disgruntled-employee” homicide took place on August 20, 1986 in Edmond, OK. Since then, the problem has grown at a rapid rate.

4. FALSE.

Many perpetrators had lived relatively peaceful lives until a few months before a violent act. It is true, however, that past acts of violence are the best indicators of future violence.

5. TRUE.

Problems such as compliance with rules are often warning signs of violence. A history of conflicts with supervisor, co-workers and customers is a strong indicator of a potential for violence.

6. FALSE.

Drug and alcohol abuse play a much larger role in violence than mental health problems do. In a majority of cases, alcohol and drugs were attached in some way to the act of workplace violence. Conflict which leads to violence has often been associated in our minds with forms of mental dementia but this has just not proven to be true.

7. FALSE.

There are almost always indicators which managers need to be aware of.

8. TRUE.

Homicide in the workplace is the fastest growing form of murder in the US today. The Center for Disease Control has actually declared workplace homicide as an epidemic.

Indicators of Potentially Violent Behavior

- * Direct or Veiled threats of harm.
- * Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying or other inappropriate or aggressive behavior.
- * History of conflicts with supervisor, co-workers, and customers; verbal comments indicating hostility directed at others.
- * Fascination with Weapons / Violence; bringing weapon to the workplace.
- * Statements indicating desperation to point of contemplating suicide (signs of stress need to be addressed whether or not you believe they will lead to violence.)
- * Substance abuse (alcohol and/or drugs)
- * Extreme or uncharacteristic changes in behavior or displays of emotion. “(may include change in attendance or quantity or quality of work)”
- * Lack of Support Systems (may see problems with or withdrawal from friends / family).

What should you do?

If you observe **INDICATORS** of violence in an individual, take the following steps:

- * If you are a co-worker, notify the employee’s supervisor immediately of your observations.
- * If it is a customer, notify your supervisor immediately.
- * If it is your subordinate, evaluate the situation with the assistance of HRO.
- * If it is your supervisor, notify that person’s supervisor.