Unit 15 Workplace violence

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Describe what workplace violence is
- ✓ Identify some warning signs of violence
- ✓ Apply the cycle of anger
- ✓ Understand Albert Bandura's behavior wheel and how it applies to anger
- ✓ Develop a seven-step process for managing your anger and others' anger
- ✓ Apply better communication and problem solving skills, which will reduce frustration and anger
- ✓ Develop some other ways of managing anger, including coping thoughts and relaxation techniques
- ✓ Use the nine components of an organizational approach to managing anger, including risk assessment processes
- ✓ Respond if a violent incident occurs in the workplace, on both an individual and organizational level

Unit 15

What is Workplace Violence?

Defining Violence

The actual definition of workplace violence can depend on the company and the area where the company operates. For example, some states classify sexual harassment as workplace violence, while others don't. Likewise, some organizations have separate workplace violence and sexual harassment policies.

Typically, the definition of workplace violence encompasses:

- Verbal abuse (such as yelling)
- Psychological or emotional abuse (such as name-calling or threats)
- Physical abuse (such as hitting or pushing)
- Sexual assault

It is important to remember that no matter what form violence takes, whether it's yelling, threatening, or physical assault, it is essential that your organization have a policy to prevent and respond to such incidents.

A crucial step in developing a workplace violence policy is determining just what workplace violence means to your organization, and therefore determining what your policy will cover.

The Cycle of Violence

In most cases, workplace violence is like a thunderstorm, building slowly before exploding. The process often begins with frustration. If the frustration isn't alleviated, it often turns to anger. Then, that unaddressed anger becomes violence.

Our goal for the first third of this workshop is to work on some tools that can help us interrupt the storm. Problem solving tools, communication strategies, anger management processes, and de-stress routines can all help alleviate anger and frustration, preventing the cycle from reaching the stage of violence.

The Warning Signs

There are many signs that may indicate that a person is on the path towards committing a violent act. These can include:

- Threats (direct or indirect)
- Harassing or obscene phone calls
- Suicidal or homicidal threats or gestures
- Expressions of hopelessness, despair, belligerence, or defiance
- Talk of violent behavior or fantasies
- Frequent profanity
- Challenging or intimidating comments
- Paranoid thoughts or delusions
- Delusions in general
- Hallucinations (particularly those where the person feels that they are being commanded)
- Signs or history of substance abuse
- Physical assault or intimidation of people or property
- Inappropriate use or possession of a weapon
- Obsessing with/stalking another person
- Easily upset, short-tempered, inappropriate emotions
- Sudden personality changes; from extroverted to introverted, or becoming very withdrawn
- Deteriorating appearance (i.e. personal hygiene)
- Deep grudges and resentments
- Belief that everyone is out to get them
- Obsession with public acts of violence or violent figures
- Obsession with fairness and equality
- Frequent misinterpretation (i.e. sees disrespect and injustice everywhere)

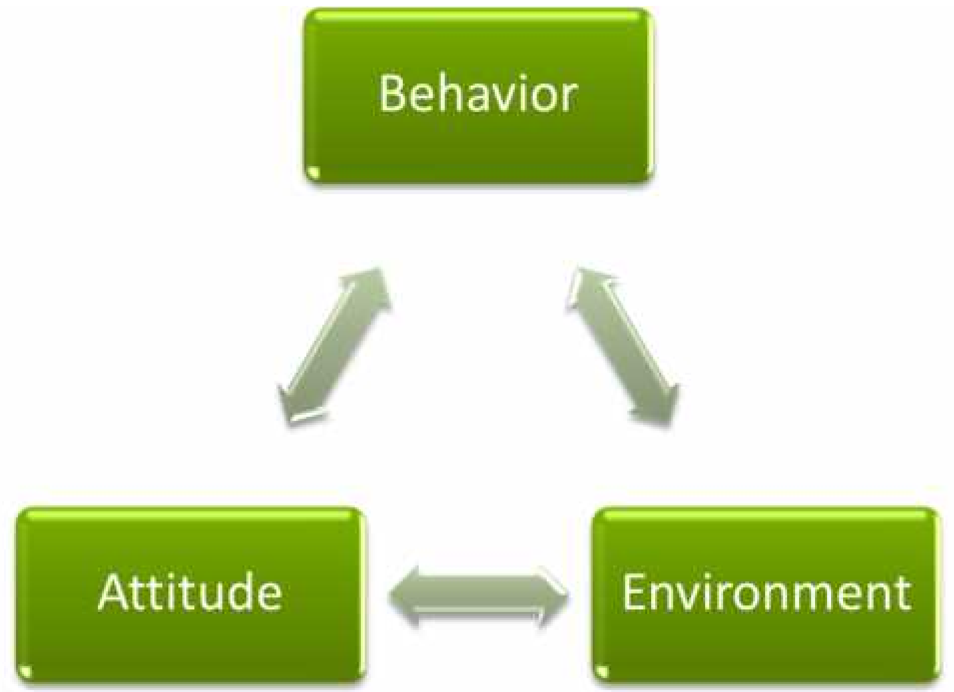
Now, we're not saying that if someone starts cursing a blue streak you should call in the cavalry. These signs can be present for all kinds of reasons, and are easy to see in retrospect, but you are trying to look ahead, not behind. If you notice that a co-worker's behavior changes, their temperament seems different, or if someone pulls out a knife in the lunchroom, then action needs to be taken. Simply mention your concerns to your supervisor. They have the tools and the resources required to help the person and to keep your workplace safe.

Understanding the Behavior Wheel

The Behavior Wheel

Psychologist Albert Bandura has developed a theory called the **behavior wheel**. This wheel provides the answer to the timeless question, "Why do people act the way they do?"

Bandura's wheel looks like this:



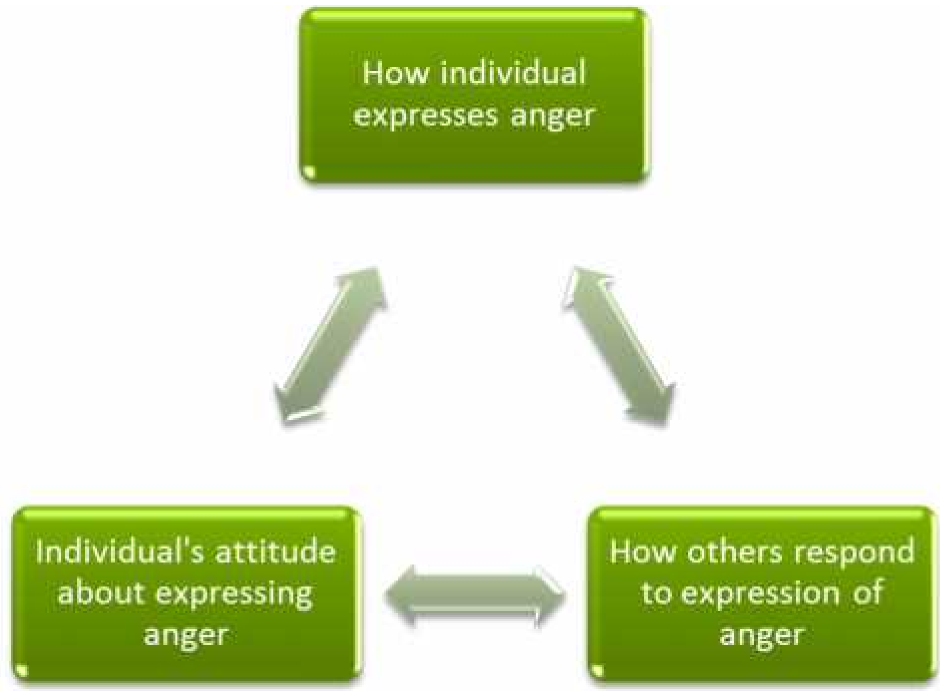
This wheel shows us how our attitude, behavior, and environment all influence each other. Note how the arrows go both ways: our environment affects our attitude, but our attitude also affects our environment.

Case Study

Let’s apply this wheel to a drug addict. One traditional approach is for the addict to simply quit. However, even if the addict’s behavior changes, his attitude may still be that drugs are OK, and he may still associate with drug users. These factors will affect his behavior, contributing to him using drugs again. However, if his environment and attitude change, his behavior will be more likely to change.

Anger and the Behavior Wheel

Dr. Lynn McClure has applied the behavior wheel to anger:



Understanding this cycle of behavior, attitude, and environment is crucial to managing anger.

The Anger Management Process

The Seven Steps

Dr. Lynn McClure has identified a seven-step process to manage anger. This process can be used whether you're angry or whether you're responding to someone else's anger.

1 • Decide what to do

2 • Be direct

3 • Acknowledge feelings

4 • Find something in common

5 • Depersonalize

6 • Get to the real issues

7 • Let go

The first step must always be deciding. Then, the other steps can be performed in any order.

Step One: Decide What to Do

Before you try to resolve the situation, ask yourself three questions:

- Do I want to work it out?
- Does the other person want to work it out?
- Is it appropriate for me to be involved?

The answer for all three questions must be yes or the process will not work. However, both parties don't have to be 100% committed. Even if they both are only willing to resolve the problem to get a project done, for example, that's still a level of commitment that can be built on.

Step Two: Be Direct

Once you have decided that you need to address this situation, it's time to start the process. Your next step should be to address the problem in the proper way, to the right person.

For example, let's say you've just seen your work schedule for next week and you're not impressed with the amount of evenings you're working.

Some improper ways of dealing with this (that are not direct or appropriate):

- Yelling at your supervisor
- Threatening to quit
- Complaining to your colleagues

The proper way to deal with this would be to approach your supervisor and talk to them calmly and logically. You want to lay out the issue and some solutions.

For example, you could say, "I saw that you posted the schedule and I wanted to talk to you about it. I noticed I'm working the most evenings again. I'd like to switch some of those shifts with Karen, since she likes the evening shift better. That would work better for both of us."

By dealing with the problem in this way, you're addressing the issue before it escalates to anger and violence. You're also setting a good example for your co-workers. Having solved this problem will probably make you feel better about yourself and about your job, thereby making work a happier place for you. (If we apply the behavior wheel, this improved attitude will spill over to your behavior and your environment.)

Step Three: Acknowledge Feelings

Another key skill in managing anger is acknowledging the other person's feelings. This step does two things: it helps the other person calm down, and it can help you understand their point of view.

Acknowledging anger doesn't mean explaining it away. An answer that starts with, "We have to do this because…" tends to make the angry person angrier and it makes them feel like no one is listening.

Let's take the scheduling example again. Let's say you said to your supervisor, "I saw that you posted the schedule and I wanted to talk to you about it. I noticed I'm working the most evenings again."

If he or she said, "Well, I have to do that because of company policy," you would probably get angry or defensive, even if you had already calmed down after you saw the schedule.

A better way for the supervisor to respond would be to say, "Yes, I can understand why you're angry about the schedule. It certainly doesn't seem fair." This sort of response would be more likely to calm the angry person and make them feel as though their opinion counts.

Step Four: Find Something in Common

If you can find something in common with the person, rather than emphasizing differences, you will be well on the way to solving the disagreement. (After all, solving the problem is all about finding a mutually acceptable solution. The process is a lot easier when you know that you and the other person are on the same team.)

For example, let's say you and a team member have had a disagreement over a project you're working on together. An easy commonality would be that you're working on the same team, towards the same goal. This common goal may be enough for both of you to start resolving the disagreement.

Step Five: Depersonalize

If you're on the receiving end of someone's anger, it is essential that you depersonalize their emotions or actions so that you don't become angry as well. This can be very hard to do and does require some practice.

It's very easy to misinterpret things and take things personally. You must first determine if this is professional feedback or a personal attack.

Professional feedback…	Personal attacks…
o Focus on your performance at work	o Focus on you as a person
o Is intended to help you grow as a professional	o Is intended to make you feel bad or guilty
o Can help you learn	o Usually have no valuable advice
o Should be accepted as constructive criticism	o Tend to make you angry

If this is professional feedback, you need to focus on how the feedback can help you grow, rather than mistakes you have made in the past or emotional interpretations you received from the conversation.

If this is a personal attack, think about how seriously you should take the incident. Is it worth causing a scene and damaging your professional reputation? Is there a mature way that you can handle this? Another good way to depersonalize is to think about what their attack says about them, not about you.

Example: You are in your supervisor's office for your monthly review. He says to you, "You know, you might get a raise if you weren't such a slob."

Let's say you took a moment to analyze his comments before allowing yourself to get upset. You think about your desk: how its surface is always neat and how you organize it every morning. He certainly can't be referring to your work environment.

But then you take a look around his office. It looks like a landfill, with papers, CD's, and even garbage everywhere! You feel a little bit sorry for your supervisor; it seems clear that he's the disorganized one and is taking his insecurities out on you.

To ensure that this is the case, you can try to turn his personal attack into professional feedback. You could say, "I'm sorry you feel that way, Jim. What areas do you think I need improvement in?" This way, you have not only managed to depersonalize his attack, but you have also turned it into a learning opportunity.

Step Six: Getting to the Real Issues

Earlier we discussed how frustration can build into anger, which can then escalate into violence. Often, the event that triggers anger or violence is not the original issue that caused frustration. It is important to identify the real issue so that the problem can get solved.

Case Study

Let's look at an example. Gina and Cindy are working on a project together. All of a sudden, Cindy explodes, yelling, "You're so stupid! I'm never going to get this done if I have to work with you." Gina is shocked; she and Cindy have always worked together well in the past.

Gina moves through some of the anger management steps within a few seconds.

Step One: Decide what to do. **Gina wants to work it out and she is the right person to do so. But, does Cindy want to work it out?**	Gina: "Cindy, I'm sorry you feel that way. Can we talk about this?" Cindy: "Sure."
Step Two: Be direct.	Gina is doing this by speaking to Cindy.
Step Three: Acknowledge feelings.	Gina: "I can tell that you're really upset."
Step Four: Find something in common.	Gina: "We've always worked well as a team in the past, and I'd like to continue working as a team. We do need to get this project done." Cindy: "That's true."
Step Five: Depersonalize.	Gina thinks to herself, "I haven't done anything different today, so I think Cindy is upset about something else. This isn't my fault. I can grow from this by helping her through the issue."
Step Six: Get to the real issues.	Gina: "I don't feel like you're angry at me. I feel like there is something else going on. I've noticed you have been distracted the past few days. I'd really like to help you." Cindy: "I'm really sorry for calling you stupid. My husband and I have been having problems, and it's really affecting me. I'm very angry at him."

Now that Gina knows what the real issue is, it's easier for her to depersonalize and help Cindy work through the real problem, or to help her find the appropriate resource. This process has probably helped Cindy calm down and let go of some emotional baggage.

When you do talk to the angry person, make sure you:

- Speak to them in a calm manner.
- Don't blame or judge.
- Choose a quiet, private place free of interruptions.
- Follow Step Two: be direct and discuss the issue in an appropriate way.

Step Seven: Letting Go

At some point, you will reach a stage where things are out of your hands. Even if you follow the entire process, things may not turn out as you want them to. You must accept that you have taken things as far as you can: you've done what you could and now it is time for the other person to make their decision.

Let's look at the example of Gina and Cindy again. At Step Six, Gina says, "I don't feel like you're angry at me. I feel like there is something else going on. I've noticed you have been distracted the past few days. I'd really like to help you."

However, Cindy is not ready to talk about her personal problems or perhaps she doesn't want to discuss them at work. She says, "I don't need help," and returns to working on the project.

Now Gina needs to let go. She may want to acknowledge Cindy's feelings by saying, "I understand you're not ready to talk. If you change your mind, my phone number is 845-7555. I know that Human Resources has a drop-in counseling center, too."

Then, she should let go of the incident and avoid referring to it again. This does not mean avoiding Cindy; she should try to maintain her normal relationship with her, in case Cindy does want to open up further. It would probably also be wise for Gina to mention this to Cindy's manager.

Role Play

Record notes for your role play in the space below.

Communicating Better

Building Your Message

The Importance of Communication Skills

Often people who are most angry are people who haven't developed their communication skills to the level they would like, and as a result they feel frustrated and misunderstood. Poor communication skills can actually contribute to their being repeatedly misunderstood, and improvements mean that they can express themselves better and be understood.

I Messages

We are most likely to retain the goodwill of the person we're standing up to if we stick with our own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, and avoid direct or implied criticism of the other person. One way to do that is to stick with "I" messages, expressed in a matter-of-fact, non-judgmental tone of voice.

You Message	I Message
You talk too loudly.	I have sensitive hearing.
You should send out an agenda.	I'd like to know what we're going to discuss in the meeting tomorrow so I can bring the right information with me.

You can use this same type of message when you are giving feedback about someone else's behavior. Remember, the feedback needs to be non-judgmental, but it should be specific and direct.

The Assertiveness Formula

There is also a formula for assertiveness:

Step	Goal	Example
Step 1	Non-judgmentally describe a specific behavior of the other person.	When you…
Step 2	Describe, as specifically as possible, the effects this behavior is having, or the practical problems it is causing in your life.	The effects are…
Step 3	Describe how you feel as a result, without using the expression, “you make me...”	I feel…
Step 4	Describe what you want, preferably after you give the other person a chance to state what they think might be done.	I prefer/would like…

Example: “When you leave your papers all over my office, it causes it to be cluttered and I feel disorganized and upset. I would like it if you could pick your papers up when you are done.”

When you are stating feelings, remember these tips:

- State feelings, not evaluations
- State feelings, not solutions
- State feelings directly

Making Connections

Rephrase the following statements using the four-step model.

You missed that deadline! I want to fire you right now!

You are late again. You're always late, and making me look bad!

Asking Questions

Questioning Skills

The right questions provide structure to your conversation. Here are some general guidelines:

- Ask one question at a time, instead of trying to get to everything at once.
- Phrase the question in simple, easily understandable words and terms that don't intimidate your conversation partner.
- Keep your questions brief. Questions that are more than two sentences in length are too long; break them up and ask them as two or more questions.
- Keep your phrasing positive. Reframe negative questions to make them more positive, which will encourage conversation.
- Use open questions to get more information, rather than relying on closed questions.
- Follow up on incomplete answers by probing for more information.

Planning Your Questions

You can plan for the conversation ahead of time and decide what kind of question to ask depending on what your goals are. You can design your questions to help you with any of the following:

- Get information
- Gain consensus
- Focus conversations
- Begin closing the conversation
- Gather opinion

It is helpful to have some good questions ready that relate to the conversation that you are planning.

List some examples of good questions.

Three Keys

There are three keys you can use to frame your conversation in the best way possible.

Intent

Set your conversation up in the best way possible by giving other people the benefit of the doubt. This means that you assume that their problem behavior or attitude was not their goal, and that they are approaching things with positive intent.

If you fail to give credit to them for having positive intent, you may inadvertently set a conversation off track and contribute to the other person becoming defensive or angry.

Identifying Criteria

Criteria and expectations are important, and they are things that you are measuring during an interaction. You use them to decide whether an idea is good or not, and to set up benchmarks. These criteria become even more important when different points of view are creating a problem between two people, or workplace teams, and so on. Salaries, job security, and engagement are some of the things that commonly create problems in the workplace. If you are finding that a conversation is going off track, try to figure out why the others in your conversation are supporting or coming out against something. Then you can problem solve and generate solutions that meet a suitable arrangement for both of you.

Non-Verbal Expressions

Whether you are someone with a tendency to frown or smile has a big effect on the direction of a conversation. Are you aware of what your body language says about you?

Basic Problem Solving Tools

The Three-Phase Model

About Problem Solving

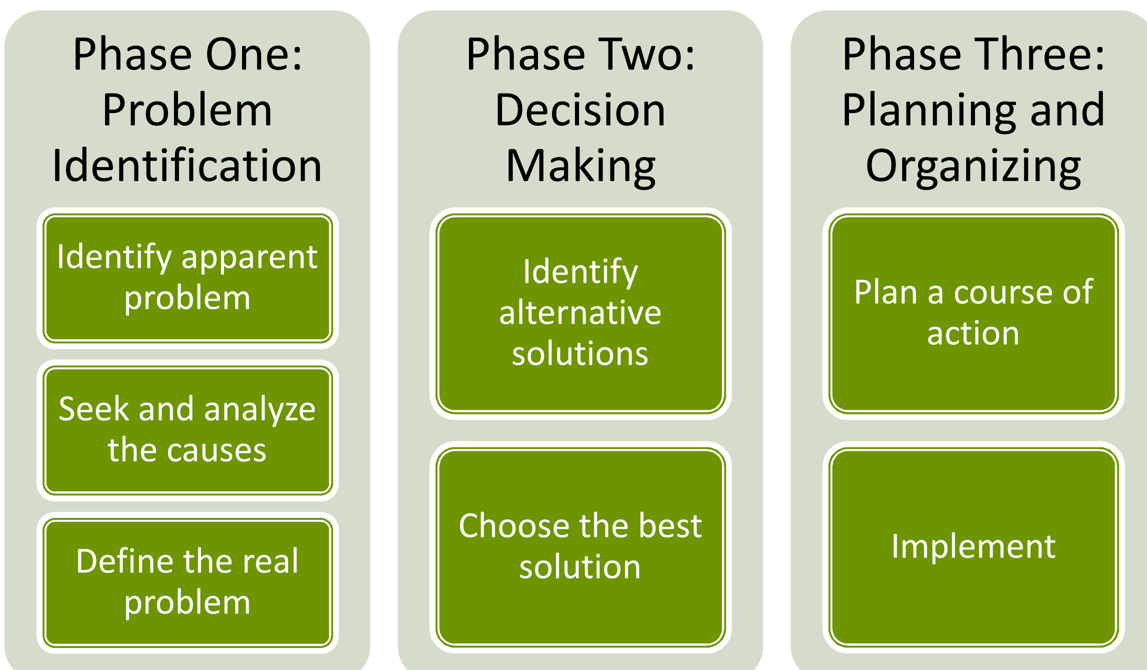
Often anger results from some sort of unresolved issue… in other words, a problem that needs to be solved.

Whenever you read a book on problem solving, this model, in some form or other, is sure to be there. It may have six steps rather than seven, or it may have five steps. However, the model doesn't really change…just the authors' ways of breaking it down.

As you work your way from problem to solution, you are actually shifting your focus.

- When you define a problem, you ask yourself: What is my problem?
- As you try to analyze the root causes you ask: Why is it a problem?
- When you are generating options, you ask yourself: What are some ways I can solve my problem?

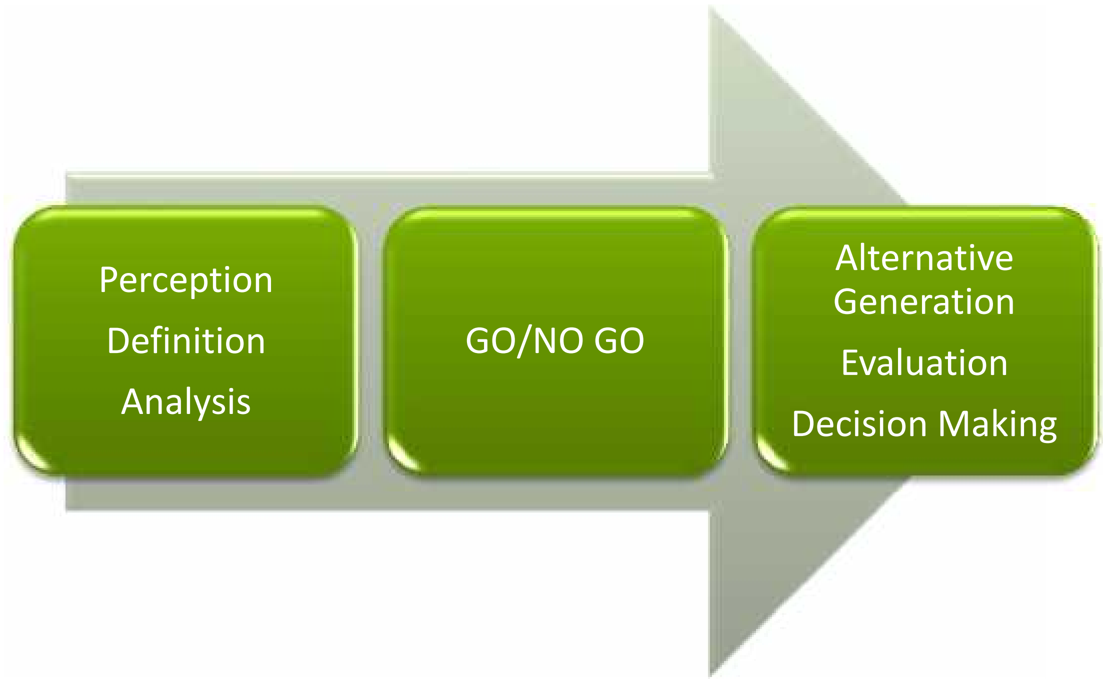
The Problem Solving Model



This model doesn't just work on paper: it applies across a range of problem solving activities. It is the very basis for informed and consistent problem solving. If you are someone who loves tools, this is your basic tool. We often don't spend enough time in defining a problem, and that in itself is a problem. Don't be in too big a rush to get the solution worked out: make sure you know what you need to know. Then, make a commitment to continually check back with the first stage to make sure the problem is the same.

Another Perspective

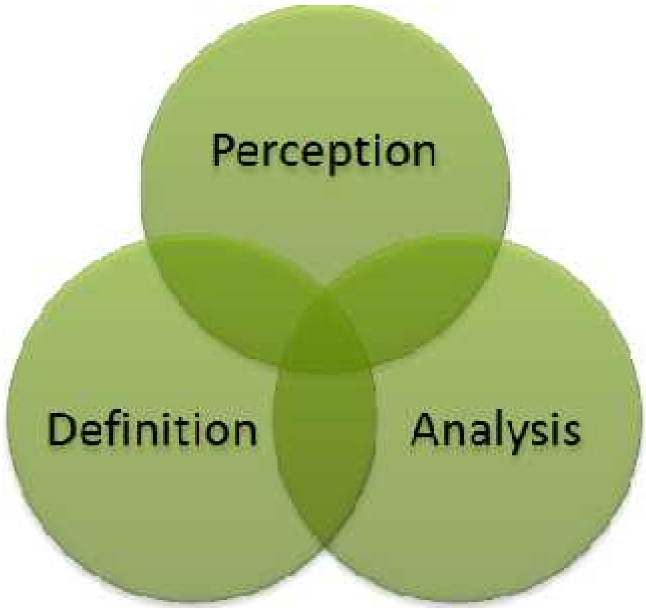
Here is another way of breaking down the three phases:



We recommend that you spend most of your time on the first block: perception, definition, and analysis. As we've mentioned already in this course, we often don't spend enough time in defining a problem, and that in itself is a problem. Don't be in too big a rush to get the solution worked out: make sure you know what you need to know first. Then, make a commitment to continually check back with the first stage to make sure the problem is the same.

Keeping an Open Mind

Part of the problem solving process is re-evaluating and evolving. This will ensure you reach the best solution possible. Consider how perception, definition, and analysis overlap:



Solving Problems the “Right” Way

Don’t let people try to convince you there is one “right” or “best” way to solve problems, or to solve a particular problem. Problem solving is all about applying educated trial and error. With so many different kinds of problems to deal with, there is no system that works in every situation. Many solutions are possible, and some are better than others.

Your skill as a problem-solver depends on your expertise with the tools and your knowledge of how to use them. You know you don’t always solve problems step by step. Sometimes you have a solution before you know what problem it solves. For example, you decide to move your bed against another wall and you find out the next morning that the sun doesn’t wake you up so early.

However, for many situations, having formal steps to follow can help you create flexible, workable solutions.

Phase One

About Phase One

Let's take a look at the first phase of the three-phase model.

Here is a breakdown of each step in the problem identification process. In all three steps, your focus is on the problem itself. Only afterward will you start thinking about solutions.

Perception

You ask yourself: Is there a problem? Where is the problem? Whose problem is it? This is the sniffing, groping, grasping stage. It includes whatever you do to get a handle on the problem.

What are the symptoms? Funny noises in the engine, an unhappy look on your employee's face, or a change in the productivity rate? You've got to find out what the problem is.

The purpose of this phase is:

- To surface an issue.
- To make it okay to discuss it (legitimize).
- To air different points of view.
- To avoid perception wars.
- To get group agreement to work on the problem.

Steps in this phase include:

- Legitimizing the problem; make it okay to discuss it.
- Asking, “How does the problem feel?” and, “What’s the real problem?”
- Identifying the best, worst, and most probable situation.
- Identifying whose problem it is.

Definition

Here, we state the problem as a question. Our goal is to grasp the general idea of the problem and then draw the rope tighter to get a more specific idea of the problem.

Steps in this phase include identifying:

- What is the problem?
- What is not the problem?

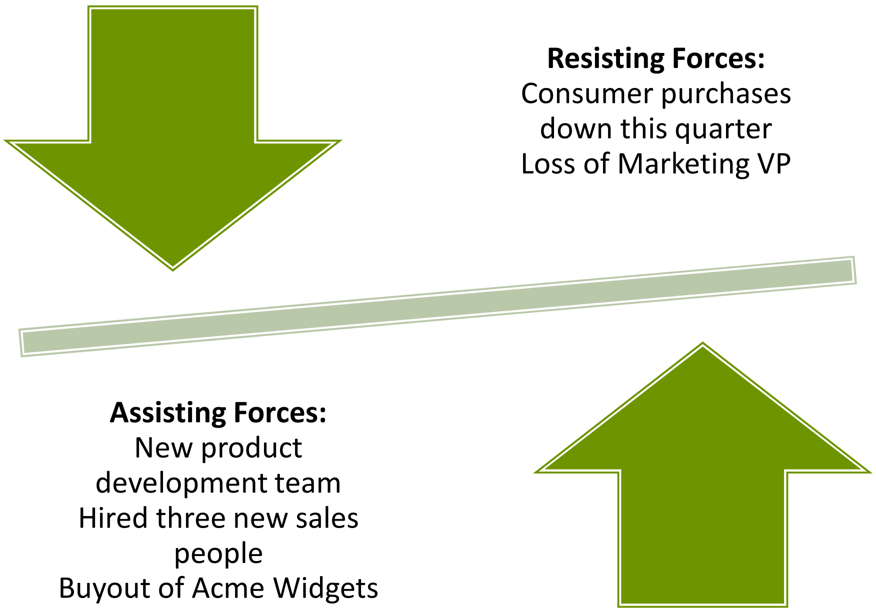
Analysis

Now that we have a general idea of the problem, we will use analytical tools to define it even further. Steps in this phase can include the following.

Ask basic questions, such as who, what, where, when, why, and how.

Break it down into smaller pieces. For example, if we know that the problem is that revenue is down, we can break it down into possible areas of cause: manufacturing, shipping, or sales.

Use force field analysis. This is a structured method of looking at two opposing forces acting on a situation. Simply draw a line on a piece of paper. On one half of the line, list the forces that are working to solve the problem. On the other half, list the forces that are stopping you from solving the problem. Let's say that revenue is down this quarter. Our force field might look like this:



Move from **generalizations to specific examples** as a way of testing what the problem is or is not. For example, you could say, "Our company has really been doing poorly all year." We could further identify how the company has been doing poorly; let's say that the production department in particular has been less efficient, costing the company money. Then, we can look at what aspect in particular is doing poorly.

Ask the expert. Find a person who has dealt with this sort of issue before.

Phase Two

About Phase Two

Until the three steps of problem identification have been covered, don't proceed to phase two (decision making).

If people don't agree on the problem, they will never agree on a solution!

Creative Thinking Methods

Here are some tools you can use to come up with ideas.

Brainstorming

Draw a circle in the middle of a page and write down your problem. Then, draw lines from that circle and write down some solutions. Don't worry if they're wacky, impossible, or silly; this is a time for creative thinking, not critical thinking. Capturing the range of ideas is what is important here.

Checkerboard
This is a more organized form of brainstorming and can be particularly helpful for people who don't like how chaotic a brainstorming session can become. With this method, you organize your thoughts into a table. We still want creative thinking rather than critical thinking, but this method may help you develop ideas.

Here is an example of a checkerboard.

Main Solution	Possible Specific Solutions		
Create safe passage between building and parking/bus stop	Have security escort night staff to their cars or bus stop	Rearrange shifts so that people come and go during daylight hours	Set up a buddy system with employees
People missing work in snowstorm	Set up 50% of staff with ability to work from home during storms	Arrange for temporary shelters so that staff can stay overnight	Provide incentives for employees to put winter tires on their vehicles and learn safe winter driving
Threat of strike is rumored	Set up contract negotiations well before contract expires	Approach union and ask to speak with them	Set up contingency plan to ensure business continuity in the event of a strike

Next, cut up solutions and move them around, or use your computer. This can help you organize your ideas and generate even more solutions!

Research and Report
Look at what others have done. Do some research and prepare a report. What lessons can you learn from this information?

Evaluation

Now that we have some solutions in mind, it's time to evaluate the solutions to see which ones are feasible.

- Sort solutions by category. This can be similar to the checkerboard above, just with some critical thinking applied.
- Identify the advantages and disadvantages to each solution.
- Identify what you like about each idea and what you don't like.
- Number your ideas in order, from the one that seems the most feasible to the one that seems the least feasible. This is useful for small problems.

Decision Making

Once you have evaluated the options, it's time to make a decision. Here are some ways you can do it:

- Get a consensus from the group on the best solution.

- Don't limit yourself to one option; you may find that you can combine solutions for super success. (This is called the both/and method.)
- To make voting easier, you may want to eliminate the solutions that the group as a whole absolutely won't consider.
- Try to focus on agreements during all voting.
- Use straw voting: Take a quick, non-binding yes/no vote on the current solution as proposed.
- Try negative voting: Rather than asking who is for a solution, ask who is against the proposed solution.
- Back off! The group may need some time to evaluate the options before making a decision.

Phase Three

About Phase Three

Our last phase should be planning how to implement the solution and performing the actual implementation.

Planning

For the planning portion, start by breaking the task down into smaller portions. Then, for each mini-task, plan the following information:

- What needs to be done?
- Who will do it?
- What resources will we need?
- How much time will it take? (Set a deadline!)

Once all the smaller tasks are planned out, you will have an idea of how long the main solution will take to implement. You may also want to make sure that the above questions are answered for the main task.

Implementation

Implementation is a cycle of three activities:

- Figuring out what you are going to do
- Doing it
- Reacting to what happened or getting feedback

Sooner or later, you have to try out your solution!

Solution Planning Worksheet

It can help to lay out what you are planning to do. Here is an example of a solution planning worksheet.

Problem: Revenue down 10%

Solution: Develop new product

Task 1	**Engineering will design product.**	
	What needs to be done?	Product needs to be designed.
	Who will do it?	Jim and Sue from Engineering.
	What resources will they need?	Unknown. They should have all resources in house; we will make sure they know we can assist in obtaining more resources if necessary.
	How much time will it take?	Targeted completion date: Dec. 31
Task 2	**Prototype will be created.**	
	What needs to be done?	Prototype needs to be developed.
	Who will do it?	Sam from Manufacturing, Jill from Engineering
	What resources will they need?	May need testing group; we will help provide this

	How much time will it take?	Targeted completion date: Feb. 28
Task 3	**Product will be manufactured.**	
	What needs to be done?	Product needs to be created.
	Who will do it?	Joe from Manufacturing
	What resources will they need?	All resources in-house
	How much time will it take?	Targeted completion date: Dec. 31

The Problem Solving Toolkit

There are some techniques we can use to help us at every stage of the problem solving process.

The Lasso

Can we tighten up our definition of the problem?

- "How can we improve communication in our group?" What do we mean by communication?
- "How can we get our work done more efficiently?" What do we mean by efficiently?

Is/ Is Not

The Is/Is Not technique lets us eliminate assumptions and emphasize facts. For example, someone says, "The telephone system isn't working." You might ask them to list what isn't working and list what is working. Perhaps all functions are affected, or perhaps only incoming calls have been affected.

Graphics

A diagram allows us to see things visually. For example, think of personality types, which can be depicted visually as well as verbally. For some, a graph is more beneficial than a score or a label. For others, one type of categorizing is better than another type of categorizing.

Basic Questions

Who, what, where, when, why, how?

Criteria

In many situations it can be very helpful to have already determined what the criteria will be for your best solution. For example, let's say that you and your spouse are going out to celebrate your anniversary. Where are you going to go? Well, rather than the old harangue about: "Where do you want to go?" and, "I don't care. It's up to you," how about developing criteria ahead of time?

Some examples:

- The place must have a liquor license, since you want a glass of wine with your meal.
- It shouldn't cost an arm and a leg, yet you don't want the fast food joint just down the road. A cost of $20 to $30 per person is another criterion.
- You want a place where you can have chicken and your spouse can have seafood.
- It shouldn't be more than 50 miles away, since you both have to work tomorrow.
- It should take reservations. You don't want to go to all that trouble and then find the place has no table for you.

Now you can brainstorm, but the brainstorming will be modified or restrained, since you've already identified the criteria that the restaurant must meet.

Force Field Analysis

Force field analysis examines restraining forces (forces that discourage the problem) vs. sustaining forces (forces that encourage a problem). Take an example like John arriving late for work.

What are the restraining forces?

- Boss is angry
- John is behind with his work
- Parking spots all gone

What are the sustaining forces?

- Gets to sleep an extra 15 minutes
- Takes the kids to the babysitter
- Misses traffic on way to work

Then the question becomes, how can we weaken the sustaining forces and strengthen or shore up some of the restraining forces?

Legitimizing Problems and Positions

Problems are okay. Everyone has problems. They are a fact of life. Human beings couldn't live without change and stimulation in their environment, and problems provide that change and stimulation. So it's all right to have a problem as long as you are willing to do something about it. In our society we often think that having a problem is like admitting failure. Some of us refuse to admit we have problems, or we ignore or hide them.

Task Information

Now that we've been through the problem solving process, let's apply it to an anger problem.

Problem

Gina and Cindy are working on a project together. All of a sudden, Cindy explodes, yelling, "You're so stupid! I'm never going to get this done if I have to work with you." Gina is shocked; her and Cindy have always worked together well in the past.

Phase One: Problem Identification and Definition

- Identify apparent problem: Cindy has some sort of issue with Gina.
- Seek and analyze causes: There is some other stress in Cindy's life that is making her more emotional.
- Define the real problem: Cindy is having problems at home.

Phase Two: Decision Making

- Identify alternative solutions: Cindy can try to deal with the problem on her own, seek the support of family or friends, or seek professional help.
- Choose the best solution: Up to Cindy; we would suggest professional help.

Phase Three: Planning and Organizing

- Plan a course of action: Get the names of three therapists from her doctor, interview each, and decide who is most suitable. Keep all appointments and track progress in a journal.
- Implement: Start by making the doctor's appointment.

Skill Application

Apply the problem solving steps we just discussed to your pre-assignment problem.

Phase One: Problem Identification and Definition

Identify Apparent Problem

Seek and Analyze Causes

Define the Real Problem

Phase Two: Decision Making

Identify Alternative Solutions

Choose the Best Solution

Phase Three: Planning and Organizing

Plan a Course of Action

Implement

Other Ways of Managing Anger

Coping Strategies

List some coping strategies for anger.

Sanctuary

Another coping strategy is to think of some place where you always feel calm and secure and confident. Picture it in your mind. Be able to describe this place.

- What does it look like?
- Do you associate any sounds with your sanctuary?
- What does your sanctuary feel like?
- What does your sanctuary smell like?
- What are its emotional components? (Safety, calmness…)

Outline your sanctuary below.

Relaxation Techniques

It's essential that you learn to relax if you want to reduce your anger levels. If stress seems to be wearing you down and you are having trouble bouncing back, you may need to consult your doctor. However, for the usual day to day stressors that we encounter, here are some quick, easy ways that you can lower your stress levels quickly.

Deep Breathing

Loosen your clothes, close your eyes, mentally relax your body, and take ten or more deep breaths. Your goal is to breathe into the bottom of your lungs (where the oxygen is readily absorbed), not the usual upper lung breathing we do. Put your hand on your stomach and feel it move as you inhale to make sure you are getting the air in good and deep. We call this **diaphragmatic breathing** because you are using your diaphragm muscle to breathe. When people are experiencing anxiety, they are most often breathing into the upper area of their lungs rather than the bottom.

Each time you exhale, count silently: “one,” after the first breath, “two,” after the second breath, etc., up to at least ten. If you lose count, or find yourself working on thoughts as they pass through your mind, start your count over again. When you are finished, you should feel more calm and relaxed. (Your blood pressure will go down temporarily too.) If you’re in a meeting, on the phone, or dealing with a customer, count in your head.

Visualize

Use positive imagery to boost your mood. In your mind, picture a place that you love. Feel the sunshine on your face, or the breeze on your skin. See the things that you love to see in great detail. If you are getting ready for a presentation or an interview, visualize yourself performing it perfectly. This way, when you get to the event your mind thinks you’ve done it before, so it will be even easier than the last time you did it. (This is a technique used by athletes and performance coaches.)

Music

Music has the power to soothe, or to give us energy. It actually has healing power. Find a type of music that relaxes you and play it when you need to calm down. When you feel tired and listless, play some rousing music (rather than relying on caffeine or other stimulants) to give you a pick-up.

Acupressure and Massage

Holding a fingertip to the point of most pain or tension and pressing very hard into the offending muscle for up to a minute can avert a headache or relieve tension. Have a friend or spouse learn how to do massage therapy and/or acupressure on tense muscles, since daily treatment is better than once or twice a month.

Laughter

Laughter is the best medicine of all. A good belly laugh can lower blood pressure, slow your adrenaline, and reverse the stomach acid that comes with negative responses. Be on the lookout for jokes and cartoons you can share with family and friends. For a smaller dose, find a cartoon or picture that always makes you smile and post it near your desk. (Just make sure it’s appropriate for all audiences!)

Replace Worry with Problem Solving

Focus on what you can do, and then go ahead and do it. Chronic worriers tend to focus on what they cannot do, what should be happening, or how things are going wrong. Replace worry with problem solving so that you identify where you can step in. Then, stop waiting for the perfect time and do it.

Resilience

Each stressful experience that you have prepares you to deal with one in the future. The more resilient you become, the less of an impact each of these events has on your mind and body. Lots of us go to great lengths to avoid stress, and although avoidance initially feels like you are doing alright, the reality is that stressful things come up in our life all the time. The better we are at handling them, the more resilient we become, and the healthier we can be.

Each stressful experience leads us into a cycle of confusion and anguish. If we stay with those feelings in an attempt to minimize the impact the stress will have on our life, things actually get worse. But if we make a decision to deal with those circumstances by problem solving and adapting, we develop resilience and can enjoy life more and be more successful.

As you encounter more stressors in life (and we all do), we can rely on the experience we've had in dealing with negative circumstances in order to cope. We get more effective at managing that cycle of confusion, anguish, problem solving, adapting, and moving on.

A Systems Approach

Violence expert Norman Keith proposes a nine-stage plan to help organizations prevent workplace violence:

1. Develop a violence prevention policy and program
2. Develop risk assessment processes and checklists
3. Maintain due diligence when hiring
4. Check workplace design
5. Review workplace practices and procedures
6. Check security systems and personnel
7. Implement worker training
8. Develop emergency response plans
9. Review and audit the program

Developing a Policy and Program

The Policy

The Purpose

A properly implemented violence policy and program is crucial to preventing workplace violence. The purpose of the policy is:

- To focus on preventing workplace violence
- To consider the work environment and organization in developing these guidelines, to create a policy unique to the organization
- To involve all levels of staff, including union representatives
- To develop a series of ever-evolving guidelines that will be reviewed at a particular interval

The Elements

The policy should contain:

- A statement that the organization has a zero-tolerance approach to violence
- Resources (time, authority, materials, people) to manage and prevent violence
- Requirement for staff to be involved in development and implementation of policy and programs
- Commitment to apply policy consistently and fairly
- Commitment to report incidents promptly and accurately
- Commitment to have the appropriate agency (such as the police or occupational health and safety board) investigate incidents
- Recognition that workplace violence is recognized in most areas as an occupational safety hazard, meaning the organization is responsible for preventing and managing it

Staff responsibilities in the policy should include:

- Participate in violence education, including training on defusing violent situations and self-defense
- Do not put yourself or others at risk for violence
- Report incidents on time and accurately

Note that the workplace can extend beyond the physical office. It should include parking lots, field offices, and any other places that employees do business.

The Programs

There are many types of programs that can be included in a workplace violence program. Here are some ideas:

- Buddy system for field work
- Safety system for excursions outside the building at night (for example, to the parking lot or closest bus stop)
- Visitor identification cards
- Warning system for violent clients or patients
- Emergency backup systems

What other ideas do you have?

Risk Assessment

The Five Stages

Before the policy is finalized, it is essential that a risk assessment is performed at the workplace. Norman Keith has identified five stages of this assessment process. Note that this process should be performed every one to two years to ensure the ongoing applicability and accuracy of the assessment.

Stage One: The Risk Assessment Team

In order for the risk assessment process to be successful in identifying all possible hazards, the risk assessment team must have defined responsibilities. These can include:

- Defining and refining the assessment process
- Identifying areas that workers may need training in
- Planning and implementing emergency response plans
- Communicating their progress and recommendations

The team should include representatives from all levels of the company, including:

- Senior management
- Operations managers
- Safety committee
- Security personnel
- Finance personnel
- Legal counsel (internal or external)
- Human resources manager

Stage Two: The Workplace Assessment

The assessment of the workplace generally has two stages. First, the team will identify scenarios that could result in violence, including:

- Exchanging money with the public
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Working late at night or in early morning
- Working in high crime areas
- Guarding property, possessions, or money
- Working in the community, away from the actual office

The second stage is an analysis of previous incidents of violence, including threats that were not carried out. This may help the assessment team identify additional scenarios, patterns, and risks that need to be addressed.

Stage Three, Part One: Victim Assessment

This part of the assessment is the flip side of the workplace assessment: who is at risk for becoming a victim of violence?

Norman Keith suggests that there are three categories that must be considered.

Occupational Factors

What factors related to a person's job responsibilities could put them at risk? Think about:

- People who handle money
- People who work outside the physical office
- People who work alone and/or at late hours
- Caregivers
- People who handle complaints
- People who enact public laws

Environmental Factors

What factors related to a person's work environment could put them at risk? Think about:

- How the workplace is laid out (crowded, loud, etc.)
- How jobs are managed (unfair workloads, angry employees, long lineups for customers)
- Management styles
- External environments (i.e., working in a dangerous neighborhood)

Personal Factors

What unique factors can put a person at risk? Think about:

- Their personality
- Attitude of workers (such as loyalty)
- Level of training and knowledge
- Ability to handle dangerous situations

Stage Three, Part Two: Perpetrator Assessment

This part of the risk assessment process attempts to identify those who may commit violence. This is not intended to be a hit list, but rather to generate ideas and identify scenarios where staff may be in danger.

To start, we must be aware that there are typically four types of violence that we see in the workplace.

- Committed by clients
- Committed by strangers
- Between co-workers
- Domestic violence

Dr. Graham Glancy has noted some characteristics that can elevate the risk of that person committing a violent act.

- Those who are mentally ill and not properly supervised
- Gang members
- Drug or alcohol users
- People who have had a troubled childhood

- History of violence (as perpetrator or victim)
- Criminal record
- Males commit violence more often than females
- Young people commit violence more often than elderly people
- Obsession with violent symbols or literature
- Obsessive tendencies in general

In particular, disgruntled or obsessed customers or employees (or their relatives) should raise a red flag.

Stage Four: Workplace Survey

A survey can give employees the chance to talk about things that they are unwilling to bring forward. It's also a great tool to use in a large organization, where interviewing each employee would be difficult. Its purpose should be to help identify the potential for violence and the need for improved security measures. The risk assessment team should work with the human resources department to develop a survey appropriate for the organization.

Stage Five: Developing a Hazard Checklist

After the three-part assessment has taken place, the risk assessment team should develop a checklist to analyze, organize, and record the information accrued from the first four steps. The checklist helps to ensure that all areas of the workplace are inspected consistently and that standards are applied uniformly. It also highlights specific areas of concern that should be rectified immediately.

Some possible items on such a checklist can include:

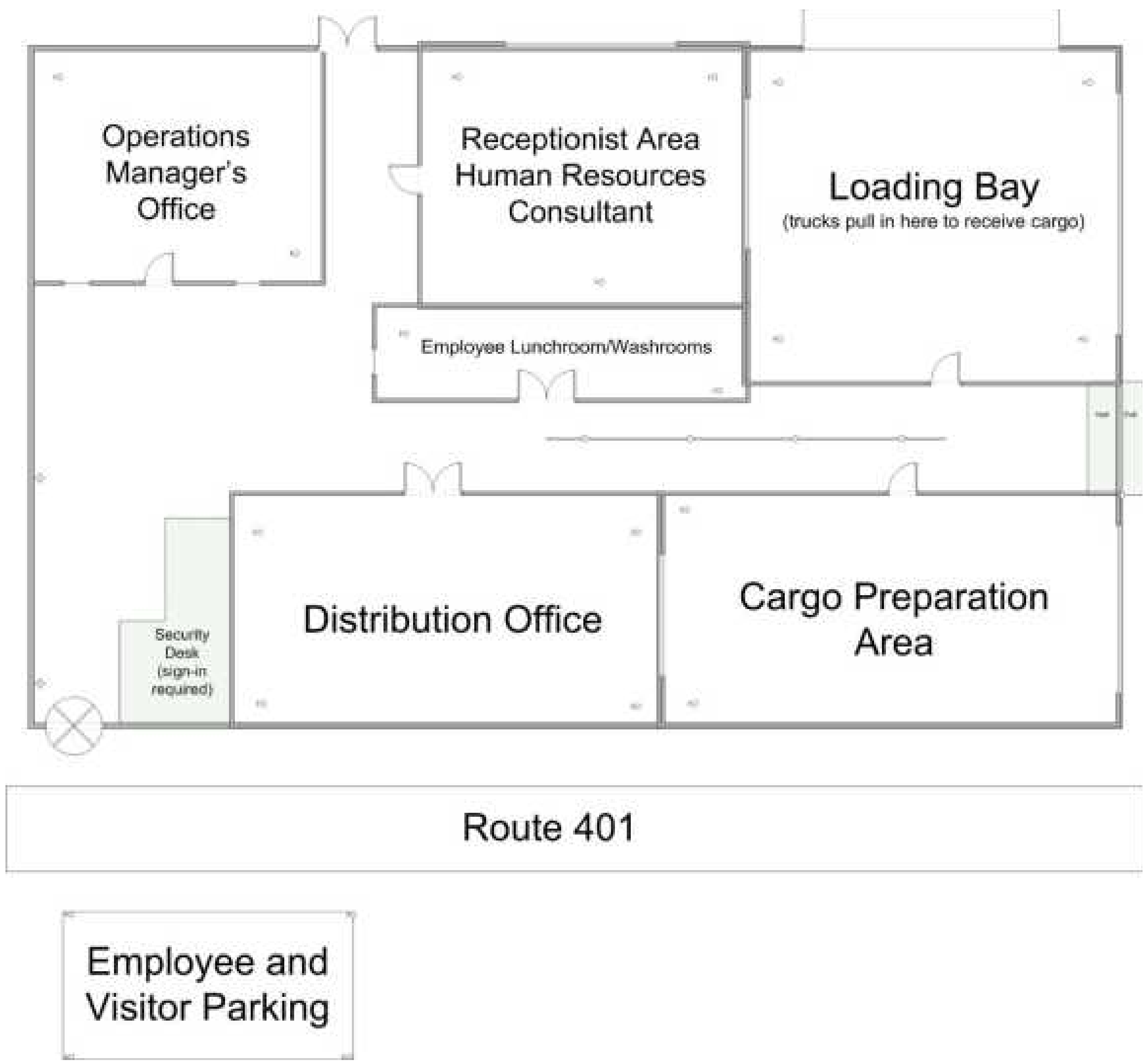
- Hidden doors, closets, hallways, alleys, and driveways
- Isolated work areas
- Late hours of operation
- Lighting
- Unrestricted areas (which may enable non-employees to access the workplace)
- Proper, working locks on doors and windows
- Working security and fire systems (including surveillance systems)
- Adequate, clearly identified escape routes
- Enforcement of security protocols and access systems (such as ID badges)
- Metal detectors
- Armed guards or guard dogs
- Bullet-proof glass partitions
- Buddy system in case of emergency

Risk Assessment for the Acme Widgets Company

Part One: Case Study

The Acme Widget Company manufactures and distributes widgets. It occupies the main floor of a warehouse in a waterfront neighborhood that has experienced gang violence. Employees use public parking across the street.

The floor plan looks like this:



The staff and their hours are outlined below.

Staff Member	Responsibility	# of Staff	Hours Worked
Security guards	Patrol building and grounds every half hour Monitor security desk and cameras	2	7 am to 7 pm (Sun-Wed)
		2	7 am to 7 pm (Thu-Sat)
		2	7 pm to 7 am (Sun-Wed)
		2	7 pm to 7 am (Thu-Sat)
		1	Backup; varies
Operations manager	Oversee all staff	1	8 am to 4 pm
Distribution clerks	Check invoices and prepare cargo Transport cargo to loading bay	2	7 am to 7 pm (Sun-Wed)
		1	7 am to 7 pm (Thu-Sat)
		2	7 pm to 7 am (Sun-Wed)
		1	7 pm to 7 am (Thu-Sat)
		1	Backup; varies
HR consultant	Manage all human resource issues, including personal counseling, hiring, firing	1	8 am to 4 pm, although can be called in off-hours
Receptionist	Respond to incoming phone calls, e-mails, faxes Prepare invoices and send to distribution clerks	3	8 am to 4 pm
		2	4 pm to midnight
		1	Midnight to 6 a.m.
Warehouse workers	Let trucks into loading bay, place cargo onto trucks, and ensure paperwork is signed and cash received	4	8 am to 4 pm
		4	4 pm to midnight
		4	Midnight to 6 a.m.

Part Two: Risk Assessment

Since the risk assessment team has already been chosen (you!), we'll start with the actual assessment.

Workplace Assessment

Log of Violent Incidents		
Incident	**Date and Time**	**Action Taken**
Guard at front desk threatened by visitor after visitor denied access	January 6, 2007 (Saturday) 7:19 p.m.	Perpetrator left; police called
Receptionist felt threatened by truck driver	Repeated incidents through February 2007, mostly around 7 p.m.	Asked trucking company to replace driver
Manager confronted by ex-employee at emergency exit (used as cigarette door since alarm is broken)	April 10, 2007 (Tuesday) 7:12 a.m.	System put in place to ensure employees have badge revoked upon leaving the company

What are some possible scenarios that could result in violence?

Victim Assessment

What factors related to a person's job responsibilities could put them at risk?

What factors related to a person's work environment could put them at risk?

What unique factors can put a person at risk?

Perpetrator Assessment

What kind of violence could be committed by strangers?

What kind of violence could be committed by clients (including truck drivers)?

What kind of violence could be committed between co-workers?

How could we find out about the potential for domestic violence?

Workplace Survey

What items would you include in your workplace survey?

Developing a Hazard Checklist

What issues need to be addressed to help prevent workplace violence?

What items would you include in your hazard checklist?

Hiring Practices

Getting it Right

A key part of preventing workplace violence is hiring the right people. There are two reasons for this. The most obvious is that hiring people who can manage stress and anger properly reduces the chance of those people committing violence in the workplace.

The less obvious reason is that most workplace violence stems from frustration, which builds to anger. If you hire people who are suitable for the job, and if you ensure you have adequate, competent staff, you reduce workplace stress, thereby reducing the anger in your workplace and reducing the chance for violence. Also, this group creates a supportive, caring community that is better able to deal with outside threats that can come from external sources.

Key Strategies

Some ways to screen employees can include the following.

Criminal Records Check
These types of checks usually must be done with the permission of the employee.

Personality Testing
You normally cannot restrict hiring based on this kind of test, but you can use it as a way to get to know the people that you hire. It can also help you understand if they will be a good fit with a particular team.

Behavior Descriptive Interview Questions
These interview questions help you see how an individual would react in a stressful situation, based on how they have acted in the past.

Performance Testing
These tests will show you if they can do the job competently.

Aptitude Testing
These tests will determine whether they have the ability to learn the skills needed for your workplace.

Alcohol and Drug Testing
These types of checks usually must be done with the permission of the employee. Restrictions vary by region, so make sure you know the rules in your area.

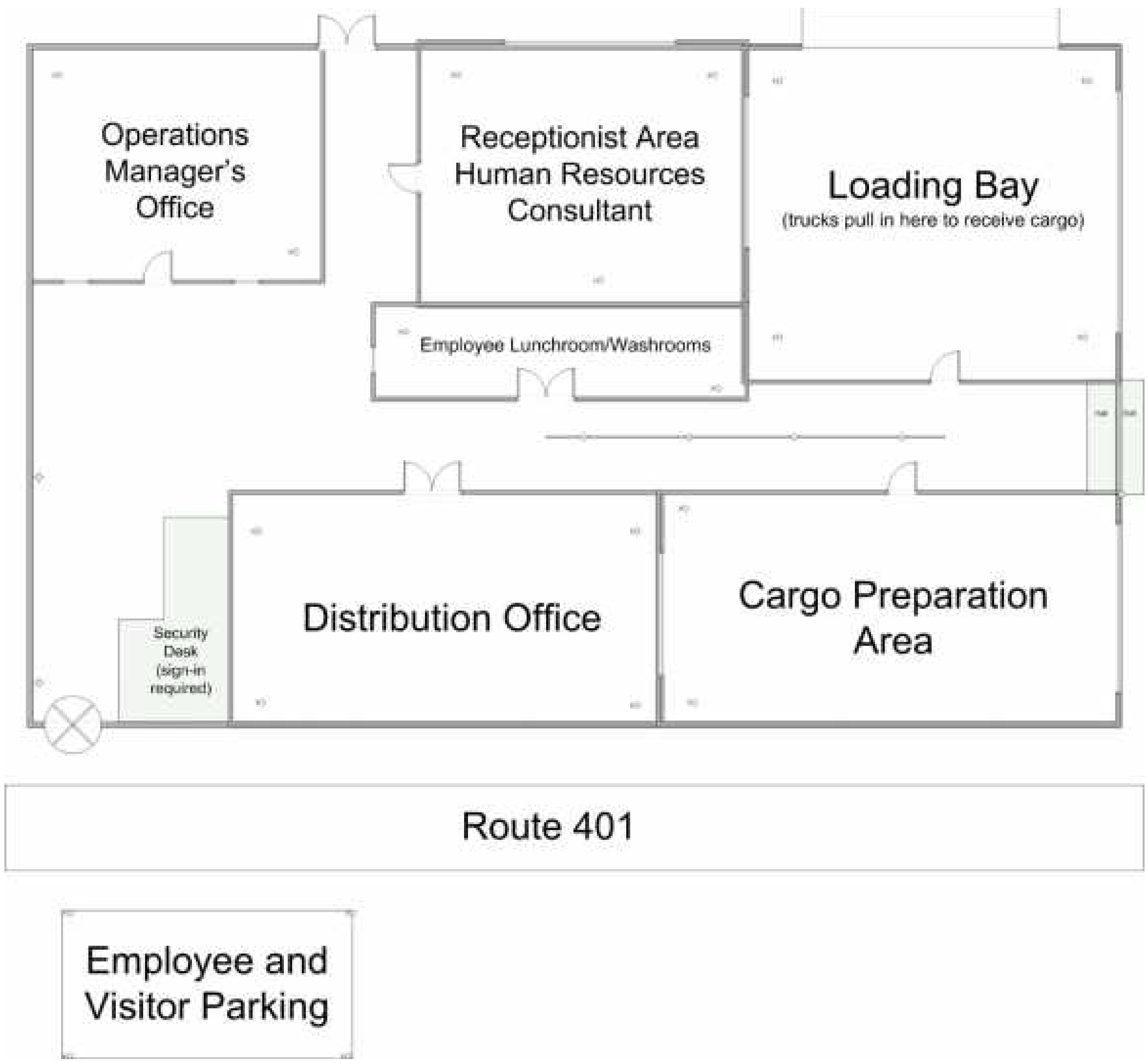
Checking Tests Out

The legality of these tests varies by jurisdiction. The human resources department must work with senior management to determine what tests are appropriate for which positions, and which tests are legal in their area.

Workplace Design

Layout Issues with the Acme Widgets Company: Case Study

The physical environment of the workplace can contribute to, or help prevent, workplace violence.



Task

Identify what aspects of the workplace layout at the Acme Widget Company could be improved to ensure better security.

Workplace Practices and Procedures

Workplace Policies

Training

Training on violence prevention, communication strategies, stress awareness, anger management, and self-defense can all contribute to preventing workplace violence. Training should be ongoing and should be subject to periodic reviews. It should also reflect workplace and worker needs.

Human Resources

Some human resources actions that can support workplace violence prevention include:

- Implementing and enforcing code of conduct for staff (including unacceptable behavior)
- Proper hiring and screening practices
- Implementation and fair application of policies and procedures
- Consistent, firm, fair, and prompt disciplinary measures
- Implementing and enforcing reporting procedures for violence (including threats)
- Adequate staff resources (internal and external) for issues such as domestic violence, stress management, conflict resolution, and crisis management
- Commit to resolving issues with staff as quickly as possible
- Take legal recourse when necessary
- Handle terminations (layoffs, firing, restructuring) as humanely as possible to reduce anger

Staff Management

As we mentioned earlier, violence often stems from frustration and anger that has not been addressed. Therefore, managing staff properly to prevent frustration can help prevent violence. Some measures that managers can take include:

- Ensuring staff are supervised and have adequate resources
- Ensuring staff are properly scheduled
- Ensuring job duties are distributed fairly
- Maintaining open channels of communication with staff (such as staff and one-on-one meetings)
- Monitoring potentially dangerous workers
- Addressing staff issues (such as negligent or incompetent staff)
- Commit to resolving issues with staff as quickly as possible

Security Measures

There are also some measures that the security department can take.

- Have action plan for warning staff of violent persons on the premises
- Monitor potentially dangerous workers after disciplinary action, suspension, or termination
- Develop relationship with local police
- Take legal recourse when necessary
- Ensure staff concerns are investigated and addressed

Workplace Procedures

Rate the following procedures on a scale of one to ten, with one being very ineffective and ten being very effective. Your rating should be based on how effective you think the procedure would be in preventing violence.

Procedure	Rating
ID cards for staff	
Sign in policy for visitors	
Intercom system in building, with panic button	
Buddy system where security guards escort staff to parking garage	
Banning all weapons in facility	
Information pamphlets on domestic violence	
Self-defense training	
Bulletproof glass protecting workers from clients (for example, at a front desk or cash register)	
Cell phones that workers can use when away from office	
Security system with surveillance cameras	
Written violence policy	

Security Systems and Personnel

Systems Criteria

Part six of Norman Keith's violence prevention plan is having a good security system in place.

Security Systems

Typically when we think of a security system, we think of an electronic system with motion sensors and a panel that tells us when a sensor detects motion. This can be one part of the system; however, there can be many other parts, including:

- Metal detectors
- Access restrictions (locks, access cards, buzzer entry systems)
- Panic buttons
- Intercoms
- Cell phones and pagers
- Bulletproof glass
- Partitions
- Proper escape routes
- Surveillance cameras
- Patrol by guards and/or guard dogs

The general point of the security system is to keep employees on the inside of the workplace safe and protected from internal and external threats. The development of a security system should not be limited to operations managers; human resources and the risk assessment team must also be involved. The components of a security system will depend on a workplace's risks and needs, and therefore will differ from workplace to workplace.

Like the risk assessment process we discussed earlier, the security system must be reviewed every one to two years, or after major building renovations or staff changes. All security equipment should also be inspected and maintained according to the manufacturer's requirements; there's not much good in a security system that doesn't work properly.

Security Personnel

Operations managers, the risk assessment team, and human resources will also want to develop a security team. This team will be in charge of the physical protection of the work site, as well as reporting and recording violent incidents (including threats). They should be trained in negotiation, defusing violent situations, communication, leadership, and self-defense measures.

Security personnel should always be in groups of two to three, never alone. They should also have some responsibility for employee safety. For example, if a security guard sees a staff member working alone at night or engaging in some other unsafe behavior, they should advise the staff member that their behavior is breaching the company policy. The security guard should also inform the appropriate supervisor.

A System for the Acme Widgets Company

Case Study

Staffing Schedule

Staff Member	Responsibility	# of Staff	Hours Worked
Security guards	Patrol building and grounds every half hour Monitor security desk and cameras	2	7 am to 7 pm (Sun-Wed)
		2	7 am to 7 pm (Thu-Sat)
		2	7 pm to 7 am (Sun-Wed)
		2	7 pm to 7 am (Thu-Sat)
		1	Backup; varies
Operations manager	Oversee all staff	1	8 am to 4 pm
Distribution clerks	Check invoices and prepare cargo Transport cargo to loading bay	2	7 am to 7 pm (Sun-Wed)
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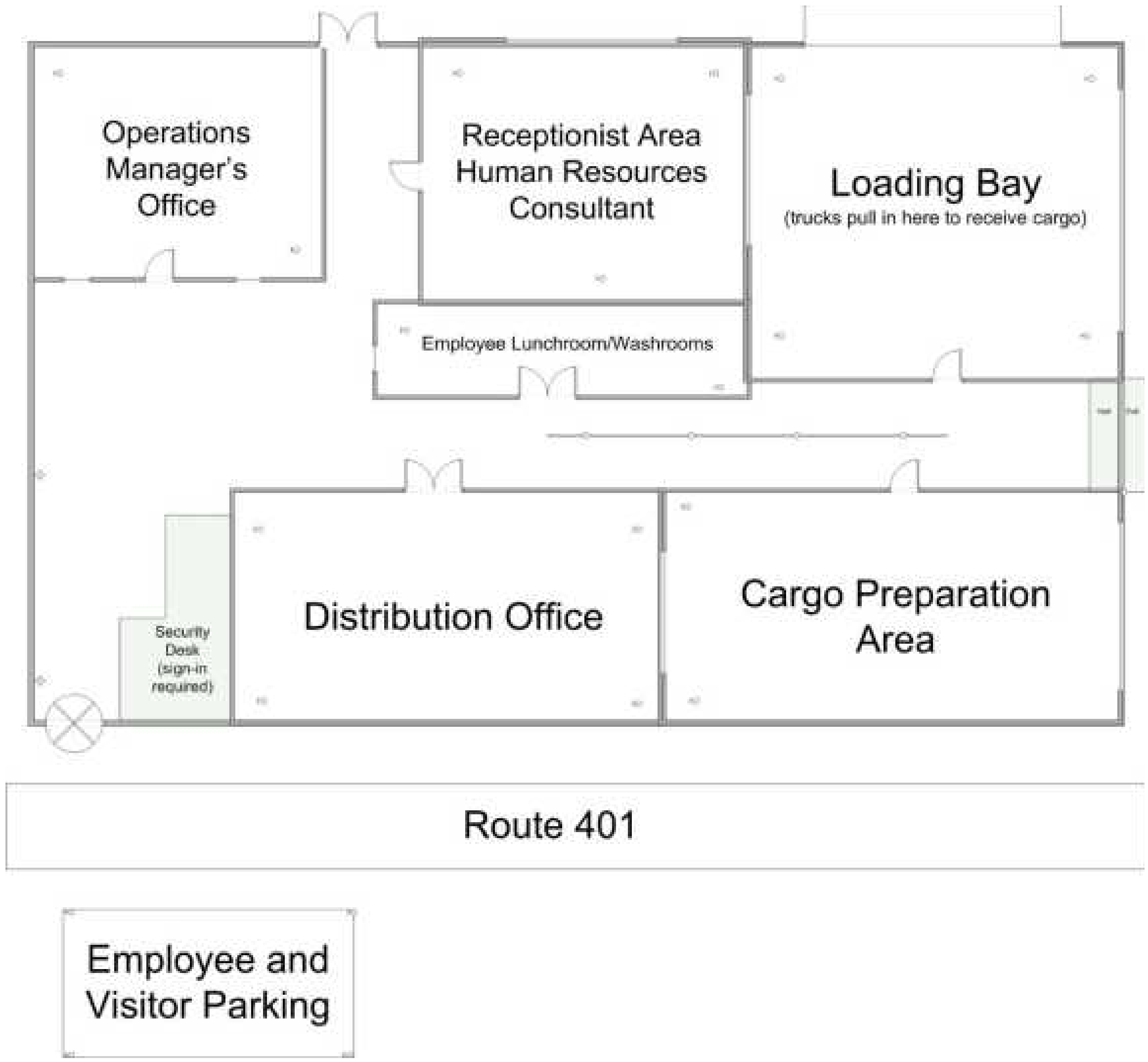
		1	7 pm to 7 am (Thu-Sat)
		1	Backup; varies
HR consultant	Manage all human resource issues, including personal counseling, hiring, firing	1	8 am to 4 pm, although can be called in off-hours
Receptionist	Respond to incoming phone calls, e-mails, faxes Prepare invoices and send to distribution clerks	3	8 am to 4 pm
		2	4 pm to midnight
		1	Midnight to 6 a.m.
Warehouse workers	Let trucks into loading bay, place cargo onto trucks, and ensure paperwork is signed and cash received	4	8 am to 4 pm

Floor Plan


Operations Manager's Office
Receptionist Area Human Resources Consultant
Loading Bay
(trucks pull in here to receive cargo)
Employee Lunchroom/Washrooms
Distribution Office
Cargo Preparation Area
Security Desk (sign-in required)
Route 401
Employee and Visitor Parking

Task

Decide what security measures and security personnel should be in place.

Training Programs

Developing a Program

Norman Keith has identified an eight-step plan for developing a training program. The most important element is that the training program is unique to the workplace and based on the results of the risk assessment.

Step One: Analysis
Analyze the situations to identify the areas for training. This can often be taken from the risk assessment.

Step Two: Definition
Decide what preventative actions you want to train employees in to address the areas identified in step one. Examples: self-defense, problem solving, or negotiation.

Step Three: Skill Identification
What skills, knowledge, and abilities will participants need to perform the actions identified in step two?

Step Four: Objectives
Identify the learning objectives for the training. Some examples: understand how to defuse a violent situation, identify some self-defense methods that will work for you, or develop some negotiation skills.

Step Five: Develop the Program
Now that you have identified the purpose of the program, specific learning objectives, and skills to be learned, you can develop the program itself. Items to be prepared will include the content, delivery methods (such as lecture, group work, or case studies), and any equipment to be used (such as a projector, VCR, white board, or flip chart).

Step Six: Develop Measurements
Once the program is developed, you must find a way to evaluate the participant's knowledge to ensure that the program has been successful. You can use tools such as written tests, simulations, or any other appropriate measuring methods.

Step Seven: Administration
Now it's time to actually administer the training. When and where will it take place? Who will take part? How will they be notified? How will they be evaluated?

Step Eight: Evaluation
Look at the results your training has produced using the tools you developed in step six. Are there any areas where participants are consistently weak? You may also want to distribute course evaluation forms to identify areas of participant concern. Make sure that you adjust the training program based on this feedback.

Like the risk assessment process, your training should be re-evaluated and modified on a regular basis to ensure you are meeting the organization's needs.

Contents of the Program

What items should be included in employee training?

Summary

Remember that training will differ depending on the organization. Even within an organization, different training should be given to managers, employees, security personnel, and human resource personnel. You will likely want expert help on developing and delivering your workplace violence training.

Developing Emergency Response Plans

Guide to Developing a Plan

Events to Plan For

Another key aspect of violence prevention is developing a plan in case something does happen. This can stop threatening behavior before it escalates into violence. As well, if a violent incident does occur, you want to minimize the number of casualties.

You cannot prepare for every type of violent incident or crisis. As well, plans will differ from organization to organization. Some of the incidents you must be prepared for include:

- Harassment
- Robbery
- Threats
- Assault
- Rape
- Homicide
- Suicide
- Domestic violence
- Stalking
- Hostage incidents
- Terrorist attacks

People to Include

Like training programs and security measures, the policy needs to be developed by a team of people, including the risk assessment team, senior management, human resources representatives, and local law enforcement. You will likely also want legal counsel and experts in the various areas.

Items to Address

Some items to address in your emergency response plan will include:

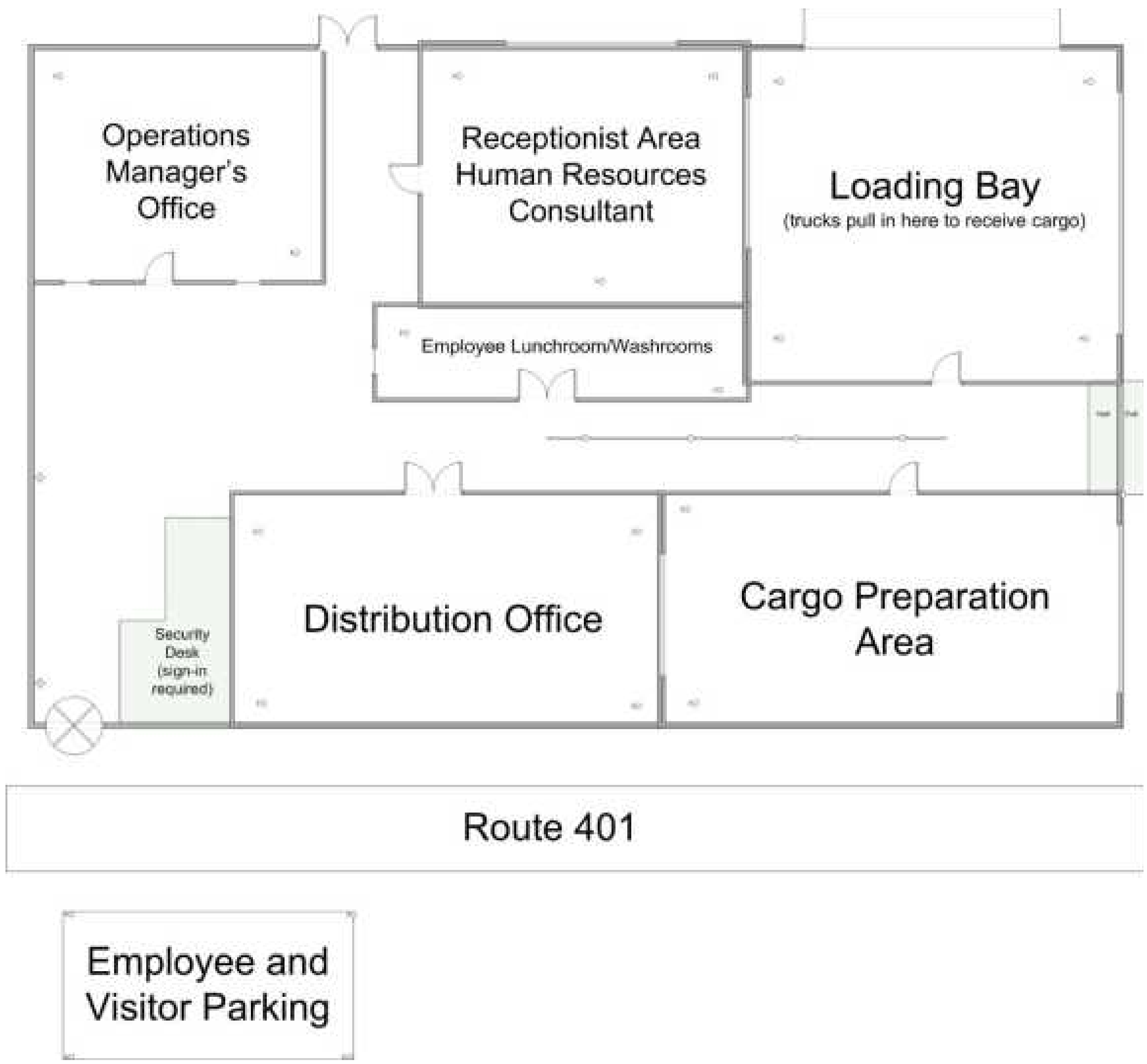
- What the worker should do if the incident happens to them
- What the worker should do if they witness an incident
- What escape routes should be used
- What security procedures they can take
- Who they should inform (for example, press panic button, call 911, or call security)
- How the responsible party should proceed, including how to inform staff
- How staff should respond when a particular emergency is declared

Emergency Response Plans for the Acme Widgets Company

Case Study

The Acme Widget Company manufactures and distributes widgets. It occupies the main floor of a warehouse in a waterfront neighborhood that has experienced gang violence. Employees use public parking across the street.

The floor plan looks like this:



The staff and their hours are outlined below. (The Acme Widgets Company made some changes based on their risk assessment.)

Staff Member	Responsibility	# of Staff	Hours Worked
Security guards	Patrol every half hour Monitor security desk and cameras Two guards are stationed inside cargo bay at all times	6	7 am to 7 pm (Sun-Wed)
		6	7 am to 7 pm (Thu-Sat)
		6	7 pm to 7 am (Sun-Wed)
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		1	Backup; varies
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		4	4 pm to midnight
		4	Midnight to 6 a.m.

Security systems include:

- Panic button in each room and in hallway that alerts the security desk that there is an emergency
- Intercom from each room to security desk
- Security guards have walkie-talkies to communicate

- Security desk has a lockdown command that locks all doors and windows
- Security desk also has direct line to police, fire, and ambulance that is separate from house line

Task

Develop a basic emergency response plan for your assigned threat.

Program Review

As we have mentioned throughout the course, constant review and re-evaluation are necessary to ensure your violence prevention program works. Components of the review should include:

- Annual employee surveys
- Safety inspections performed by an external agency every one to two years
- Risk assessment performed every one to two years
- Scheduled, regular meetings of risk assessment team
- Ongoing staff training
- Evaluation of training and modification of content as necessary
- Annual review of policy and program

These auditing procedures should be outlined in the violence prevention policy.

Developing a Threat Response Process

Introduction

Drs. James Turner, Michael Gelles, and Chris Hatcher have spent decades managing, preventing, and responding to workplace violence. Their research has changed the way thousands of organizations respond to workplace violence and has saved hundreds of lives.

Today we are going to walk through their 14-stage process of responding to a violent threat. Yesterday we emphasized how one size does not fit all when it comes to developing a violence prevention program and policy. The same goes for the violence response process; your organization should modify this process to reflect its policies and plans. However, today will give you a good framework to base your response process on.

The 14 Stages

Here is an overview of the 14 stages.

1. Immediate response and investigation
2. Review of incident response and decisions with labor and threat assessment experts
3. Identification of further information needed
4. Review of security
5. Determine re-evaluation factors
6. Determine threatened individuals and develop action plan
7. Determine interviewing need
8. Determine who will conduct interview
9. Determine risk level and response
10. Review of investigation
11. Determine legal options (civil or criminal)

12. Co-ordinate on site security responses
13. Co-ordinate off site security responses
14. Track individuals impacted

The Threat Review Team

A threat review team is key to these threat response stages. This team should be made up of people who have experience in assessing and managing workplace threats. Members should include human resource consultants, management, and security personnel. It is also wise to have experts in law and threat assessment available; these resources can be internal or external. You may also require additional experts depending on the situation and your specific organization.

The Immediate Response

What to Do When Violence Happens

Employee Responsibilities

If an employee witnesses or is the victim of violence in the workplace, the first thing they need to do is protect themselves. They should get as far away from the violent person as possible, preferably to the security desk.

Once the employee is safe, they can then concern themselves with protecting others. They should also initiate any appropriate alarms, notify security, and then notify management and/or human resources. (All of these steps should be explained in the organization's emergency response plan.)

Next Steps

Human resources, security personnel, or management should then take the following steps. (The proper person to perform these steps should also be explained in the organization's emergency response plan.)

- Call police.
- Secure work area where violence occurred.
- Preserve the scene's integrity while ensuring the safety of workers.
- Ensure that no area is left short-staffed and that employees remain in groups.
- Assess the scene for safety hazards (such as broken glass, weapons, or blood).
- Quickly debrief affected workers, including victims and witnesses. These conversations must be kept confidential.

Stage One of the Threat Response Process

Once the scene is secured and workers are safe, management needs to decide if the incident warrants triggering the threat response process.

If the process is triggered, then the threat assessment team must gather the following information:

- Description of the threat or threatening behavior
- Determine immediate action (call police) versus prompt action (team review)
- Determine if threat is general (directed towards company) or specific (directed to a building or person)
- Determine who heard/observed/received the threat or threatening behavior
- Determine if team or manager has any knowledge of warning signs (threat, threatening communication, angry outbursts, or violence)
- Determine level of distress by persons receiving, observing, or being targeted
- Determine if threat requires immediate security presence or removal of employees from environment
- Determine availability of external consultants and contact as needed

We recommend setting up a command center in a safe location and recording all information on a white board or flip chart in an organized manner.

Obviously the shape this process will take depends on the threat. If a person walks into a bank with a gun, there’s no time for the threat assessment team to sit down and decide what to do. In this case, the threat is immediate, so it would make sense for the emergency response plan to be activated immediately.

However, let’s say that one of your employees receives a letter stating that the bank will be bombed tomorrow. In this case, the threat assessment team would have time to have a meeting, perform basic fact-finding as described above, and determine a course of action.

Case Study

Case Study

Robert has worked for the Acme Widgets Company for ten years as a warehouse worker. He hated his job, hated the manual labor, and hated the long hours, but he stuck it out because he had to support his family. Yesterday, Joe Smith (the operations manager) took him into his office. He said, “Robert, I’ve got some bad news. We lost the DHP contract, so we’re going to have to lay you off in two weeks. We’ll pay out your vacation, of course…”

But just then Robert interrupted him. He stood up, leaned over the desk, and said, “I’ll be back here tomorrow, but not to work. I’m going to bring in a gun and kill every single miserable person that works here.” With that, he stormed out of the office, past the security desk, and out the door. Joe then called the head of the threat assessment team and asked that the threat assessment process be launched.

Questions

What was the threat or threatening behavior?

What immediate action is necessary?

What prompt action is necessary?

Is the threat general or specific?

Who heard the threatening behavior? Who witnessed the threatening behavior?

Is the team or manager aware of any warning signs? If so, what were they?

What is the level of distress of the threatened persons and the witnesses?

Does the threat require immediate security presence?

Does the situation warrant removal of employees from the workplace?

Does the threat require immediate police response?

What external consultants should be brought in?

Consulting with the Experts

Stage Two

Once the threat assessment team has established the basic facts of the case, they should bring in (or have a conference call with) their external consultants.

One member of the threat assessment team should be appointed spokesperson. They should have a summarized report prepared, outlining the facts gathered in Stage One.

In order for the consultants to provide the best information, you should ensure that the facts gathered in Stage One are as correct and precise as possible and that only the facts are conveyed, not impressions, judgments, or opinions.

The information gathered in the conference call should be noted and added to the Stage One analysis. Once again, it is important that the recorded notes be as correct and precise as possible.

Gathering Additional Information

Gathering Information

Stage Three

The third stage is to determine what additional information needs to be gathered, from whom, and how. You will want to interview employees and people outside the workplace to gather information. You may also want to perform a background check; be sure you check this with your Human Resources department to make sure it's legal. And, you may want to establish a liaison with local law enforcement, if appropriate.

Case Study

Robert has worked for the Acme Widgets Company for ten years as a warehouse worker. He hated his job, hated the manual labor, and hated the long hours, but he stuck it out because he had to support his family. Yesterday, Joe Smith (the operations manager) took him into his office. He said, "Robert, I've got some bad news. We lost the DHP contract, so we're going to have to lay you off in two weeks. We'll pay out your vacation, of course…"

But just then Robert interrupted him. He stood up, leaned over the desk, and said, "I'll be back here tomorrow, but not to work. I'm going to bring in a gun and kill every single miserable person that works here." With that, he stormed out of the office, past the security desk, and out the door. Joe then called the head of the threat assessment team and asked that the threat assessment process be launched.

Questions

Who in the workplace will need to be interviewed?

What questions would you ask each person?

Who outside the workplace will need to be interviewed?

What questions would you ask each person?

Who will perform these interviews?

Would you want to do a background check?

What purpose would a law enforcement liaison serve?

Re-Evaluating Information

Stage Four

Stages four and five involve the re-evaluation of information. At stage four, the threat assessment team must review the information gathered from the interviews and add it to the assessment performed in stage one. Then, they can use this information to determine what new security measures should be taken (if any) and what additional resources they may need.

For example, in our case study, the company may want to offer some type of security for Robert's family and have domestic violence experts on hand to help his family deal with the crisis.

Stage Five

At stage five, the threat assessment team should determine what new information would cause a re-evaluation of security measures. For example:

If Robert…	We will…
o Threatens his family (via telephone or in person)	o Inform the police o Ensure the family's safety
o Visits the office	o Call the police immediately o Lock down the premises
o Calls the office	o Record the call o Add information to threat assessment and re-evaluate as necessary

These measures can serve as contingency plans, to ensure that if something does change in the situation, the team is prepared to deal with it. (Of course, the impacted individuals should be notified of the plans as well.)

Communicating Incidents and Threats

Deciding What to Say

Stage Six

Now that the threat assessment team has gathered information and has a fairly good idea of the situation and possible ramifications, it's time to communicate with your staff and external people. If you have a communications or public relations department, these people should be involved at this stage. Remember that this message will be seen as issuing from the company, so it's crucial that the message be correct and come from the proper channels. Prior to this stage, the process must be performed as confidentially as possible.

First, the threat assessment team must decide what the company will say to its employees. Typically, you need only address those individuals or sites that are at risk. However, if it is a small company, you may want to address the entire company to cut off the rumor mill.

Then, the team must decide what to say to non-employees who are, or may be, at risk. Again, this should be done on a need-to-know basis. It is crucial not to hide information about a potentially violent person in the workplace; otherwise, the company could be held liable in the event that something happens.

Next, the team should identify resources that can be offered to the affected individuals, including counseling, security measures, or assistance programs.

Finally, the team should identify a spokesperson (typically senior management or someone from the communications or human resources department) to relay the message to everyone concerned.

Developing a Communication Plan

Case Study

Robert has worked for the Acme Widgets Company for ten years as a warehouse worker. He hated his job, hated the manual labor, and hated the long hours, but he stuck it out because he had to support his family. Yesterday, Joe Smith (the operations manager) took him into his office. He said, "Robert, I've got some bad news. We lost the DHP contract, so we're going to have to lay you off in two weeks. We'll pay out your vacation, of course…"

But just then Robert interrupted him. He stood up, leaned over the desk, and said, "I'll be back here tomorrow, but not to work. I'm going to bring in a gun and kill every single miserable person that works here." With that, he stormed out of the office, past the security desk, and out the door. Joe then called the head of the threat assessment team and asked that the threat assessment process be launched.

Staff List

Staff Member	Responsibility
Security guards	o Patrol every half-hour o Monitor security desk and cameras
Operations manager	o Oversee all staff
Distribution clerks	o Check invoices and prepare cargo o Transport cargo to loading bay
HR consultant	o Manage all human resource issues, including personal counseling, hiring, firing
Receptionist	o Respond to incoming phone calls, e-mails, faxes o Prepare invoices and send to distribution clerks
Warehouse workers	o Let trucks into loading bay o Place cargo onto trucks o Ensure paperwork is signed and cash received

Questions

Who inside the company needs to be informed of the incident?

Who outside the company needs to be informed of the incident?

What would you say to each group?

Ideally, what resources would you offer?

Looking at the staff list, who would you ask to perform the notifications? (Choose one person from your group to be this staff member.)

Interviewing Employees

Stages Seven and Eight

Stage Seven

The next two stages in the threat response process involve interviewing the employee. For stage seven, the threat assessment team needs to determine the purpose of the interview.

- Do we want to assess the current threat level?
- Do we want to determine what behaviors the alleged perpetrator is engaging in or may engage in?
- Do we need to determine what caused the distress?
- Do we need to determine what could escalate the person's level of anger and violence?

Typically, your employee interview will cover all of these questions. The purpose is to get a better idea of what caused the violence and how to de-escalate the person. The employee interview should be performed whenever possible, but it must be done so safely and wisely.

Stage Eight

In stage eight, the threat assessment team will need to determine who should conduct the interview. For safety reasons, the person performing the interview should be experienced and trained in these matters. The location should be secure and neutral. You may also want to have security personnel standing by.

When considering who should perform the interview, consider your internal resources as well as external consultants. The threat assessment team should compare experience, training, availability, and the relationship to the perpetrator and/or incident for each interviewer they consider.

Making Connections

Case Study

Robert has worked for the Acme Widgets Company for ten years as a warehouse worker. He hated his job, hated the manual labor, and hated the long hours, but he stuck it out because he had to support his family. Yesterday, Joe Smith (the operations manager) took him into his office. He said, "Robert, I've got some bad news. We lost the DHP contract, so we're going to have to lay you off in two weeks. We'll pay out your vacation, of course…"

But just then Robert interrupted him. He stood up, leaned over the desk, and said, "I'll be back here tomorrow, but not to work. I'm going to bring in a gun and kill every single miserable person that works here." With that, he stormed out of the office, past the security desk, and out the door. Joe then called the head of the threat assessment team and asked that the threat assessment process be launched.

Task

Develop a list of questions the interviewer and the threat assessment team would want to ask Robert.

Risk Level Analysis

The Five Categories

Stage Nine

By stage nine, the threat assessment team will have gathered the basic facts; consulted with outside experts; interviewed employees, witnesses, non-employees, and the perpetrator; and performed extensive risk and threat analyses. Now that we have all this information, we must analyze the level of risk that this threat poses. Violence experts Dr. James Turner and Dr. Michael Gelles propose this five-level system for analyzing threats.

Category 1 (Most Severe)

- Available data suggests high violence potential
- Behavior meets state criteria for arrest or hospitalization
- Requires major organizational response
- Has demonstrated violent behavior in the past
- Example: “I’m going to kill everyone in this building.”

Category 2

- Available data suggests high violence potential
- Behavior does not meet state criteria for arrest or hospitalization
- Threat is quid pro quo (this will happen if that demand is not met)
- Example: "I'm going to kill everyone in this building if I don't get my job back."

Category 3

- Available data is insufficient to determine violence potential
- Data supports that victims feel threatened/distressed
- Purpose is to cause emotional harm rather than physical harm
- Example: "You're so stupid; I wish you would just die."

Category 4

- Available data is insufficient to determine violence potential
- Data supports that victims feel threatened/distressed
- Infliction of distress is unintended
- Threat or behavior is a single event

Category 5 (Least Severe)

- Available data is insufficient to determine violence potential
- Data does not support that victims feel threatened/distressed
- Report of threat may be unfounded

Case Studies

Scenario One

Mohammed has had a long, hard morning. He walked into the cafeteria and opened the fridge, only to find that his sandwich container was missing. He looked around and saw Sarah, the office manager, eating his sandwich. He walked over to her and said, "If you ever touch my lunch again, I will rip your lips off."

What category does this behavior fall in?

Scenario Two

The marketing team at the Acme Advertising Company has been struggling for weeks to get a new campaign pulled together. Shawn, Darlene, and Samantha are all on the core team. Darlene and Samantha have heard that Shawn has been involved in some domestic violence incidents and are very careful not to upset him. One night they are working late, and they realize their latest idea just isn't working out. Shawn starts throwing things, leans out the window and starts yelling at passersby. Darlene and Samantha ask him to calm down, and he responds hysterically, "Keep them away!!!"

What category does this behavior fall in?

Scenario Three

The operations department of the Acme Accounting Company is having their monthly staff meeting. Kara gets very frustrated midway through the meeting, throws her pencil across the room, and leaves, slamming the door. The other employees are very distressed and feel threatened.

What category does this behavior fall in?

Scenario Four

Robert has worked for the Acme Widgets Company for ten years as a warehouse worker. He hated his job, hated the manual labor, hated the long hours, but he stuck it out because he had to support his family. Yesterday, Joe Smith (the operations manager) took him into his office. He said, “Robert, I’ve got some bad news. We lost the DHP contract, so we’re going to have to lay you off in two weeks. We’ll pay out your vacation, of course…”

But just then Robert interrupted him. He stood up, leaned over the desk, and said, “I’ll be back here tomorrow, but not to work. I’m going to bring in a gun and kill every single miserable person that works here.” With that, he stormed out of the office, past the security desk, and out the door.

What category does this behavior fall in?

Reviewing the Options

Stage Ten

Stage ten involves a comprehensive review of the information and actions to date to decide on a long-term plan. This meeting should involve legal counsel, the threat assessment team, and the threat assessment consultant.

Note that the threat assessment consultant should not be present during discussions about the perpetrator’s employment status, nor should they be involved in personnel decisions (such as hiring, firing, and disciplinary action). Once a decision has been made, however, they can be asked to help develop risk reduction strategies based on the employment decision.

Possible Outcomes

Typically, the outcome is either discipline or counseling.

Discipline	Counseling
o Can include written warnings, suspension, or termination	o Can involve sessions with trained professional, workshops, personal development
o Serves as deterrent to others	o Typically not a deterrent
o Typically does not help employee grow or change problem behavior	o Possibility for rehabilitation, growth, and education
o Shows that company takes stance against inappropriate behavior/violence	o Shows that company takes stance against inappropriate behavior/violence and that it cares about its workers' health
o Appropriate for major offences (breaking the law, human rights violations)	o Appropriate for minor offences (outbursts, inappropriate displays of anger)

About Termination

Termination should be used as a last resort. Termination usually only serves to make the employee angrier. It will not likely help them resolve the issues that led to the violence, although you cannot refrain from firing someone simply because they may have a reaction or you won't be able to run your business. It may, however, be necessary to terminate an employee if a major violation has occurred, or if problem behavior recurs. It is wise to seek legal counsel before terminating an employee for violence issues.

Stages Eleven, Twelve, and Thirteen

During the next three stages, the threat assessment team and their resources should look at civil law options, criminal law options, on-site security responses, and off-site security responses. An action plan can then be laid out and implemented.

Analyzing the Impact

About Stage Fourteen

The final stage of the threat response process is assessing and responding to the people involved in the violent incident. You want to make sure that these people have adequate resources and counseling. There are three main parts to this stage.

Part One: Victim Identification
The first task is for the threat analysis team to identify those affected by the violent incident. They should include people who witnessed the incident, those who experienced the violent behavior, and those close with the violent person. If the company is small, all employees may be included on the list.

Part Two: Victim Analysis
Once the affected people are identified, the appropriate personnel (typically human resources) should conduct an interview with each individual to identify the level of impact. The interviewer can then decide what action is appropriate to help the individual deal with the violent incident: counseling, supervisor follow-up, or other employee assistance programs.

Part Three: Follow-Up
Once the action plan has been established, a member of the human resources department (or other appropriate team) should follow all impacted individuals and ensure that the action plan is being implemented. They must continue evaluating the success of the action plan to ensure it is working and is adequate. Supervisors should also monitor all employees and watch for signs of stress. They must ensure that their staff is getting the help that they need.

Debriefing for the Threat Assessment Team

Once the threat has been resolved, a neutral third party who is not on the team should come in to debrief the threat assessment team. This gives each team member an opportunity to discuss their feelings during the process and helps them de-escalate. These conversations must be kept entirely confidential.

It is also useful to perform an evaluation of the threat assessment process after resolution has been achieved (or at least after the crisis is over).

Helping the Healing

Ensuring that the violent person gets appropriate follow-up is crucial to this stage. If counseling or other non-disciplinary measures have been chosen as a resolution to the issue, it is important that the perpetrator be assigned a human resources representative to ensure that the action plan is being followed and that it is working. This representative must have the authority and the resources to alter the action plan if the behavior is not changing.

Incident Response Checklist

Dr. Robert Turner has developed a framework checklist that the threat assessment team can use throughout the process. This checklist will need to be adapted to your organization's specific needs and your jurisdiction's legal requirements, but you can use it as a starting point.

1. Initial Team Consultation

People Involved

- Threat assessment team
- Management
- Legal consultants
- Risk assessment consultants
- Security staff

Checklist

Member	Name	Cell Phone/Pager Number
Human resources		
Security staff		
Legal counsel		
Risk assessment consultant		

2. Immediate Action Taken

Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Employee removed from worksite?		
Administrative leave?		
Benefits suspended?		
With pay?		
Restricted access to site and staff (physical)?		
Restricted access to staff (phone/e-mail)?		
Process completed?		

3. Contact Labor Law Counsel

People Involved

- Threat assessment team

Checklist

	Yes	No
Is labor law counsel required?		
If Yes, has counsel been contacted?		

4. Contact Risk Assessment Consultant

People Involved

- Threat assessment team

Checklist for Risk Assessment Consultant

Action	Yes	No
Seek assessment of situation stability, areas overlooked, areas needing additional inquiry		
Options for obtaining further information		

Related Information

Determine conditions for further interviews:

- Conducted by management and security personnel (internal)
- Risk assessment specialist (external)

If risk assessment specialist will be involved, determine level of involvement:

- Risk assessment specialist helps to script interview for company personnel
- Risk assessment specialist conducts interviews
- Establish threshold where risk assessment specialist will conduct interviews

5. Background Check

People Involved

- Security staff

Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Confirm if check is legal		
Complete background check		

Related Information

Results of check:

____

____

____

____

6. On-Site Security Enhancement

People Involved

- Security staff

Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Personnel needed?		
Areas identified?		
Personnel assigned?		

7. Off-Site Security Enhancement

People Involved

- Security staff

Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Restrict access to site?		
Restrict access to co-workers?		

8. Law Enforcement Liaison Established

People Involved

- Security staff

Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Law enforcement liaison required?		
Command officer on duty at time of employee interview?		
Backup staff identified?		
Prepare briefing card with specifics of violent person?		

Name of command officer at law enforcement agency: ____________________________

9. On-Site Interviews of Co-Workers

Interview List

Name	Phone Number	Cell Phone/Pager Number

Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Are co-workers scheduled to work on the day/time of the interview?		
Are co-workers entitled to union representation?		
If "Yes," has union been notified?		
If "No," who will inform union and when?		
Have co-workers been notified of the interview?		
Circle method of notification: Via memo or written Verbally		
Is there agreement about communication to co-workers?		

10. Management of At-Risk Staff

People Involved

- Management
- Security staff

Checklist

Action	Details
Who is designated management liaison to at-risk employees?	
Will there be security considerations for at-risk employees at the work site? (Examples: parking place close to building, security escort, cell phone or pager loan)	
Will there be security considerations for at-risk employees away from the work site? (Examples: time off, paid trip out of town, police liaison)	
What contact, if any, will be maintained with the spouse or family of the at-risk employee?	
If employee is referred to employee assistance program, who will contact program manager to ensure personalized referral and provide briefing?	
If employee intends to use health resources, who will contact provider to ensure personalized referral and provide briefing?	

11. On-Site Interviews of Violent Employee

Preparation Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Is employee scheduled to work on the day/time of the interview?		
Is employee entitled to union representation?		
If "Yes," has union been notified?		
If "No," who will inform union and when?		
Has the employee been notified of the interview?		
Circle method of notification: Via memo or written	Verbally	
Is there agreement about communication to the employee?		

Related Information

Employee name and number: ____

Which management member will note the employee agreement to attend to interview and have employee initial this agreement?

Which management member will greet employee and introduce interviewers?

Interview Checklist

Ensure that the following points are covered during the interview.

Question or Statement	Reviewed
Interview is an internal review of problem behavior between employee and others	
Interview is not confidential	
All information gathered may be provided to management, shared with threat assessment team and outside consultants	
Employee has access to the management member of risk assessment team during the interview; provide phone number	
Management member of risk assessment team will meet with employee after interview if appropriate	
Employee can take breaks at any time	
Employee can consult with union representative at any time (if applicable)	
Refreshments are available in the room	

12. Assessment of Threat Categories

People Involved

- Threat assessment consultant
- Threat assessment team

Category Checklist

Circle the current category level.

<table>
<tr><th>Level</th><th>Details</th><th>Anticipated Response</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Category 1
(Most Severe)</td><td>Available data suggests high violence potential</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Behavior meets state criteria for arrest or hospitalization</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Category 2</td><td>Available data suggests high violence potential</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Behavior does not meet state criteria for arrest or hospitalization</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Category 3</td><td>Available data is insufficient to determine violence potential</td><td rowspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Data supports that victims feel threatened/distressed</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Category 4</td><td>Available data is insufficient to determine violence potential</td><td rowspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Data supports that victims feel threatened/distressed</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infliction of distress is unplanned</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Category 5
(Least Severe)</td><td>Available data is insufficient to determine violence potential</td><td rowspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Data does not support that victims feel threatened/distressed</td></tr>
<tr><td>Report of threat may be unfounded</td></tr>
</table>

13. Post-Risk Assessment Interview (Feedback Session)

People Involved

- Risk assessment consultants
- Risk assessment team
- Legal counsel
- Security personnel

Related Information

Date, time, and location of feedback session:

____

____

____

____

People involved:

____

____

____

____

Who, beyond the risk assessment team, needs to know what (safety vs. privacy) from the interview results?

____

____

____

____

(People to consider: Threatened employees, witnesses, general employee population, and workplace visitors)

14. Post-Risk Assessment Interview (Security Enhancements)

People Involved

- Risk assessment team
- Security staff
- Risk assessment consultants

Checklist

Action	Yes	No
Personnel needed?		
Areas identified?		
Personnel assigned?		
Restraining order warranted?		

Related Information

What behaviors should be looked for?

What behaviors warrant considering further contact (such as additional interviews) with violent person?

What behaviors warrant contacting law enforcement?

15. Post-Risk Assessment Interview (Personnel Action)

People Involved

- Risk assessment team
- Legal counsel

Related Information

Personnel action to be taken:

Behaviors personnel action is based on:

Process Application

We've covered the entire threat response process. Let's look over the process and see how it could be applied to the scenario we started out with in Session Nineteen.

Time	Stage of Process	Action Taken
11:05 a.m.	Initiation	Robert says to operations manager Joe Smith, "I'll be back here tomorrow, but not to work. I'm going to bring in a gun and kill every single miserable person that works here." Robert then leaves workplace.
11:07 a.m.	Initiation	Joe Smith alerts security and calls threat assessment team.
11:10 a.m.	Initiation	Security team initiates emergency response plan to secure workplace and address immediate threat.
11:30 a.m.	Stage One	Threat assessment team meets and analyzes data.
12:00 p.m.	Stage Two	Threat assessment team has conference call with legal counsel. HR representative Mary Anderson presents.
12:30 p.m.	Stage Two	Threat assessment team has conference call with threat assessment consultant. HR representative Mary Anderson presents.
1:00 p.m.	Stage Three	Threat assessment team appoints June Mayfield (head of security) as police liaison; she makes contact with local law enforcement.
1:10 p.m.	Stage Three	Threat assessment team decides on people to interview, questions to be asked, and interviewers. Background checks not legal in this state unless have employee's permission, so will not be performed at this time.
1:30 p.m.	Stage Three	Interviews performed by Mary Anderson and Joe Smith.
3:00 p.m.	Stage Four	Threat assessment team meets to review all information. Determined that may need expert on domestic violence; Mary Anderson to set this up.
3:30 p.m.	Stage Five	Contingency plans developed.
4:30 p.m.	Stage Six	Public relations consultant (Hubert Redbord) brought in to help develop staff communications.

Time	Stage of Process	Action Taken
5:30 p.m.	Stage Six	Joe Smith and Hubert Redbord communicate with staff currently on-site. Inform security that anyone coming on shift must go to lunch room first to meet with Joe and Hubert.
5:30 p.m.	Stage Six	Police confirm Robert is not at home. Mary Anderson and June Mayfield meet with Robert's wife and children.
7:30 p.m.	Stage Seven and Eight	Threat assessment team meets. Plans employee interview questions for when Robert is located. June Mayfield and Mary Anderson will conduct interview.
8:00 p.m.	Stage Nine	Threat assessment team reviews information to date. Categorizes Robert as Level One threat.
8:15 p.m.	Stage Ten	Threat assessment team conferences with threat assessment consultant and legal expert. Mary Anderson summarizes and presents data. Risk control measures (increased security at site, police alerted) to date reviewed. No new measures needed.
8:45 p.m.	Stage Ten	Threat assessment consultant leaves. Decision is made to suspend Robert with pay for two weeks minimum. Robert must attend counseling and have psychiatric evaluation. Decision on return to work will be made by supervisor, HR consultant, and counselors.
9:30 p.m.	Stage Eleven	Threat assessment team conferences with legal expert. Possibility of filing criminal charges of uttering a threat; civil charges not appropriate at this point.
10:00 p.m.	Stage Twelve	On-site security responses reviewed and confirmed. Security staff briefed on communication to share with employees arriving at work.
10:10 p.m.	Stage Thirteen	No off-site security responses. Police ensuring safety of Robert's family.

Personal Action Plan

I am already doing these things well:

I want to improve these areas:

I have these resources to help me:

As a result of what I have learned in this workshop, I am going to…	My target date is…	I will know I have succeeded when…	I will follow up with myself on…

Further Reading:

- ✓ Bassi, Goldie, and Norman A. Keith. *Human Resources Guide to Managing Workplace Violence (2nd Edition).* Canada Law Book, 2010.
- ✓ Dobrich, Wanda, Steven Dranoff, and Gerald Maatman. *The Manager's Guide to Preventing a Hostile Work Environment.* McGraw-Hill, 2002.
- ✓ Fitzwater, Terry L. *Crisp: Behavior-Based Interviewing.* Crisp Learning, 2000.
- ✓ Gelles, Michael G., and James T. Turner. *Threat Assessment: A Risk Management Approach.* The Haworth Press, 2003.
- ✓ Hamilton, Cheryl, and Cordell Parker. *Communicating for Results (10th Edition).* Wadsworth Publishing, 2013.
- ✓ Hammond, Stephen. *Managing Human Rights at Work.* Harassment Solutions Inc., 2009.
- ✓ Kemp, Sid. *Perfect Solutions for Difficult Employee Situations.* McGraw-Hill, 2004.
- ✓ McClure, Lynne. *Anger and Conflict in the Workplace.* Impact Publications, 2000.
- ✓ Namie, Gary, and Ruth Namie. *The Bully at Work, Second Edition.* Sourcebooks, Inc., 2009.
- ✓ Stone, Douglas, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen. *Difficult Conversations (10th Anniversary Edition).* Penguin Books, 2010.