



Workplace violence

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Facts

- Homicide is the 4th leading cause of fatal occupational injury in the US.
- In 2007 there were 610 workplace homicides.
(Up 13% from 2006)
- Less than half of all threats are reported annually.

Workplace violence defined



- Workplace violence is any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting.
- A workplace may be any location either permanent or temporary where an employee performs any work-related duty.





Types of workplace violence

- **Internal**
 - Insider/employee of the organization causes harm/violence.

- **External**
 - Outsider to the organization causes harm/violence.

- **Domestic**
 - Occurs when a family member, partner or ex-partner attempts to physically or psychologically dominate or harm the other.

Types of physical violence

- Homicide
- Hitting
- Shoving
- Pushing
- Kicking
- Sexual assaults



- Usually directed to an employee, supervisor or customer

Verbal violence

- Threats
- Harassment
- Abuse
- Intimidation



- Often signals more serious violence to come

Possible internal causes of workplace violence



- Unstable economy
- Job layoffs
- Labor – Management disputes
- Job stress
- Pressure for increased productivity
- Psychological instability
- Lack of individual responsibility
- Marital or family problems
- Alcohol/drug problems



Other signs usually accompany a threat. A potentially violent person:



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- Is unusually argumentative
 - Resistance and over-reaction to changes in procedures
 - Has a problem with authority figures
 - Repeated violations of company policies
 - Frequently blames others for his or her problems
 - Increase of unsolicited comments about firearms and other dangerous weapons
 - Displays marked changes in work patterns like tardiness or absenteeism
 - Escalation of domestic problems
 - Increased use of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
 - Explosive outbursts of anger or rage without provocation
 - History of violence



Keep in mind

- A person may not exhibit all of these signs
- Do not make hasty judgments
- Use common sense and avoid stereotyping



Risk factors

- Isolated work areas
 - (Remote locations: on campus or in a building)

- Solo work
 - (Night class instruction or working late hrs.)

- No means of communication



Risk factors

- Financial responsibilities
 - (Making deposits)

- Nature of service or responsibility
 - (Student's Grades)

- Unrestricted movement in the workplace



Safety tips

■ DO:

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Know where your exits are
- Implement a *"buddy system"*
- Leave with keys in hand
- Consider workplace layouts

■ DO:

- Maintain the ability to communicate
- Report all incidents
- Inform management of restraining orders
- Secure your workplace daily

What to look for

- Obsessive behavior
- Increased absenteeism
- Chemical dependency
- Verbal threats or threatening actions
- History of discipline problems
- Depression & isolation
- Defensiveness
- Emotional outbursts
- Interests in weapons
- Self-destructive behavior
- Affiliation with gangs



Things to remember

- Do NOT get physical
- Do NOT over-react
- Do NOT take the challenge
- Be a good listener
- Know what is really being said
- Give them space
- Watch what you say non-verbally
- Speak of consequences NOT threats



Possible Violence If Any of These Conditions Exist:



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- Verbal abuse
 - Excessive profanity
 - Consistently argumentative
 - Failure to cooperate
 - Inappropriate sexual comments
 - Instigating harmful rumors
 - Expressing suicidal thoughts
 - Frequent displays of anger, such as clenched fist, tight jaw, red face (also known as posturing)
 - Negative attitude toward policy/procedures



Strong Threat

- Expressing a desire or intent to harm others
- Open disobedience of policy/procedure
- Vandalizing/stealing property for revenge
- Expressing feelings of persecution by others
- Sending sexual/violent notes
- Making suicidal threats or gestures
- Consistently acting out anger such as shouting, throwing or pushing objects, slamming doors, punching walls

Call 911 Effectively

- Stay calm.
- Know the location of the emergency and the number you are calling from.



Call 911 Effectively

- Wait for the call-taker to ask questions, then answer clearly and calmly.
 - If you are in danger of assault, the dispatcher or call-taker will still need you to answer quietly, mostly "yes" and "no" questions.





Call 911 Effectively

- Let the call-taker guide the conversation.
 - He or she is typing the information into a computer and may seem to be taking forever. There's a good chance, however, that emergency services are already being sent while you are still on the line.

- Follow all directions.
 - In some cases, the call-taker will give you directions. Listen carefully, follow each step exactly, and *ask for clarification* if you don't understand.



Call 911 Effectively

- Keep your eyes open.
 - You may be asked to describe victims, suspects, vehicles, or other parts of the scene.

- Do not hang up the call until directed to do so by the call-taker.

Summary

By being proactive, working together and raising awareness to the stresses that can come into one's life, we can prevent violence from occurring and ensure a safe and pleasant work environment.





Deputy Les Wiemers

If I can be of any help
please let me know.

- Weld County Sheriffs Office
- Aims Campus Resource Officer
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Thank you

