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Managing the Threats of
Workplace Violence 2016

RISK CONTROL

Table of Contents

Introduction

Violence in the workplace continues to be a growing concern. In fact, there are over two million incidents of workplace violence each year, not including those that go unreported. For this reason, it's important for companies, whether large or small, to take every reasonable precaution to keep their workplace safe. On the positive side, there is compelling evidence to suggest that employers who take a proactive stance toward problematic behavior will be more successful in deterring workplace violence. By detecting and interceding "at risk" or intimidating behavior in the early stages, the threat can oftentimes be mitigated and/or avoided, in some cases, before it becomes dangerous or even life threatening.

Given that workplace violence is not easily predictable, empowerment must begin at the employee level. For example, workplace "threats" can be both internal (co-worker, supervisor or customer) or external (family member, stranger). So while holding a door open for a co-worker may be well intended, it could in reality, be granting entry to someone terminated the day before who has returned for revenge. When you raise an employee's level of awareness about unacceptable behaviors, that sequence of violence can be disrupted. Creating an awareness of these "Behaviors of Concern" and the subsequent implementation of an action plan to de-escalate potentially violent incidents are essential components of a workplace violence prevention program.

Although no one expects to become a victim of workplace violence, knowing how to respond if a violent incident were to occur is a critical survival skill. This is especially important since most critical incidents end prior to the arrival of law enforcement, meaning employees must then assume responsibility for their own lives. The first step toward survival during a critical incident begins with a survival mindset and the ability to manage fears and emotions. Panic and fear can result in the inability to think clearly and respond accordingly during a time of unthinkable stress; however, trained individuals are often able to overcome those crippling emotions.

Workplace violence mitigation requires ongoing attention and senior management commitment in personnel security. Staying on top of the workplace culture, staffing and assessing the impact of workplace policies can uncover conditions, situations and moods adversely affecting worker morale, performance, production, and efficiency that eventually lead to workplace conflict. Assessing physical protective workplace measures is not only required under the Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) Act, General Duty Clause[1], but is an effective risk management strategy for a safe workplace. If an employer experiences workplace violence or threats of potential violence, they would be placed on notice for the risk of workplace violence.

Although this handbook is designed to provide general guidance on risk management issues, it is, in no way, a substitute for expert advice. Please consult experienced professionals for guidance on specific threats and workplace violence issues and on how to develop and implement a comprehensive workplace violence program.

What is Workplace Violence?

Definition

Workplace violence is a multi-faceted problem that is now recognized as a category of violent crime that calls for a distinct response. Contributing factors include downsizing or reorganizing departments, sizeable layoffs, growth of technology, recession, large mergers, post modernism and unemployment. Although there isn't a standard definition, a common description is violence or the threat of violence against workers that can occur at or outside of the workplace. Further, it can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicides, which is one of the leading causes of job-related deaths. However, it chooses to manifest itself, workplace violence is a growing concern for employers and employees nationwide.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)[2] defines workplace violence as violent acts, including physical assaults and threats of assaults, directed toward persons at work or on duty. Workplace violence ranges from offensive or threatening language to homicide. It may include domestic violence, sexual violence—including sexual harassment or sexual assault—dating violence and stalking.

Prevalence

Multiple homicide incidents, while highly publicized in the media, are representative of only a small number of workplace violence incidents. The majority of incidents that employers and employees face on a daily basis are cases of assault, domestic violence, stalking, threats, harassment (to include bullying and sexual harassment), and physical and/or emotional abuse. That said, many incidents go unreported to management, so data on the precise extent of workplace violence is inexact. The truth is that workplace violence can strike anywhere and, unfortunately, no one is immune. According to OSHA, nearly 2 million American workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year[3].

Although not all workplace violence results in fatalities, the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries for the years 2006–2010[4], conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, cited an average of 551 workers per year killed in work-related homicides. Working alone or in isolated areas can contribute to the potential for violence. Providing services and care, and working where alcohol is served, may also affect the likelihood of violence. Additionally, time of day and location of work, such as working late at night or in areas with high crime rates, are also risk factors that should be considered when addressing issues of workplace violence. Among those with higher risk are delivery drivers, healthcare professionals, public service workers, customer service agents, law enforcement, and those who work alone or in small groups.

Types of Workplace Violence

Workplace violence typically falls into four types of categories based on the relationship among victims, offenders and work settings.

Type I – Criminal Intent

In this kind of violent incident, the offender has no legitimate relationship to the victim or the organization, but enters to commit robbery or another crime.

Type II – Customer/Client

When the violent person has a legitimate relationship with the business—for example, the person receives services from the organization (retail, health or service industry) when they commit an act of violence against them.

Type III – Worker on Worker

Involve current or former employees acting out toward their present or past places of employment.

Type IV – Personal Relationship

Violence committed in the workplace by someone who doesn't work there, but has a personal relationship with an employee— an abusive spouse or domestic partner that spills over into the workplace.

Myths

There is no evidence that violence is spontaneous. In other words, people don't "just snap" and suddenly become violent without provocation, which is one of the common myths associated with workplace violence.

In virtually every incident, there are red flags, or Behaviors of Concern, that have escalated over time that precede an incident of workplace violence. These can entail problems with co-workers, management, financials, and relationships, to name just a few.

Next, critical incidents are rarely, if ever, random; typically, they are planned and, in most cases, the violent offender intentionally targets a specific individual, usually a supervisor, human resources manager or co-worker, whom he/she perceives to be responsible for their plight. Quite often, there's a sense of denial on the part of employees and others who've interacted with a violent offender prior to an act of violence; they sometimes believe if not intervened or interfered with, the "problem" will just go away over time or that "it's someone else's responsibility," such as corporate security. Lastly, and probably the most prevalent myth, is that "it doesn't

happen here." Remember, workplace violence can happen anywhere with little or no relationship to a company's product, service, size, location or history. Not surprisingly, then, is the Department of Justice[5] statistic that 1 in 4 employees will be victimized—specifically harassed, threatened or attacked on the job. In addition, each week in the United States, an average of 20 workers are murdered and 18,000 are assaulted while at work.

Costs

It is difficult to overstate the costs of workplace violence, because a single incident can have sweeping repercussions. There can be the immediate and profound loss of life or physical or psychological repercussions felt by the victim as well as the victim's family, friends, and co-workers; the loss of productivity and morale that sweeps through an organization after a violent incident; and the public relations impact on an employer when news of violence reaches the media. In reality, workplace violence related fatalities are only the tip of the iceberg. According to the Department of Justice[6], victims of violence in the workplace miss 1.8 million days of work each year, resulting in more than $55 million in lost wages, not including days covered by sick and annual leave. Added to that are costs for reduced productivity, medical costs, workers' compensation payments and legal and security expenses which, although less exact, run into billions of dollars[7]. In fact, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health estimate the annual cost of workplace violence for employers to be close to $121 billion[8].

Snapshot
The following characteristics of the 160 active shooter incidents identified between 2000 and 2013 are noted:

160 incidents occurred between 2000 and 2013

An average of **11.4** incidents occurred annually; with an increasing trend from 2000 to 2013.

486 were killed in 160 incidents

1,043 Casualties, including killed and wounded (shooters were not included in this total)

557 were wounded* in 160 incidents.

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2014
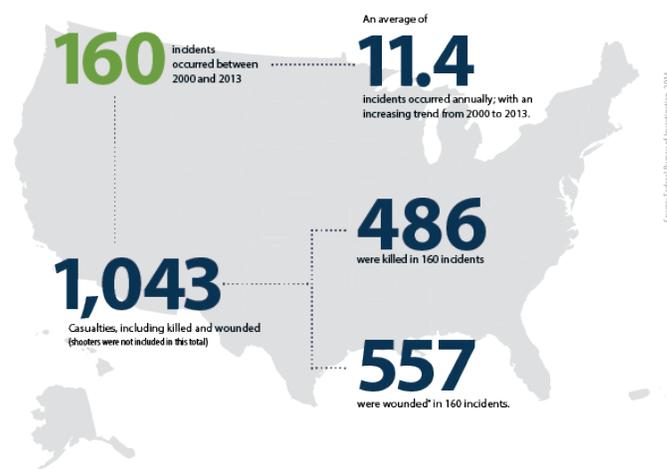
INCIDENTS
- An average of 11.4 incidents occurred annually.
- An average of 6.4 incidents occurred in the first 7 years studied, and an average of 16.4 occurred in the last 7 years.
- 70.0% of the incidents occurred in either a commerce/business or educational environment.[10]
- Shootings occurred in 40 of 50 states and the District of Columbia.
- 60.0% of the incidents ended before police arrived.

*A handful of those identified as "wounded" were not injured by gunfire but rather suffered injuries incidental to the event, such as being hit by flying objects/shattered glass or falling while running. This does not account for all those wounded in this fashion or any mental or emotional trauma that resulted in potential medical treatment.

Standard Considerations – Voluntary/Compliant

In 2011, the **American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS)** and the **Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)** issued guidelines on workplace violence prevention and intervention in the form of a joint **American National Standard** (available through the ASIS website). This Standard recommends creating policies, procedures and a prevention program that include management commitment, employee involvement, training, threat assessment, incident management and resolution. Following the release of the American National Standard, the **Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)** issued its first compliance directive (available on their website) on investigation and inspection of workplace violence incidents.

Sources

ASIS is the preeminent organization for Security professionals, with more than 37,000 members worldwide. It is dedicated to increasing the effectiveness and productivity of Security professionals. SHRM is the world's largest association devoted to Human Resource management. Representing more than 250,000 members in over 140 countries, **SHRM** serves the needs of HR professionals and advances the interests of the HR profession. **OSHA** is responsible for assuring safe and healthy working conditions for working men and women by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance.

OSHA General Duty Clause

The OSHA General Duty Clause requires employers to provide a safe and healthful workplace for all workers covered by this Administration. This would include reducing the risk of workplace violence by ensuring appropriate measures have been implemented to provide physical security of the facility itself. Additionally, there would be an expectation that threats of harm and/or physical assaults would be immediately addressed and stopped. Employers who do not take reasonable steps to prevent or abate a recognized violence hazard in the workplace can be cited.

Mitigating Workplace Violence

An employer could be liable[9] under OSHA if a victim or victim's family can prove that the employer knew, or should have known, that violence could occur. Under OSHA, an employer may also be penalized if the U.S. Secretary of Labor establishes that the employer violated the General Duty Clause. In order to establish a violation, the Department of Labor must prove a hazard existed, the employer knew it existed, the hazard was likely to cause death or serious bodily harm, and a feasible abatement method existed. In recent years, OSHA has applied the General Duty Clause in numerous workplace injury cases where no specific standard was in effect.

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

One of the first measures employers should take is to create a "No Threats, No Violence" policy toward workplace violence against or by their employees.

Threat of Violence
Conduct or behavior interpreted as conveying the intent to engage in violence or to cause injury or harm to a person or property. **Note:** Threatening conduct or behavior is not limited to in-person verbal or physical action, but can also include remote and/or "virtual" activity.

Workplace Violence
Words or actions delivered in person or remotely, including by phone, mail, email, text, or various forms of social media. Workplace violence is any conduct that is sufficiently severe, offensive or intimidating to cause an employee to reasonably
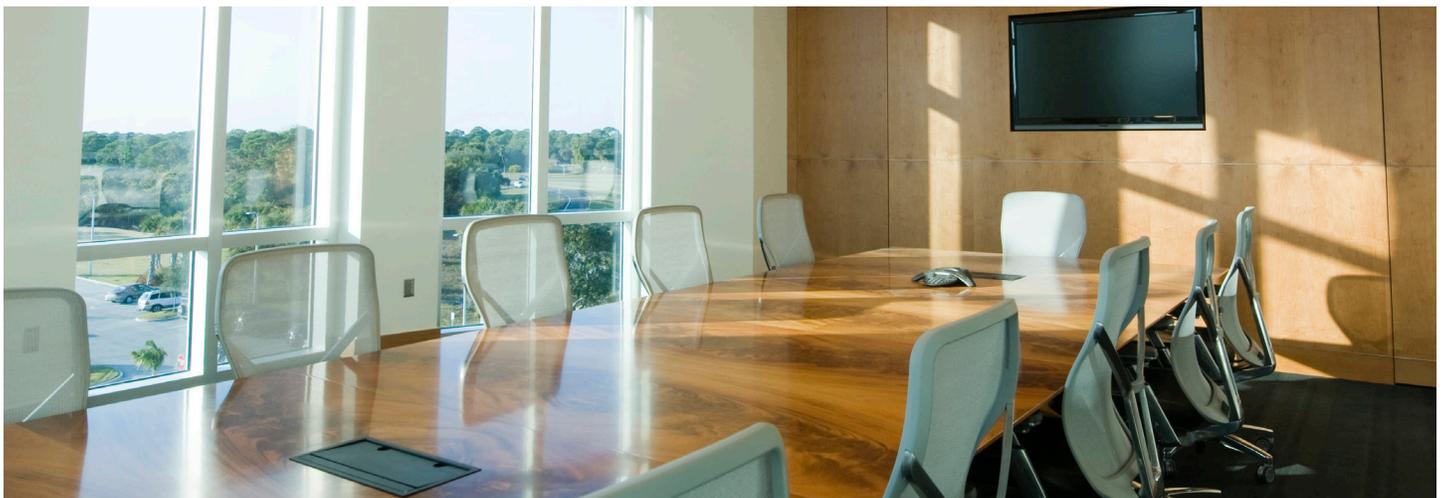
fear for his/her personal safety or the safety of his/her family, friends, co-workers and/or property. Further, it includes such behavior that results in employment conditions that are altered or hostile, creating an abusive or intimidating work environment.

Vulnerability Assessment or "Gap Analysis"

The next step in preventing workplace violence is a detailed "gap analysis," conducted by professionals to review and assess the capability to deter, identify, contain and/or control "unauthorized visitors and/or intruders with intent to do harm—to include potential 'active shooters.'" A vulnerability assessment evaluates and validates the effectiveness of current safeguards designed to protect assets and infrastructure against the potential threats of workplace violence. By assessing the workplace, employers can identify methods for reducing the likelihood of incidents occurring.

Training and Education – Tiered Approach

Using a unique **tiered** approach, the Center for Personal Protection and Safety is able to benchmark prevailing "Best Practices," existing compliance documents, and organizational cultures to focus on the five centers of gravity.

Tier 1 – Policies and Procedures

Policies, procedures and training strategies are designed to exemplify each company's distinctive values and culture. In like manner, each workplace violence prevention program is benchmarked against comparable clientele (Fortune 100 companies) and recommended measures delineated in the ASIS/SHRM American National Standard and OSHA Directive are integrated to ensure compliance.

Tier 2 –- Awareness Training

Knowledge of prevention and intervention strategies can help to increase safety in the workplace. This foundational level of training is for all employees/stakeholders and includes topics such as workplace violence awareness, prevention and

response; situational awareness; intimate partner violence and stalking, extreme violence response; and terrorism awareness and response. In order to accommodate the largest training need, awareness training can be delivered through a variety of delivery methods, including media-based and in-person solutions.

Tier 3 – Managers and Supervisors Training

Managers and supervisors require a "deeper look" into the issue of workplace violence, adding to their current understanding with additional concepts, enabling them to better identify "Behaviors of Concern" and related issues to facilitate the earliest detection that someone might be struggling and potentially on a path toward violence. In addition, training programs should be geared toward managers and supervisors to enhance significantly their background, knowledge and under-standing of workplace violence. Topics of discussion include trend issues and insights regarding the prevention of workplace violence; "behaviors of concern"; de-escalation; safe suspensions, terminations and layoffs; active shooter perspectives and insights; and internal and external threat dangers, early warning signs and prevention strategies.

Tier 4 – Threat Management Team Training

Members of a Threat Management Team should receive the most detailed and comprehensive training regarding the behavioral or psychological aspects of workplace violence, violence risk screening, investigatory and intervention techniques, incident resolution and multi-disciplinary case management strategies. This training is comprised of lecture, case studies and practical exercises in the assessment and management of threats and threatening behavior in keeping with industry "Best Practices," the ASIS/SHRM American National Standard and OSHA Directive. Following training, professionals are sometimes retained to provide real-time assistance in the assessment and management of workplace threats as they occur.

Tier 5 – Crisis Management and Executive Team

A specialized training program geared toward select staff that creates background, knowledge and understanding of a simulated crisis. Training consists of a simulated disaster (such as an active shooter) that is tailored to the organization, using a tabletop exercise, with a group discussion to navigate through potential challenges a crisis exposes. Emphasis is placed on a low stress, yet systematic, group problem-solving process.

Common Risk Management Strategies

Physical risk management measures to be considered.

- Require all visitors and vendors to register before entering the worksite. If the site has no central office or security station, the reception desk can coordinate this function. Make sure the employee who registers visitors has ready access to a security "panic" button. In case of emergency, a phone call may not possible.

- Determine how emergency information will be communicated to employees (e.g., intercom system). Identify a meeting location according to the nature of the emergency. Determine alternative means of egress and take steps to ensure that employees are not directed into a violent situation.

- Install alarm systems. Consider video surveillance equipment or closed circuit TV.

- Consider additional physical barriers such as bullet-resistant glass, deep service counters or pass-through windows.

- Consider in-car video surveillance cameras and global positioning systems for employees with mobile offices.

- Ensure clear visibility of service and cash register areas by installing convex mirrors.

- Use bright, effective lighting.

Suggested employment practices include:

- Background checks

  - Background checks should be done to avoid potential liability for negligent hiring. However, background checks, and the selection process, needs to be narrowly tailored to the specific job functions of the position to comply with the EEOC and state fair employment practices agencies.

- When employment ends, collect and document keys, name badges and access passes.

- Train all personnel on workplace violence warning sign recognition and reporting procedures

Responding to Threats

Threats

Many times, individuals who engage in violent behavior are doing so as the result of a loss, whether real or perceived, in their personal or professional life and this is what can trigger a crisis for that individual. Moreover, when individuals go into that type of crisis mode, it affects the way they think, it affects the way they feel and it affects the way they behave. Of importance is that individuals who become violent often communicate their intentions in advance, which is why it is so important to encourage reporting of Behaviors of Concern and to take those reports seriously.

Threat Management Team Requirements

When a threat is received, time is critical. A coordinated, multi-disciplined team approach can deter a potentially violent incident and maximize the company's ability to provide employee safety. A Threat Management Team creates measures to monitor violence risk and to manage and/or mitigate the risk.

Preplanning Considerations

No matter how effective company policies and procedures are in detecting, mitigating or preventing incidents, there are no guarantees against workplace violence. Even the most responsive employers face this issue. If a violent incident does occur, it is essential the response be timely, appropriate to the situation, and carried out with the recognition that employees are traumatized and that the incident's aftermath has just begun.

- Core type of incidents include:
  - Aggressive posturing
  - Injurious aggression
  - Use of weapons or explosives, and active shooters
  - Single or multiple offenders
- Expectation of employee involvement and response

- Policies to mitigate or stabilize an immediate threat

- Support to law enforcement

- Threat Management Team training

Public Emergency Numbers
Mobilizing emergency responders takes time. Actions with the greatest impact on the outcome will be taken by persons already at the scene. Emergency responders should be considered one element of a broader response plan.

Immediate Response Imperatives

- Move to a safer location or away from the facility

- Once safe, report the incident to emergency responders first, security resources second

- Comply with emergency responders; avoid aggressive or threatening actions

- Use technology to monitor unresolved situations; communicate real-time updates to affected personnel and emergency responders
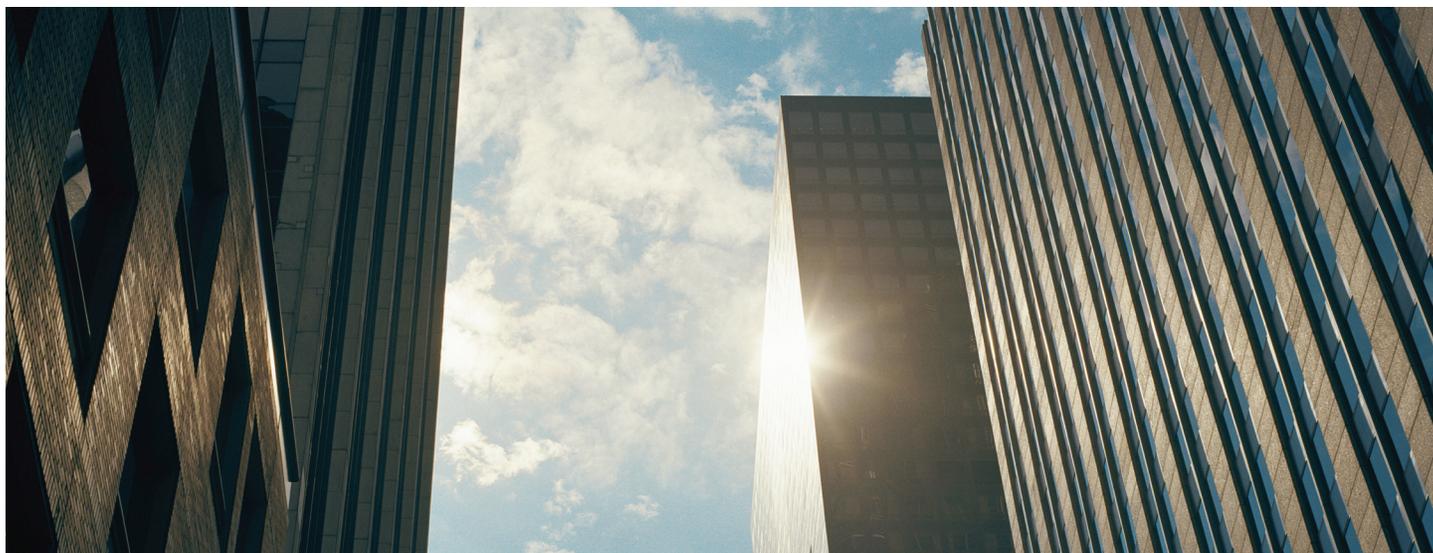
- Notify those in all potential danger zones to escape or seek shelter and barricade

- Provide first-aid to injured, when safe to do so

Response

FIGURE OUT

- Assess the situation

- Believe what you see and hear

- Choose an option (Get Out/Hide Out/Spread Out/Call Out)

Courses of Action Options

GET OUT, STAY OUT

- Move quickly; don't wait for others to validate your decision

  - Leave belongings behind

  - Survival chances increase:

    ○ If you are not where shooter is positioned

    ○ If you go where he can't see you

HIDE OUT

- Find a place out of the shooter's view that can be locked and/or barricaded

- Call 9-1-1, if possible, to alert law enforcement to the shooter's location

- If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen

SPREAD OUT

- If two or more individuals, do not huddle together

  - Provides options and makes it harder for the shooter

- Quietly develop a plan of action in the event the shooter enters

CALL OUT

- Inform authorities

- Call 9-1-1 and tell them the name of the shooter (if known), shooter description, location, number and type of weapons

- Contact Security

Post-Incident Response

Companies can significantly reduce the risk of long-term physical, emotional and financial fallout resulting from a violent incident in their workplace. It's crucial to have a plan in place, to include critical incident counseling and employee assistance programs to deal with victimized employees and employees who may be traumatized by witnessing a workplace violence incident.

Pre-Determined Steps

- Account for all personnel and determine their status/location

- Close off access to any areas affected by the incident

- Conduct a damage and impact assessment

- Develop and implement a comprehensive communication plan

- Restore and recover business processes

- Resume operations, to include addressing emotional needs of employees

- Establish a "current circumstances assessment" and steps required to restore the workplace to full productivity

- Continue monitoring the well-being of those affected by the incident

About the Center for Personal Protection & Safety

The Center for Personal Protection & Safety (CPPS) is the leading developer and provider of scalable training and consulting solutions in the U.S. for Workplace Violence Prevention, Active Shooter Response, and High Risk Travel. CPPS has touched the lives of millions. Its client base includes more than 60 percent of Fortune 100 companies, 1600-plus colleges and universities nationwide, 1500-plus hospitals and numerous U.S. Agencies, to include the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the Department of Defense, the Veterans' Administration and Social Security Administration. In partnership with their clients, CPPS empowers individuals to be stakeholders in their personal safety and security in the workplace and while traveling and living abroad. As thought leaders in the industry, CPPS creates and leverages Best Practices, providing practical solutions to some of today's most extreme challenges.

CPPS collaborated with CNA on this booklet in order to raise awareness and offer preventative measures to enhance workplace safety. Primary CPPS contributors to this publication are Randy Spivey and Margi Strub.

Randy Spivey, CEO/President and Founder of CPPS

Randy Spivey is recognized as a leading expert in the field of preventing and responding to violence in the workplace, campuses, universities, schools, corporations, and religious organizations. Since forming CPPS, Randy and his company have trained over 10 million individuals in Best Practices related to Workplace Violence Prevention, Active Shooter Response, Travel Safety and Security, and Kidnap Survival. Prior to forming CPPS, Randy enjoyed tenure as a Department of Defense executive. Randy managed and provided oversight to all Hostage Survival training programs in the Department of Defense from 1997 to 2002 and co-authored multiple hostage-related policy and doctrine documents.

Margi Strub, Director of Project Management/Chief Knowledge Officer for CPPS

As the Director of Project Management, Margi ensures the scope and timeline of each project is aligned with client expectations. She is responsible for project processes and functions, coordination and management. In her secondary role as Chief Knowledge Officer, she promotes a culture for organizational learning through gap analysis; managing the capture, sharing, and retention of knowledge-content activities; leveraging corporate-wide knowledge and expertise; and researching Best Practices, as well as strategic benchmarking. Margi has been with CPPS for ten years following a career in the Department of Defense focused primarily in the areas of Training and Education.

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