

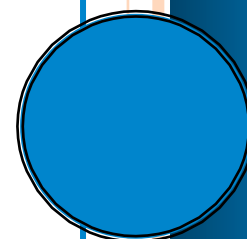
Solution Snapshot:

What can companies do to better protect employees as economic pressures raise concerns about increased rates of workplace violence?

Security Executive Council Staff

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Question: What can companies do to better protect employees as economic pressures raise concerns about increased rates of workplace violence?

Tony Gibson, Security Manager, Western region, CVS Caremark: Where I think many of us need work isn't with the policy, it's in the trenches. Do we really know what's happening in our companies right now? How are we tracking what OSHA doesn't even define? It's not workplace homicides that are happening in our business units on a daily basis - it's the employee-on-employee; threats, fights and domestic violence related to the stress of a bad economy. What are we doing about tracking and mitigating those issues to prevent the workplace homicide? The key questions are really these: Is there ongoing training to ensure employees recognize WPV indicators? Are they motivated to report it or are they too apathetic? Is there a process in place for reporting it quickly and an assessment team available 24/7 to determine the violence potential? Does the team have the right stakeholders and a playbook with lots of options so they can react quickly? If the answers are yes, you are on track.

Rosalind Jackson, Security Executive Council staff; consultant specializing in workplace violence prevention; former manager, Georgia-Pacific's workplace violence prevention program: It is important to respond early and effectively to inappropriate behaviors that raise concerns about the well-being of employees and the safety and security of the workplace. Supervisor and manager training is key. A manager's role is not to become an expert psychologist or detective, nor is it to conduct security investigations, practice on-the-job psychotherapy or do anything alone. Instead, work as a team with, for instance, human resources, employee assistance (EAP) and legal to help prevent a crisis. The way managers respond to potentially dangerous situations or individuals will depend on

the employee and the situation. Response options include security, administrative, mental health (EAP/psychological evaluation), and criminal/law enforcement steps. There is no way to know if an employee will act out and cause a situation that could put the workplace in danger. Keep in mind that dangerous situations may also involve spouses, family members, friends, vendors or clients. Early intervention and treating everyone with respect are the keys to prevention.

Park Dietz, President, Threat Assessment Group Inc.; Security Executive Council content expert faculty: The main defenses against violence in the workplace for all employers are pre-employment screening; access controls; a drug-free workplace program; an employee assistance program; a threat and misconduct identification, reporting and response program; critical incident response; and expert resources, both internal and external. Companies that experience lethal violence most often lack a well-designed system for identifying, reporting and responding to misconduct. Without such a system, nothing is done to prevent violence until the behavior is so extreme that it can no longer be ignored. Too often, the steps taken at that point are punitive and provocative tactics that make a bad situation worse. Any company large enough to have dedicated HR and security directors needs 6-12 hours of training for these people and those who work for them, 1-3 hours of training for all managers and supervisors, and 20-40 minutes of training for nonsupervisory employees. Smaller companies need access to an external consultant who specializes in violence prevention.

George Campbell, Security Executive Council Emeritus Faculty; former CSO, Fidelity Investments: If your crisis management organization does not currently have a sub-group on workplace violence, I would encourage you to lead in establishing one. Working with HR, use this venue to train and reinforce the supervisors' responsibility to maintain a respectful workplace and to look for cues within their teams. Make sure they know how to escalate if they see an individual acting out or being victimized by threatening behavior. We also need to better catalog WPV-related incidents. In most companies, employees have multiple sources for

reporting workplace concerns, and it is critical that all reports of actual violence or threats come to a single data repository for analysis and determination of notable patterns. It is also important to note that the last national survey on workplace violence was prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics 15 years ago. We need a national workplace violence database for various industry sectors to provide a point of comparison for our business risk profile.

Next Month's Question: What solutions can I employ to combat vandalism affecting my business?

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