VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE: Are You Prepared?

Lynn Berger
Prepare to Survive.

Lynn Berger

Business Health Services partners with organizations to provide Employee Assistance, Wellness, and Organizational services nationwide.

Lifestyle choices, personal problems and workplace struggles can negatively impact work performance and hurt a company’s bottom line.

BHS works with their clients to create solutions that are tailored to address the organization’s unique needs to support total wellness.
Preventing violence and promoting safety have become primary concerns for all workplaces.

It is essential that workplaces educate and take appropriate proactive action to mitigate risks as well as ensure that employees and the workplace are as safe as possible.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 7, 2012</td>
<td>California School Shooting</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 6, 2012</td>
<td>Jacksonville, Florida - 28-year-old teacher at Episcopal High School, returned to the campus after being fired, then shot and killed the head mistress with an assault rifle.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 27, 2012</td>
<td>Chardon, Ohio - At Chardon High School, a former classmate opened fire, killing three students and injuring six.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 3, 2010</td>
<td>Manchester, Connecticut - Warehouse driver shot and killed eight people after learning he would be terminated because of employee theft.</td>
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<td>January 2010</td>
<td>St. Louis, Missouri - Employee killed four coworkers and himself in shooting, he was involved in a lawsuit regarding a dispute over retirement benefits.</td>
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<td>April 20, 2007</td>
<td>Johnson Space Center Shooting</td>
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<td>April 16, 2007</td>
<td>Virginia Tech Massacre</td>
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<td>October 2002</td>
<td>Beltway Sniper attacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 20, 1999</td>
<td>Columbine High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 19, 1995</td>
<td>Murrah Building in Oklahoma City</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 28, 1993</td>
<td>Waco, Texas</td>
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Objectives

- What is Workplace Violence?
- Legalities and OSHA
- Perpetrators of Violence
- Contributors to Workplace Violence
- Statistical Data
- Explore Violence Equation
- Threat Assessment
- Signs to Look for
- Best Practices
What is Workplace Violence?

Media:
“A disgruntled ex-employee with an AK-47.”

Reality:
Workplace violence refers to a broad range of behaviors falling along a spectrum that, due to their nature and/or severity, significantly affect the workplace, generate a concern for personal safety, or result in physical injury or death.

Workplace Violence is anything that can:
- Escalate and threaten safety and security of employee, department, or business
- Make any employee feel afraid to come to work, stay at work, or interact with others
- Involve vandalism to company or personal property
- Start at home and crossover to the workplace (often Domestic Violence)
OSHA General Duty Clause

To assure safe and healthful working conditions for working men and women; by authorizing enforcement of the standards developed under the Act; by assisting and encouraging the States in their efforts to assure safe and healthful working conditions; by providing for research, information, education, and training in the field of occupational safety and health; and for other purposes.

- OSHA Public Law 91-596

**Each employer -**

(1) Shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees;

(2) Shall comply with occupational safety and health standards promulgated under this Act.

(b) Each employee shall comply with occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued pursuant to this Act which are applicable to his own actions and conduct.

- OSHA 29 USC 654
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category 1:</th>
<th>Category 2:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criminals (60%)</td>
<td>Customers, taxpayers, students, patients, passengers, vendors, etc... (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 3:</td>
<td>Category 4:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current or former employees (5%)</td>
<td>Spouse/partner of an employee (5%)</td>
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</table>
Contributors to Workplace Violence

**Economic**
- Over-stressed population, downsizing, re-organization, layoffs, growth of technology, recession, mergers, unemployment.

**Societal**
- Changing society, violence in the media (TV, movies, music), violence as an accepted means of problem solving, availability of handguns.

**Psychological**
- Childhood trauma and abuse, employees who bring “baggage” into the workplace.

**Organizational**
- Organizational structure, management style, polarization between employees and managers, lack of a forum to address grievances, threats of violence, lack of opportunity for initiative and responsibility.

[www.employeescreen.com/workviol.htm](http://www.employeescreen.com/workviol.htm)
US Workplace Violence Statistics

- Nearly 2 million American workers report having been victims of workplace violence each year.
- One in six violent crimes occurs in the workplace.
- Homicide is the fourth-leading cause of fatal occupational injury.
- Shootings account for 80% of workplace homicides.
- 14% of workplace homicides were a result of stabbing, hitting, kicking or beating.
- In 2009, 572,000 nonfatal crimes (rape/sex. assault, robbery, assault) occurred in the workplace.
- In 2010, 506 cases of workplace homicides were documented.

www.bls.gov
www.doj.gov
Workplace Shootings by Industry, 2008

Fatal workplace shootings by industry, 2008

Total fatal injuries = 421

- Retail trade: 24%
- Leisure and hospitality: 17%
- Government: 14%
- Transportation and warehousing: 11%
- Financial activities: 6%
- Professional and business service: 5%
- Manufacturing: 4%
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting: 4%
- Construction: 2%
- Wholesale trade: 3%
- Other or not reported: 4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
The First Violence Equation

- Economic Stress
- Mental Illness
- Desire for Revenge

= Threat Potential

- What can we alter, change, offer solutions for?
- Is the Organization at fault?
- Did the Organization create this?
- Did the organization keep the toxic environment?

- Dr. Steve Albrecht
- Inhibitors vs. Igniters

**Inhibitors**
- Money
- Job security
- Family presence
- Love relationship(s)
- Friends/Social connections
- Religious Beliefs
- Interests/hobbies
- Rules of norms

**Igniters**
- Economic Stress
- Job Loss
- Family crisis
- Broken Heart
- Loner behavior
- Irrational religious beliefs
- One-dimensional life
- Blaming others

- Dr. Steve Albrecht
Do you have:

- Do you have an interdisciplinary threat management team?
- A written workplace violence policy and complimentary policies focused on appropriate workplace conduct?
- A clear incident management process?
- Centralized record keeping?
- Training?
- Specific strategies for high risk workplaces?
- Do you work with general public
- Do you deal with money in open
- Do you try to mitigate issues/problems/concerns
- Additional prevention strategies dependent on your workforce, location and company decisions?
### Warning Signs to Look For

- Unexplained rise in absences
- Substance abuse
- Outbursts at coworkers and customers or poor impulse control generally
- Verbal abuse or threats toward coworkers and customers
- Making harassing phone calls or email communications
- Strained workplace relationships
- Overreaction or resistance to even minor changes in workplace routine; insubordination and belligerence
- Lack of attention to personal appearance, including hygiene
- Interest in firearms or other weapons; access to weapons
- Signs of paranoia ("everyone's out to get me") or withdrawal
- Fascination with violent acts or fantasies, or a history of violence
- Seeing oneself as a victim and others as persecutors; blaming others for one's problems
- Obsessive behavior toward a coworker or customer, up to and including stalking
- Comments about suicide
- Mood swings
- Domestic problems, including money troubles or family disputes.
Communication Barriers

- Fear of conflict
- Fear of confrontation
- No formal training
- Limited knowledge of access or resources
- Upper levels have apathy or resistance
- “Entitled Disgruntlement”
- Inverse rewards
Disgruntled Employees

Human resources staff, supervisors and managers can become targets of employees who believe their jobs are in jeopardy because of performance-based reprimands, suspension or termination.

Such was the case with a gunman employed by a Connecticut beer distribution plant. News reports indicate he was summoned for a disciplinary hearing in the early days of August 2010 and upon learning that his employment would be terminated, he shot and killed nine employees before shooting himself.

The media and a union representative labeled the shooter disgruntled because he was observed stealing from his employer and was afraid of losing his job.
Employee Discipline or Termination

- Entitled Disgruntlement
- Discipline or Termination
  - Performance Review Process
  - How to handle difficult conversations
  - Provide just the facts
  - Treat with dignity and respect
  - Facilitate a smooth transition
  - Put details in writing
  - Have an employee exit plan
- Benevolent Severance
Minimize Risk

See Something, Say Something

Train Management & Employees

Secure the Workplace

Minimizing Workplace Access by Outsiders

Tell Employees to Avoid Unsafe Places
Best Practices

- Pre-Employment Screening
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Threat Management Team – must meet regularly
- Zero Tolerance of Harassment
- Respectful Terminations and Discipline
- Pre-Plan Early Interventions
- Pre-Plan Emergency Response
- Use Technology
- Ban Weapons
Wrap-Up & Key Reminders

- Foster respect and dignity in all interactions.
- Appreciate coworker’s unique contributions.
- Emphasize problem solving instead of placing blame.
- Never discount “subtle” warning signs.
- Report odd behavior, threats, aggressive behavior.

- Be alert to your surroundings and to the people around you.
- Report any weapons you observe.
- Understand your organization’s workplace violence policy.
- Never ignore the problem or assume it will go away without attention.
- Test Alert Notification System
Prepare to Survive.

QUESTIONS?

Lynn Berger
Executive VP,

**This presentation has been recorded and a link will be sent out tomorrow to all registrants.**

**To download slides, please visit:**

http://agil.me/workplace-violence
Started by General Electric 23 years ago.
Saw a need to recover at or near the businesses’ normal location.
We provide 4 key Elements of Disaster Recovery

1. **Office Space**: Everything needed for your employees to work
2. **Power** for the office
3. **Communications**: Telephone and Internet access
4. **Computer System**: Computers, servers, printers, fax
Culture of Success

General Electric built an infrastructure to ensure success

- 23 years
- Rescued 1000’s of businesses
- Never failed
The industry focused on the needs of the Fortune 500. This model is too expensive for most businesses.

In 2004, Agility defined a new vision. Agility will bring disaster recovery solutions to ALL businesses.
Agility created a solution that all business could afford.

For a small monthly fee, normally $495/month, you can protect your business.
When You Become a Member

A continuity planner will contact you and gather the info we need to recover your business if you have a disaster. e.g.

• How many employees need to be up and running?
• What are the power requirements of the office?
• Where do you store your data?
• How do you want your phone calls handled during a disaster?
When You Become a Member

All information is placed in a password protected site called myAgility. myAgility is the foundation of your recovery plan.
When You Have A Disaster

- Agility’s operations team works with you to determine your needs.

- You only pay for Agility’s out-of-pocket expenses:
  - If we fly a technician to your office to set-up computers, we charge you for the airfare, but not the time.
  - If you need a generator, we'll deliver it and bill you our exact costs.
  - If you need a server, we take one from our stock and ship it to you. You pay for the shipping.
When You Have A Disaster

• Regardless if you have Agility or not, you would still have the same recovery needs.

• But Agility will get it done faster, cheaper and more effectively.

• Most importantly, we get it done every time.
Disasters Happen

Sometimes they’re small like a phone outage.
Disasters Happen

Sometimes they’re big like a tornado.

Photo taken by Agility Recovery team
Disasters Happen

If you don’t have a plan your business will be forever altered.

Photo taken by Agility Recovery team
Disasters Happen

• During a disaster there are more important things to focus on instead of trying to rebuild your infrastructure.

• When you’re most vulnerable to being overcharged and underserved, you will have a partner you can trust:
  ➢ 23 years
  ➢ 1000’s of recoveries
  ➢ Never failed

• Agility doesn’t profit from your disaster.

Bobbi Carruth Agility Member
Worthington Federal Bank
Ask Yourself...

- Do you believe a disaster could happen?
- Do you believe that without a plan, your business will suffer?
- Do you believe Agility, after 23 years and 1000’s of recoveries will be there?
Ask Yourself – Do You Believe?

If you answered, “Yes,” then Agility is a fairly easy decision. We welcome you as a member.