

Personnel Security: What Is Your Security Posture?

1. The Security Consultant's Perspective...

With Workplace Violence becoming an emerging concern, the employee dimension becomes a critical factor in conducting Vulnerability Threat Assessments against capabilities and weaknesses, similar to the way we conduct a business SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). I wonder how much thought a disgruntled employee, angry customer, an armed robber or a specific act of terrorism, has given to the real business threat of a violent act. Within each business or type of employment, there exists an intriguing combination of potential threats to the safety and security of the workplace. If you recall in recent incidents over the past month on the topic of workplace violence, that while critical structures are key targets, no type of business was immune.

The ideologues and the imbedded terrorists have now become objects of concern for those of us engaged in conducting threat assessments; evaluating risks and recommending risk abatement measures. Key to these concerns is the free access of these employees, their familiarity with the operations and their knowledge of the company secrets. To combat this threat and to reduce the risk, it would behoove decision makers to become creative in their approach to these potential threats. Just implementing technological resources may be insufficient. Taking proactive measures during the hiring and screening process might identify a potential threat, implementing security guidelines might serve to deter or minimize the threat and educating employees will increase security awareness. Key to this creative approach however, is the collaboration of resources in a synchronized team fashion. The Threat Assessment Team is my recommended creative strategy to minimize the threat while managing the possibilities.

2. Workplace Security Concerns: People, Premises and Property...

In preventing Workplace Violence in today's volatile workplace nothing can be taken for granted. While it is the employer's responsibility to protect the workforce, a predisposed individual is a company's worst nightmare. The acts of a disgruntled employee can be predictive, while the threat of a robber's motives cannot anymore than the motivations of the professional ideologue with external grievances that might target a business to emphasize an opposing position. Verifiably evident is the catastrophic capability of the politically motivated threat whose methodical planning may take years. With access and familiarity critical factors in measuring risks, decision makers are encouraged to reconcile the security impact to business disruption and business recovery in the aftermath in terms of proactive and preventive measures during the Threat Assessment Phase. Every business is a target of opportunity and value regardless of type:

Production Plants Power & Light Utilities Dam & Water Purifications Sewer Treatment Telephone and Heating Food & Beverages Sports Facilities Entertainment Centers Suburban Strip & Shopping Malls Hospitals and Treatment Centers High Rise Building Complexes Unprotected Establishments

3. Ask the Tough Questions. Has Our Company Done a Critical Assessment of Our Business Practices...?

Are the functional needs of security and safety decided by a team; or are they relegated the responsibility of a Security Director, Human Resource Manager, Safety Manager or even Facility Manager? How much thought goes into arriving at a business matrix that factors the security needs against the type of business? Are security budgets based on the offerings of technology devoid of the unique aspects of personnel security as part of the security posture or is there justification for one or the other or both? I pose these additional questions for your consideration.

-Are the Security Plans, Policies and Programs adequate? -Are Threat and Crisis Plans incorporated in training programs? -Do I have an Emergency Evacuation Plan and do employees know their roles? -Are the Homeland Security Protective Measures integrated in the Security Plans? -Do I have knowledge or familiarity with the police and hospital response plans? -Is the company prepared to handle a Bomb Threat? -Are my mailroom and mail handling procedures adequate? -Does the Personnel Security Plan address the myriad of concerns including travel and VIP Security? -Is Counter-terrorism factored into my Workplace Violence Prevention Plan? -Whose responsibility is it to coordinate Security Awareness Training? -How do I organize a Threat Assessment Team? -Am I relying on the police and the response time or do I have a plan? -Is Workplace Violence a threat to your business in the event of business disruption and continuity?

4. Security the Business Matrix...

Merely appointing a security chief and purchasing security technology without the essential critical assessment or evaluation of your business situation is not employing the best security strategy. Collaborating of resources and synchronizing the plans are positive steps to take in developing a business matrix that drives the security strategy. No longer can the decision maker delegate the security function as a separate and apart

responsibility without having any input into the strategy, philosophy and objective of the security plans. The assumption we make about the investment against intangible benefits of a proactive or preventive security policy having no immediate impact on the Return on the Investment (ROI) must die a quick death. A critical assessment of your business practices will clearly provide an appreciable and measurable business matrix to motivate application of this philosophy in the Threat Assessment Phase.

About the Author

Japanese Recipe Collection and guide to Japanese cuisines, part of the Tokyo Food Page, including recipes especially formulated for ingredients.

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