



Training Solutions, Delivered!

# **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

## **Leader's Guide, Fact Sheet & Quiz**

**Item Number: 5038**

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***This easy-to-use Leader's Guide is provided to assist in conducting a successful presentation.***

## **PREPARING FOR THE MEETING**

Here are a few suggestions for using this program:

- a) Review the contents of the Fact Sheet that immediately follows this page to familiarize yourself with the program topic and the training points discussed in the program. The Fact Sheet also includes a list of Program Objectives that details the information that participants should learn from watching the program.
- b) If required by your organization, make an attendance record to be signed by each participant to document the training to be conducted.
- c) Prepare the area and equipment to be used for the training. Make sure the watching environment is comfortable and free from outside distractions. Also, ensure that participants can see and hear the TV screen or computer monitor without obstructions.
- d) Make copies of the Review Quiz included at the end of this Leader's Guide to be completed by participants at the conclusion of the presentation. Be aware that the page containing the answers to the quiz comes before the quiz itself, which is on the final page.

## **CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION**

- a) Begin the meeting by welcoming the participants. Introduce yourself and give each person an opportunity to become acquainted if there are new people joining the training session.
- b) Introduce the program by its title and explain to participants what they are expected to learn as stated in the Program Objectives of the Fact Sheet.
- c) Play the program without interruption. Upon completion, lead discussions about your organization's specific policies regarding the subject matter. Make sure to note any unique hazards associated with the program's topic that participants may encounter while performing their job duties at your facility.
- d) Hand out copies of the review quiz to all of the participants and make sure each one completes it before concluding the training session.

## 5038 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE FACT SHEET

**LENGTH: 14 MINUTES**

### **PROGRAM SYNOPSIS:**

One out of six violent crimes occurs in the workplace. While sensational workplace homicides grab the headlines (homicide is now the second leading cause of death on the job and the number one killer of women in the workplace), other forms of workplace violence happen much more frequently. Less dramatic incidents of aggressive behavior, physical conflict and sexual harassment in the workplace are far more common. By recognizing and acting on the warning signs of violence and knowing how to avoid or defuse potentially dangerous situations, the risk for physical confrontations on the job can be minimized. Reminding employees to treat each other with respect, and refusing to tolerate aggressive behavior, can also play a significant part in preventing workplace violence. To help employees understand how to prevent workplace violence, this program is designed to present basic safety information in this area.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

After watching the program, the participant should:

- Understand the nature of workplace violence.
- Spot the early warning signs and indications of potential violence.
- Apply proven techniques to handle verbal abuse, insults, intimidation and "escalation".
- Understand that sexual harassment is a form of violence and know what is included in this type of behavior.
- Recognize the variations of "assault", including threats to do bodily harm.
- Know what to do, and what not to do, when confronted with an armed assailant.

### **PROGRAM OUTLINE:**

#### **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE & ITS SOURCES**

- **"Violence" is defined as more than physical confrontation.**
  - It includes verbal and emotional attacks.
  - The psychological harm caused by threats, intimidation and verbal abuse can be as serious as any physical attack.
- **There are several sources of violence in the workplace. One category is "outside threats".**
  - These are acts of violence committed in your facility by people not employed by your company.
  - Customers or vendors may seek revenge for some perceived wrongdoing.
  - In healthcare environments, patients or their families can become hostile and assault medical personnel.
  - The workplace is also not immune to incidents of domestic violence.
  - Terrorists could even target your business to "set an example".
- **Another type of outside threat is "commercial crime."**
  - For example, a robber who enters a business looking for some quick cash.
- **The workers at greatest risk from commercial crime include those who:**
  - Exchange money with the public.
  - Work alone or in small numbers.
  - Work late-night or early-morning hours.
- **Another source of workplace violence is "inside threats".**
  - All organizations are at risk from aggressive or violent people within their facility.
  - This includes disgruntled employees who take out their frustrations on supervisors.
- **But disagreements or personality conflicts between coworkers are the most common causes of workplace violence.**
  - This includes people we work with and know.
  - Fortunately, this type of violence rarely happens without warning.

#### **WARNING SIGNS OF POTENTIAL VIOLENCE**

- **Although we can't predict when and where violence will strike, there are usually "warning signs".**
  - A person may become irritable and prone to emotional outbursts or mood swings.

- They may be defensive and overreact to comments or criticism.
- **An individual may start complaining frequently, or blame others for their problems.**
- They may talk about "getting even with someone."
- Or they may be fascinated by other incidents of violence.
- **Other possible warning signs may include:**
- Someone who seems to be late or absent more often than usual.
- A coworker who disappears during the work day.
- Someone who becomes careless, reckless or has accidents on the job because they are frustrated or distracted.
- **Remember that warning signs don't always lead to violence.**
- Everyone has "bad days", and may blow off a little steam now and then.
- What is really important is to watch for accompanying aggressive or violent behavior.

## **THREATS, SEXUAL HARASSMENT & VERBAL ABUSE**

- **Aggressive behavior is any attempt to hurt or demean someone. This does not just include causing physical harm.**
- It also includes:**
- Threats.
  - Sexual harassment.
  - Verbal abuse.
  - **There are basically three kinds of threats.**
  - Veiled.
  - Conditional.
  - Direct.
  - **"Veiled" (or "hidden") threats suggest that someone intends to do harm without them actually spelling it out.**
  - **"Conditional" threats are used to intimidate people. The goal with these threats is to:**
  - Make someone do something.
  - Or prevent them from doing it.
  - **"Direct" threats come through loud and clear.**
  - This is when someone declares an intention to commit an act of violence.
  - **Although we do not usually think of it this way, sexual harassment is also a form of violence.**
  - It is repeated, unwanted behavior based on an individual's sex.
  - Women are not the only victims.
  - **Sexual harassment includes:**
  - Sexist as well as sexual remarks.
  - Any unwanted physical contact.
  - Sexual advances.
  - Hazing or practical jokes based on an individual's sex.
  - Assigning menial or demeaning tasks because of gender.
  - **The bottom line is that it is not fair to treat anyone differently because of their gender.**
  - Sexually explicit language or behavior has no place in the workplace.
  - **"Verbal abuse" is another type of aggressive behavior, and can include:**
  - Bullying.
  - Mocking.
  - Intimidation.
  - Insults.
  - **This should not be dismissed as someone "just being mean."**
  - There is no excuse for using language or behavior to hurt someone's feelings.

## **REPORTING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR**

- **Some people do not want to get anyone in trouble by reporting incidents.**
- They do not want to be a "tattle-tale".
- They just pretend that the problem will go away on its own.
- **Making a report is your best opportunity to solve the problem once and for all.**
- It is a chance for a troubled person to get the help they need.

- It may prevent a more serious incident from occurring.
- **You should report any aggressive behavior you experience or witness to:**
  - Your supervisor.
  - The Human Resource Department.
  - Or to your company's security personnel.
- **Your company may also have an independent hot-line or employee assistance program that allows you to make confidential reports.**
- **Local law enforcement agencies should be notified of serious incidents involving:**
  - Threats of violence.
  - Physical assaults.
- **Also make sure that all incidents get documented for future reference.**
- **Another situation that should be reported immediately is the presence of a weapon in your facility.**
  - Even a licensed, authorized weapon can be very dangerous.
  - If you see one, tell somebody about it.
- **You should also report any unfamiliar or unauthorized people that you see.**
  - If they have been approved, there is no harm done.
  - It is better to be safe than sorry.

#### **PROPER RESPONSE TO POTENTIAL VIOLENCE**

- **No amount of physical violence is ever acceptable in the workplace. Assault includes:**
  - Any attempt to cause physical injury.
  - Any physical threat to do bodily harm.
- **Even if you are not the one who starts it, fighting has serious consequences. You could get:**
  - Injured.
  - Suspended.
  - Fired.
  - Arrested.
  - Sued.
- **Attempt to resolve disagreements peacefully, and try to avoid arguments.**
  - Never get caught up in a shouting match.
  - Stay calm.
  - Offer a compromise.
  - Suggest asking another person to intercede.
- **If an unreasonable or irrational person confronts you, you should remain calm.**
  - Keep your arms low and in a non-threatening position.
  - Try to stay at least five feet away.
  - Avoid physical contact.
- **Maintain a soothing tone of voice. Let the person know that you understand their concerns. Do not:**
  - Judge.
  - Argue or disagree.
  - If they become violent, get away or call out (help is usually nearby).
- **If someone challenges you to a fight, turn them down:**
  - Fighting causes more problems than it resolves.
  - The best response is to just walk away.
- **If someone assaults you, try to get away from them or call out for help.**
  - Do not fight back unless your life is in danger.
  - Report the incident to your employer.
  - Since assault is a crime, inform local law enforcement agencies.

#### **SITUATIONS INVOLVING AN ARMED ASSAILANT**

- **Any situation that involves a weapon is extremely dangerous and requires special considerations, whether it is:**

- A personal dispute.
- A robbery.
- Or something else.
- **Never confront an armed assailant if you don't have to. The best plan is to:**
  - Get as far away as possible.
  - Stay low and out of sight.
  - Help others get to safety if possible.
- **In general, do not sound alarms if it will put anyone in danger.**
  - Check your company's policy to determine how they want these situations handled.
  - Contact law enforcement personnel only when you can do so safely.
- **If you come face-to-face with an armed assailant, remember "the person with the gun is in charge".**
  - Follow their instructions to the letter.
  - Repeat their commands as you do as they ask.
  - Don't make any sudden moves.
  - Keep your hands visible at all time.
- **Never resist an armed assailant unless you feel that they are going to kill you.**
  - This is the only time to risk your life by fighting back.
- **Workplace violence can have serious consequences.**
  - Sadly, no organization is immune.

## **WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

### **ANSWERS TO THE REVIEW QUIZ**

1. a

2. a

3. d

4. a

5. d

6. b

7. a

**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**  
**REVIEW QUIZ**

*The following questions are provided to determine how well you understand the information presented in this program.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. Homicide is the leading cause of death for women in the workplace?
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
2. The complete definition of violence includes "behavior meant to cause emotional harm"?
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
3. The people who are at the greatest risk of commercial crime include employees \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Who work alone
  - b. Who work late at night
  - c. Who exchange money with the public
  - d. All of the above
  
4. Most incidents of workplace violence are between people who know each other?
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
5. When faced with an armed assailant, you should \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Make no sudden moves
  - b. Keep your hands visible
  - c. Follow instruction.
  - d. All of the above
  
6. A "conditional" threat implies an intention to harm without actually saying so?
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
7. Sexual harassment includes assigning menial or demeaning tasks because of gender?
  - a. True
  - b. False