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Violence in the Workplace Preventing It; Managing It

03/01/04

Violence in the workplace—it happens, and when it does, it's frightening.

How can we keep it from happening? How can angry people be managed so their fury doesn't explode unexpectedly? For that matter, how can workplaces be protected from acts of terrorism, like those that occurred on 9/11/01? In FBI Director Robert Mueller's words: "Workplace violence was put in a new context that day. Prior to 9/11, this type of violence was viewed as perpetrated by disgruntled employees, customers, or a domestic violence/stalking relationship that surfaces at a workplace. Since that time, America's workplaces have to be prepared not only to face the more traditional internal workplace threats, but now have to consider the external threat of terrorism."

To answer these questions, the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violence Crime (NCAVC), Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG), sat down with a select group of experts from law enforcement, private industry, government, law, labor, professional organizations, victim services, the military, academia, mental health, and CIRG's Crisis Negotiations Unit. Why so many? Because a multi-faceted problem takes a multi-disciplinary approach.

The result? The monograph "Workplace Violence: Issues in Response," posted right on this site and released today at a press conference by FBI Executive Assistant Director Charles Prouty, Law Enforcement Services. (A limited number of hard copies and CD-ROMs are available and can be obtained by contacting FBI Supervisory Special Agent Eugene Rugala at earugala@fbiacademy.edu.)

What's in it? Discussions, from law enforcement and behavioral perspectives, on interpersonal aspects of workplace violence issues. The monograph highlights findings from the collaboration of experts who looked at the latest thinking in prevention, threat assessment and management, crisis management, critical incident response, research, and legislation. It also offers common-sense recommendations for those in the position to do something about workplace violence.

Who should read it?

- ↳ Employers, employees, and labor unions, who want to avoid violence at all costs;
- ↳ Law enforcement agencies, who investigate it and counsel businesses on how to avoid it;
- ↳ Medical, mental health, and social service agencies, who try to help when it happens;
- ↳ State and federal occupational safety and criminal justice agencies, who need to track it and develop violence prevention plans; and
- ↳ Legislators, policymakers, and the legal community, who rule on ways to handle it.

In short, almost everyone needs to read "Workplace Violence: Issues in Response." Because—one way or another—workplace violence affects us all.

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