



***National Transit Institute  
Workplace Safety and Security***

***Violence in the Workplace:  
Prevention, Response and Recovery***

**Participant Workbook**

*Presented in association with the  
Passenger Vessel Association*



*US Department of Transportation*  
**Federal Transit Administration**

# ***INTRODUCTION***

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The threat of workplace violence is a daily concern for any business, including the passenger vessel industry. However, there are many steps that can be taken by front-line employees, captains and supervisors to reduce the risk of such incidents. Every employee has the responsibility to help prevent, appropriately respond to, and report incidents of workplace violence.

## ***Course Objectives***

This course is for both shore side and vessel front-line employees, captains and supervisors, who work in the passenger vessel industry. The objectives of this course are to provide employees with the skills and knowledge to:

- ❑ Recognize and define workplace violence
- ❑ Identify system and personal security measures for preventing workplace violence
- ❑ Describe strategies for dealing with “different,” “difficult,” and “dangerous” people
- ❑ Discuss the importance of recovering from workplace violence

## ***Course Outline***

The following seven modules will be covered in this course:

- ❑ Defining workplace violence
- ❑ Identifying system and personal security measures
- ❑ Recognizing warning signs of workplace violence
- ❑ Dealing with different people
- ❑ Dealing with difficult people
- ❑ Dealing with dangerous people
- ❑ Recovering from workplace violence

# WHAT IS WORKPLACE VIOLENCE?

**Exercise:** Read the short descriptions below. Do you think this is a workplace violence incident? Indicate YES or NO in the space provided.

<i>Is it Workplace Violence?</i>	Yes	No
1. As you see a co-worker placing a gun in his locker he says to you, "Don't worry, it's just my equalizer. I don't get mad, I get even."		
2. A boarding passenger reacts with anger to your "no smoking" reminder by flicking his lit cigarette in your direction.		
3. While working, another employee grabs your hand and asks you out on a date. When you say "no" he/she doesn't let go of your hand and says "I won't take no for an answer."		
4. A customer boards your ferry and yells at you because the boat was "late again." When you try to collect his ticket he calls you "stupid" and makes other derogatory remarks.		
5. Your ex-wife unexpectedly shows up at the dock and says, "If I can't have you no one can." She then walks away.		
6. One passenger accidentally spills a drink on another passenger. The other passenger becomes loud and abusive to the one who spilled the drink.		
7. Your boss stands up and screams at you saying you are a "worthless employee" and that you "don't deserve a paycheck."		
8. A group of teenagers on the stern of the boat become loud, rowdy and disruptive to your other passengers.		
9. You witness two mechanics shouting at each other over a tool that was borrowed without permission.		

# ***DEFINING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE***

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Sometimes, what may be considered workplace violence depends on how you perceive the situation. As front-line employees and supervisors, both shore side and on vessels, you need to trust your judgment when determining what is a threatening or intimidating situation. Do not second-guess yourself. If you feel threatened, intimidated, or harassed, you need to recognize and quickly assess the situation and be prepared to ask for help if necessary.

Workplace violence is defined as:

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## ***Defining the “Workplace”***

“At work” or “on duty” can include the following:

- Company office and storage buildings
- Employee, visitor and customer parking lots
- Ticket sales office and vending areas
- Docks
- Vessels
- Maintenance vehicles
- Maintenance facilities
- Anywhere** your duties as an employee are being carried out

# ***SYSTEM SECURITY MEASURES***

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There are a variety of vulnerabilities that are inherent in any workplace. However, there are also a variety of system security measures that may be taken to address these vulnerabilities.

## ***System Vulnerabilities***

The following are some of the system vulnerabilities that are often inherent in the passenger vessel industry:

- ❑ Open and accessible work environment
- ❑ Dealing with many and different customers
- ❑ Well known routes, docks and facilities
- ❑ Inconsistent security procedures
- ❑ Broken or non-working security apparatus
- ❑ Lack or failure to follow up

## ***Security Measures***

System security measures are the preventive steps that may be used by your company to reduce the risk of workplace violence. The following are three ways to address security vulnerabilities:

### ***Engineering Controls:***

These are the physical changes that can be made to the working environment in order to protect workers, equipment and facilities in conjunction with the company security plan. Re-assessment can improve the design features of facilities and equipment and employ technology to enhance security for employees and customers.

### **Examples:**

- ❑ A gated parking lot
- ❑ Card-access entry systems
- ❑ Video or CCTV surveillance systems
- ❑ Lighting in parking lots
- ❑ Fences

### ***Administrative Controls:***

These are the work practices, policies and procedures that are intended to reduce the likelihood of workplace violence.

#### **Examples:**

- ❑ Personnel policies that are properly designed, implemented and followed
- ❑ Employee uniforms, identification cards or badges
- ❑ Pre-employment screening, background checks
- ❑ Termination procedures
- ❑ Employee training
- ❑ Practices regarding the release of sensitive or personal information
- ❑ Re-assessing, updating and posting company policies

### ***Employee Actions:***

There are actions that you can take to prevent workplace violence from a system security perspective. When you notice something that is out-of-the-ordinary or that does not “seem right,” it is your responsibility to report these situations to help prevent incidents from happening.

#### **Examples:**

- ❑ Reporting concerns of possible situations that could lead to workplace violence
- ❑ Reporting suspicious activities
- ❑ Following up on security issues and system weaknesses

# ***PERSONAL SECURITY MEASURES***

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There are a variety of personal vulnerabilities that are inherent to working in the passenger vessel industry. However, there are also a variety of personal security measures that may be taken to reduce these vulnerabilities.

## ***Personal Vulnerabilities***

The following are some of the personal vulnerabilities we may face:

- Interaction with the public
- Working in an open and accessible environment
- Working alone, late at night or early in the morning
- Exchanging money or items of value (i.e., customer fares or tickets)
- Possible lack of potential escape routes

## ***Security Measures***

Personal security measures are the preventive steps that you may consider taking on a daily basis to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of workplace violence. The following are a few personal security measures to consider:

- Wear appropriate uniform and identification
- Wear clothing that does not restrict movement or that can catch on things
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry or accessories at work
- Do not leave personal items unattended or in plain view
- Carry limited amounts of cash
- Avoid opening wallet or purse in public view, don't "flash" money
- Survey parking lots and have keys ready
- Stay in well-lighted areas
- Use the "buddy system", avoid going out on deck by yourself
- Maintain communications with others at work
- Check all communications equipment during pre-trip inspections
- Keep compartments, cabinets, vehicles and vessels locked when unattended
- Do not leave expensive equipment or keys out in the open
- Observe and report all suspicious behavior and activity
- Know emergency contact procedures and numbers





# NOTES ON SECURITY MEASURES



# RECOGNIZING WARNING SIGNS

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Violent behavior is often preceded by a variety of early warning signs. Unfortunately these signs are often ignored until it is too late. Early recognition of the warning signs of workplace violence is critical to the prevention of incidents.

In recognizing warning signs, you should be alert for unacceptable or out-of-the-ordinary behavior exhibited by a person with whom you have a level of familiarity. When this behavior is exhibited you should tell someone in your company about your concerns so that prevention measures can be taken if necessary. These measures may include a conversation on the part of a labor leader or supervisor, counseling, EAP support, or other forms of assistance. The goal is not punitive action but prevention through resolution of the issues or situation. Effective Workplace Violence Prevention Programs will include a mechanism for communicating these concerns in a confidential and productive manner.

The following is a chart that lists behavioral warning signs that you should be alert to:

<i>Behavioral Warning Signs</i>
<p><i>Unusual Interest in Weapons &amp; Expressions of Violence:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an unusual fascination with guns and other weapons</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Brings a gun or other weapon to the workplace</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Verbalizes his or her wishes to hurt other employees</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shares fantasies about acts of revenge</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Makes direct or veiled threats of harm toward others</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Talks about retaliation or “getting even” with someone</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Makes statements that approve of the use of violence to resolve problems</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Discusses a fascination with incidents of workplace violence</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Openly identifies with perpetrators of workplace homicides</li></ul>
<p><i>Exhibits Signs of Depression:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Frequent crying and mood swings</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal and isolation from others</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Expresses feelings of hopelessness</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Shows signs of alcohol or drug abuse</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates a loss of interest in life or work</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Changes in personal appearance and/or hygiene</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Makes statements indicating desperation and comments about committing suicide</li></ul>

### ***Increased Work Problems:***

- Increased lack of motivation
- Increased absenteeism and tardiness
- Sudden decrease in performance, productivity or inconsistent work patterns
- Increased conflicts with others
- Constant complaining about unfair treatment
- Overreaction to criticism (increased hypersensitivity)
- Refusal to acknowledge performance problems and/or blaming others
- Constant and blatant disregard for company policies and procedures
- Talking about the same problems without resolving them
- Misinterpreting communications, requests and directions
- Becoming more accident-prone due to disregard for on-the-job safety

### ***Shows Signs of Domestic Violence:***

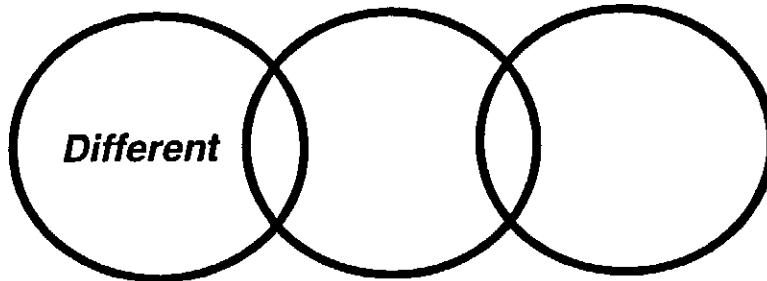
- Frequent and/or unexplainable visible physical injuries
- Physical injuries which are inconsistent with explanation
- Strong emotional reactions to unusual or excessive phone calls received at work
- Disruptive and unannounced workplace visits by significant other (spouse, partner, family members)

### ***Other Behavioral Concerns:***

- Increased emotional outbursts
- Displays of unwarranted anger
- Expresses irrational beliefs and ideas
- Unhealthy obsession with a co-worker
- Unusual or extreme changes in behavior
- Verbal, nonverbal or written threats or intimidation
- Expressions of the perception or belief that others are “out to get them”
- Words or conduct that causes concern that the person may act out in a violent manner

**Not all warning signs are actual indicators that a person is about to engage in a violent act. These warning signs should be used only to heighten our concern as to a potential problem. As an employee, your responsibility is to recognize a warning sign and then to communicate this information to an appropriate person in your company (i.e., manager, supervisor, union officer, human resources representative) if it causes you concern. These observations or concerns should NOT be openly discussed among peers or others either within or outside the company.**

# DEALING WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE



*Different* people are those who may be unlike us in terms of the way they look, talk, or interact with others. However, different people are usually non-threatening. They pose no threat of harm to anyone simply because they look or talk differently.

## *Maintaining Self-Control and Respecting Differences*

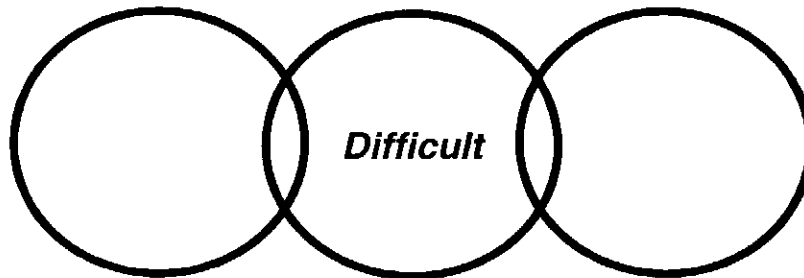
We live and work in a very diverse society. When dealing with people who are different from us we need to recognize that diversity will always be a part of our life.

The key to dealing with diversity is our ability to respect others' differences. We need to manage our own behavior and remember to treat others with dignity and respect regardless of our cultural, religious, ethnic, racial, sexual, physical, or philosophical differences. We should also be very careful and not stereotype or make assumptions about people just because they may be different from us.

Often times we lose our self-control by simply letting another person's differences irritate us or we react in such a way that we instigate a non-threatening situation into a possible incident. Once we begin to lose control, we begin to give up the ability to think rationally and act in a professional and safe manner. We then become a part of the problem and not the solution.

Our sensitivity, tolerance, and respect of others' different characteristics will play a key role in determining how we interact with others, and our ability to manage our own behavior.

# DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE



*Difficult* people are those that direct their frustration, anger, and/or hostility at others, although they are not at the stage where they are a direct threat to anyone's safety. Quite often this anger or hostility is not *about* you, it is merely and unfortunately targeted *at* you.

As the above graphic illustrates, there can be some overlap between being a "different," "difficult," or "dangerous" person. A person may fluctuate into any one of these three "roles" at any time.

You need to recognize and remember that if at any time the "difficult" person becomes threatening to yourself or others (i.e., the person becomes "dangerous") then safety becomes your first priority and you need to get help immediately.

In dealing with a difficult person it is the management of our own behavior and how we effectively interact with the person that is important. The following are three basic strategies that should be considered when dealing with a difficult person:

- ❑ Maintain self-control
- ❑ Avoid the person or problem
- ❑ Defuse the situation

# Maintain Self-Control

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The following are a few strategies for maintaining self-control:

- Identify your hot buttons*** — Understand and be aware of the topics, issues, actions beliefs or statements that ignite your temper and rile your emotions.
- Don't take the bait*** — When a person pushes your buttons don't get defensive. Don't counter attack that person because then you become part of the problem and not the solution.
- Project calmness*** — Always remain calm when dealing with other people. If needed, take a few seconds to think rationally about the situation.
- Slow down your responses*** — Pause, take a deep breath or count to 10 before responding to the person. Make sure you think before you speak and act.
- Take a "time-out"*** — Disengage if you feel yourself getting angry and try to compose your thoughts and control your emotions.
- Use positive self-talk*** — This refers to the things we say to ourselves. Self-talk can be used to remind ourselves of how we should react and behave in various situations. Using positive self-talk will help us to respond constructively
- Be respectful of others' differences*** — Don't let others' differences cause you to act out inappropriately, stereotype, make assumptions, or engage in discriminatory behavior.

# *Avoid the Situation*

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## *Avoidance as a Strategy*

A potential conflict with a difficult person may simply go away if you avoid the person or situation.

Avoidance is a calculated, thought-out strategy to not take any action because you have decided that, on balance, it won't cost much to overlook the situation.

Avoidance is different from denial. Denial means that you are blindly reacting to the situation and deciding not to acknowledge it or even wishing or pretending that the situation didn't exist. Denial could actually make a situation worse.

## *Guidelines for Using Avoidance*

There are certain circumstances when avoidance will **NOT** be effective. The following are some guidelines for when to use and not to use Avoidance in a situation:

### *When to Avoid a Situation:*

- ❑ The issue is minor or inconsequential
- ❑ The conflict will most likely go away on its own
- ❑ Other more active approaches are not going to work

### *When NOT to Avoid a Situation:*

- ❑ The issue is important and needs to be addressed
- ❑ Doing nothing is too costly or damaging
- ❑ There are time constraints that push you to manage the conflict/issue quickly
- ❑ There is a potential for the conflict to quickly escalate
- ❑ The difficult person continues to force the issue



# ***Defuse the Situation***

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The third strategy is to engage in communication with the difficult person and attempt to defuse the situation. You should only engage the person and attempt to defuse the situation if the person is not threatening your safety or the safety of others.

Do not try to bargain with a person or use defusing strategies if the person is or becomes threatening. If you become involved with a person who is threatening or dangerous, you should seek immediate assistance by following your company's emergency procedures.

## ***General Communication Guidelines***

In communicating with the difficult person, the following are some general guidelines:

- Treat the person with dignity and respect
- Do not use a condescending tone or posture
- Do not criticize the person's behavior or point of view
- Be patient
- Use cooperative instead of confrontational language
- Use short sentences and simple terms that are easy to understand
- Avoid repeating "hot" phrases and words
- Do not invade the person's space
- Do not make the situation seem less serious than it is
- Do not accuse the person of wrongdoing

## ***Defusing Strategies***

The following are five defusing strategies for dealing with difficult people:

1. Acknowledge the person's feelings
2. Ask open-ended questions
3. Summarize with empathy
4. Offer help, options or a referral
5. Give choices and consequences

Defusing strategies can be combined for optimal effectiveness. The key to using defusing strategies is to choose the appropriate one or more for the situation and to only use those strategies that you are comfortable with.

## ***Defusing Strategy #1 - Acknowledge the Person's Feelings***

Acknowledgement refers to communicating to a difficult person that you are interested and concerned. You are letting a difficult person know that you understand his/her emotional state **WITHOUT** agreeing with the person or condoning his/her behavior.

### ***Guidelines:***

- Use the proper tone of voice
- Let the person know they have your attention
- Indicate that you can see that they are upset, angry, etc.

### **Examples:**

- "Sir/ma'am, I see you are really upset."
- "Sir/ma'am, you seem to be really frustrated."
- "Sir/ma'am, it looks like you're really annoyed."

## ***Defusing Strategy #2 – Ask Open-Ended Questions***

Responding to questions requires a person to think rather than react to a situation. By keeping a person talking you may help them become more rational.

### ***Guidelines:***

- Ask *who, what, when, where, and how* questions to clarify the situation
- Get the person to think rather than react
- Keep them talking to keep them rational; be ready to ask follow-up questions
- Listen attentively to responses and encourage the person to talk
- Focus on the facts, don't take sides or react defensively
- Accept criticism and don't take it personally

### **Examples:**

- "What was it that made you so upset?"
- "What time was it when that happened? What was the name of the boat?"
- "Where were you when that happened?"
- "What did the other employee look like?"
- "What did it say on the Internet about the new schedule?"
- "What did the day shift mechanic say to you?"

## ***Defusing Strategy #3 - Summarize with Empathy***

Summarize the situation by using empathy statements to let a difficult person know that you have heard what he/she has said and understand the situation. You are not agreeing with a difficult person, you are just giving feedback as to your understanding of the facts that have been communicated to you without making any judgments.

### ***Guidelines:***

- Acknowledge the person's right to be upset
- Paraphrase the person's concerns to let them know you "got it"
- Avoid "I understand how you feel" because the focus should be on the feelings of the difficult person. Also, this statement may seem patronizing
- Avoid making judgmental or accusatory statements

### **Examples:**

- "You're frustrated because you had to wait a long time."
- "It sounds like you feel you have been getting the runaround."
- "It must be very upsetting to have to worry about... No wonder you're annoyed."
- "So if I understand you correctly, you're saying that ... Is that correct?"
- "Let me make sure I understand. Are you saying. . . . You're right, that is a problem."

## ***Defusing Strategy #4 - Offer Help, Options or a Referral***

This strategy can help you control the interaction and aid in the problem-solving process. It also communicates to a difficult person that you empathize with his/her situation and want to help.

### ***Guidelines:***

- ❑ Don't reject all demands
- ❑ Break down big problems into smaller, more manageable issues
- ❑ Be reassuring and point out options
- ❑ Give the person an "out"
- ❑ Avoid making promises you can't keep
- ❑ Offer to call in additional resources

### **Examples:**

- ❑ "Is there anything I can do to help?"
- ❑ "I can call my captain (supervisor) for you if you like?"
- ❑ "I'd be happy to get you some additional information to help you solve that problem."
- ❑ "I'm not able to approve what you want, so would you like to wait to talk to my captain (supervisor), or would you prefer I have them give you a call?"

## ***Defusing Strategy #5 - Give Choices and Consequences***

This strategy is a stronger approach to handling the situation by politely making it clear that you will not accept the behavior that a difficult person is exhibiting. This strategy is a way to communicate our limits to a difficult person by encouraging the person to modify his/her behavior.

### ***Guidelines:***

- ❑ Keep your tone non-threatening
- ❑ Avoid saying things like “I require . . . “ or “I can’t allow . . .”
- ❑ State the ground rules
- ❑ Present negative and positive choices and their consequences
- ❑ Consequences should be reasonable and enforceable
- ❑ End on a positive choice

# GIVING CHOICES AND CONSEQUENCES

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*Situation #1:* A customer boards your ferry and starts playing loud music from a “boom box” radio. The customer refuses to turn the radio off even after you politely make this request.

*Response:* ***Sir/Madam we need to get underway. For the comfort and safety of all passengers, company policy prohibits you from playing your radio while on the vessel. If you continue to play the radio we will not depart, or you can turn it off so you can get to where you want to go.***

**Note:** The *Choices and consequences* statement is in **boldface** for emphasis. In the example, point out the structure of the statement: Negative choice and consequence, followed by positive choice and consequence.

*Situation #2:* You are a mechanic working on a boat that is scheduled to depart, but the engine is not running smoothly. The Captain comes over and asks when the boat will be ready to go. When you try to explain the situation, the Captain curses at you and says: “Can’t you ever give me a straight answer? I bet you don’t have a clue what’s wrong with the engine. You never know how to fix anything. Are you a mechanic or just a glorified coffee drinker?”

*Response:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Situation #3:* You are an administrative office worker responsible for “signing in” all visitors to the workplace. An “unknown” person enters the building and walks right past you toward the door that leads to the rest of the offices in the building. When you ask the person who she is, she says, “It’s none of your business. I’ve been here before to visit my husband and I know where I need to go, so leave me alone and stop harassing me!”

*Response:* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# **CHOOSING A DEFUSING STRATEGY**

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*Please observe your facilitators as they act out a situation with a difficult person. In your assigned groups please use the questions below to guide you through each part of the scenario.*

## **Part I**

1. What strategy does your group recommend for dealing with the difficult person?
2. Why did you recommend that strategy?

## **Part II**

3. What strategy does your group recommend for dealing with the difficult person?
4. Why did you recommend that strategy?

## **Part III**

5. What strategy does your group recommend for dealing with the difficult person?
6. Why did you recommend that strategy?



## *Guidelines for Dealing with Difficult People*

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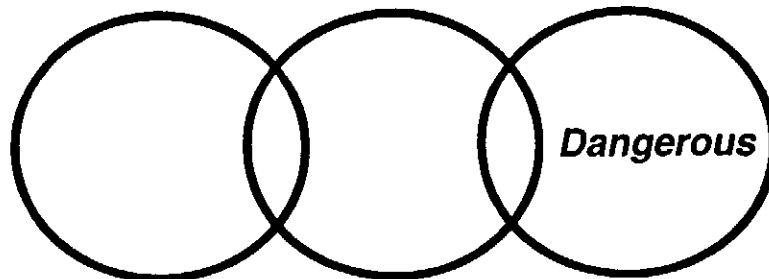
The following list summarizes some general guidelines to keep in mind when dealing with a difficult person:

- # 10: Accept \_\_\_\_\_ in a positive way.
- # 9: \_\_\_\_\_ is not always the best defense.
- # 8: Acknowledge \_\_\_\_\_.
- # 7: \_\_\_\_\_ to show concern.
- # 6: Give reasonable \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- # 5: Be \_\_\_\_\_.
- # 4: Allow person to maintain his/her \_\_\_\_\_.
- # 3: Always use \_\_\_\_\_ language.
- # 2: Don't let the person push your \_\_\_\_\_.
- # 1: Maintain \_\_\_\_\_!

**Note:** If you become involved with a person who is threatening or dangerous, you should seek immediate assistance by following your company's emergency procedures.



# DEALING WITH DANGEROUS PEOPLE



*Dangerous* people pose an immediate threat to your safety or the safety of others. When you are confronted with a dangerous person you need to call for help *immediately*. Your safety is the top priority; so do not do anything that puts yourself or others at risk.

The following are some guidelines for dealing with dangerous people:

- Maintain self-control
- Preserve your safety and the safety of others
- Notify or get help by following your company's procedures
- Report the incident through your company's formal reporting process

Keep in mind that maintaining self-control when confronted by a dangerous person is a critical component of your safety. Try to remain calm and do not overreact to the situation. In addition, use a non-threatening tone and behavior. If possible, think of positive outcomes and don't focus on the negatives of the situation.

# Self-Preservation Guidelines

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Above all your safety should be your top priority when confronted with a dangerous person. You cannot call for help or provide assistance if you are injured or worse. The following are some basic tips for preserving your safety when dealing with dangerous people:

- ❑ Use common sense
- ❑ Know your limitations
- ❑ Don't take any unnecessary risks
- ❑ Keep yourself and others safe
- ❑ Follow all instructions
- ❑ Alert others (if the situation allows) by using alarm systems or prearranged codes
- ❑ Watch for a safe chance to escape (if possible)
- ❑ Know your company's emergency procedures
- ❑ Report the incident to your company as soon as possible
- ❑ Know your company's self-defense policies and laws regarding the same

**Vessel** — If the dangerous person is on your docked vessel, let passengers or the dangerous person off, if possible. If underway, look for potential places of refuge on the vessel or a way to separate oneself from the dangerous situation. The most important thing is to call for help, using the radio or a cell phone, or by otherwise alerting a co-worker to call.

**Shore Facility** — If the dangerous person is in your facility try not to get trapped where there are no avenues of escape. When the dangerous person has entered your facility, remain active in looking for avenues of escape. As you are exiting the building, pull an alarm or use any other means to alert others if you can do so without jeopardizing your own safety.

**Weapon** — If the dangerous person has a weapon, such as a gun or a knife, do not try to grab the weapon. Remain calm and do NOT make any sudden movements. Tell the person what you are doing whenever you need to move. Constantly assess the situation and look for an escape route. Attempt to escape only if you are certain you will be successful OR your life is in immediate danger.

**Threatens Others** — When you observe a dangerous person threatening another person, don't intervene. You may think you are helping, but you may actually make the situation worse. Instead, your best option is to get immediate assistance. While you are waiting for help to arrive, keep others away from the situation so that their safety is not at risk. When help arrives, give a thorough description of the dangerous person and the situation.

# Emergency Notification Guidelines

When dealing with a dangerous person you need to call for help as soon as possible. Prior to making this call, quickly observe and assess the situation and make a mental note of the incident.

When calling for help follow your company's emergency procedures. When you request help, give as much relevant information as possible so emergency personnel can adequately respond to the situation.

Here are some tips on emergency notification and requesting assistance:

**Identify yourself** — Give your first and last name, your position (captain, mate) and the name of the vessel

**Give your exact location** — If you are calling from a company building give your address, floor location, and room number.

If you are underway, identify yourself and your vessel, location, heading, speed, and destination.

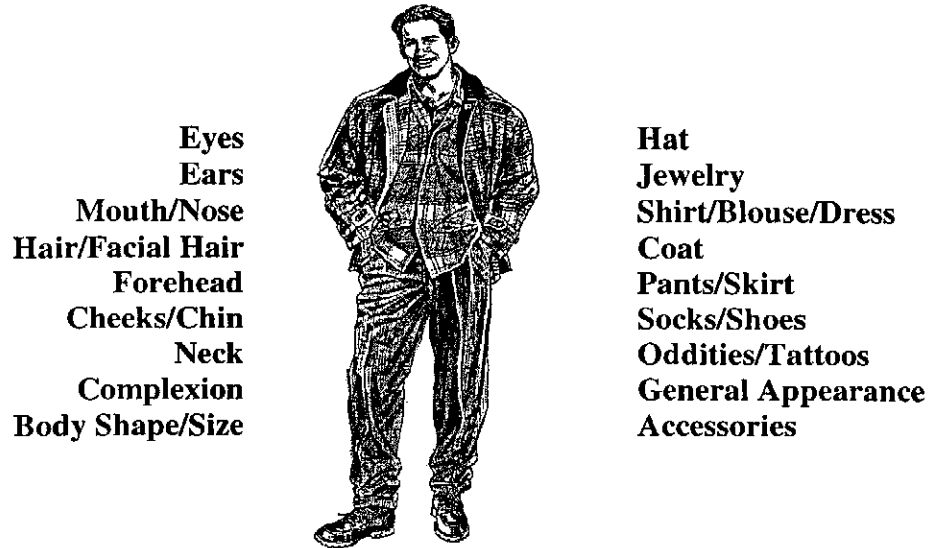
If possible, give location of alternate or emergency docks or moorings that the vessel can go to. Give an arrival time estimate.

**Request immediate assistance** — Be specific about the type of assistance you need (e.g., police, fire, EMS, Coast Guard).

**Explain the situation** — Be specific in giving information on the situation. Give specific facts and observations. Answer all questions posed by emergency personnel. Provide any information that may be important or helpful. Give a description of the dangerous person or persons who are involved in the situation.

# Identifying the Dangerous Person

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In giving a description of a dangerous person or person(s) you need to give as much detailed information as possible. Any and all physical characteristics you can give will help the police identify the perpetrator when they arrive on the scene or if he or she is fleeing from the area.

Consider giving a description of the following:

- Eyes:* Color, shape, eyelashes, eyebrows
- Ears:* Size, shape
- Mouth/Nose:* Size of lips, shape, nostrils
- Hair/Facial Hair:* Color, length, texture, hairline, clean-shaven
- Forehead:* Skin texture, height
- Cheeks/Chin:* Flesh texture, bone structure, shape, type (cleft, dimpled)
- Neck:* Adam's apple, hanging jowls, length, width
- Complexion:* Skin color, texture, pores, pock marks, acne, rashes, scars, birthmarks
- Body Shape/Size:* Height, weight, build
- Hat:* Color, style, how it is worn
- Jewelry:* Rings, watches, bracelets, earrings, necklaces, body piercing
- Shirt/Blouse/Dress:* Color, pattern, design, sleeves, collar
- Coat:* Color, style, length
- Pants/Skirt:* Color, pattern, design, length, cuffs
- Socks/Shoes:* Color, pattern, style, clean/dirty
- Oddities/Tattoos:* Shape, size, color, location on body
- General Appearance:* Neat, sloppy, clean, dirty
- Accessories:* Purses, briefcases, backpacks, packages

# ***Using Your Company's Reporting Procedures***

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After your encounter with the dangerous person is over, THE MOST IMPORTANT thing that you can do is to report the incident using your company's procedures.

## ***Employee Responsibilities***

It is critical that all workplace violence incidents be reported to the appropriate personnel in your company using established reporting procedures and protocols.

Incidents that are never reported are often times treated like they never happened. If you do not report incidents of workplace violence you may actually be compromising your company's future prevention efforts. Failure to report incidents will also impact your safety and the safety of other employees, customers and the community.

## ***Using Incident Reporting Forms***

In completing incident reports or forms, get assistance from your manager or supervisor if necessary.

Incident reporting forms should be legible, factually accurate and complete so the situation can be adequately assessed.

In addition, these reports may be used to assess prevention efforts to reduce the risk of similar incidents in the future.

## ***Management Responsibilities***

Managers and supervisors should take all reports of workplace violence seriously. Follow your company's procedures for handling the report and then follow-up to make sure appropriate action has been taken.

Make sure you provide feedback to the employee who originated the report and, if appropriate, other employees.

Use the information in the reports to assess what went wrong and why, and then use this insight to implement future prevention measures.

# *RECOVERING FROM WORKPLACE VIOLENCE*

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Despite our best prevention efforts, violence in the workplace can and does happen. Therefore, we must be prepared to deal with the aftermath of such incidents. The greatest impact incidents can have is on our personal well-being. The ability to deal with the stressful impact of workplace violence is an important part of the recovery efforts.

## *Impact on Victims*

Workplace violence can have the following impact on victims and their families:

- ❑ Physical or psychological injury
- ❑ Increased fear and stress
- ❑ Absenteeism and loss of productivity
- ❑ Job turnover
- ❑ Disruptions in personal and family life

## *Impact on Co-Workers*

Workplace violence can have the following impact on co-workers who, although they are not the direct victims of the incident, are still affected. (e.g., they may know the victim, work in the same facility or environment as the victim, or work in similar circumstances as the victim, such as the same route):

- ❑ Psychological trauma
- ❑ Increased fear and stress
- ❑ Loss of productivity

## ***Identifying Symptoms of Stress***

Whether you are a victim or a co-worker, one of the primary impacts of workplace violence is stress. Stress can occur as a result of a single traumatic incident or due to culmination of a series of incidents.

Symptoms of stress can be exhibited in a variety of ways:

- ❑ ***Physical*** – Difficulty breathing, elevated blood pressure, sweating and chills, muscle twitches and teeth grinding
- ❑ ***Emotional*** – Fear, panic, depression, grief, denial, feelings of hopelessness, guilt, agitation, irritability, intense anger
- ❑ ***Psychological*** – Hypersensitivity, paranoid thoughts, poor concentration and decision-making, disorientation, confusion, nightmares
- ❑ ***Behavioral*** – Withdrawal or other anti-social acts, disrupted sleep patterns, substance abuse, loss or increase in appetite

## ***Seeking Assistance***

If you or someone you know exhibits symptoms of stress, you need to seek help for yourself and/or others so that recovery can begin. Seek assistance if you are exhibiting symptoms of stress due to workplace violence. You can seek assistance from:

- ❑ Your manager or supervisor
- ❑ Human resources representative
- ❑ Union representative
- ❑ Family members
- ❑ Support groups
- ❑ Medical providers
- ❑ Employee Assistance Program (EAP)



## *Providing Support*

If you see signs of stress in co-workers provide as much support as you can or feel comfortable doing.

If someone confides in you, be empathetic and a good listener. Don't be judgmental or belittle a person's feelings.

When possible make referrals to other support resources. Whatever you can do to be supportive will go a long way.

Keep in mind that if stress is left unaddressed, it could fuel the "cycle of violence" and contribute to future workplace violence incidents.

## *Conclusion*

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There are many prevention efforts that you and your company can take to reduce the risk of violence in the workplace.

The challenge is to incorporate prevention efforts into your daily routines, each and every day. This can be accomplished by paying attention to inappropriate and out-of-the-ordinary behaviors, communicating concerns about warning signs, effectively managing our interactions with people and reporting all incidents to the appropriate people in our company in a timely fashion.