Situational Awareness

WAIT FOR IT

......Wait for it.......
The intent of this presentation is to provide guidelines to employers and employees in the event of an emergency.

As in most cases, emergencies are fluid and the circumstances are constantly changing.

This presentation is intended to serve as a general guide with the understanding that circumstances may prevent the implementation of each and every protocol as outlined.
Topics for Discussion

• Profile of an Active Shooter
• Indicators of Potential Violence
• Run, Hide, Fight
• Course of Action
• Situational Awareness
• Partnership with Law Enforcement
• CPTED
• Summary
• References
What exactly are we to look for?

How do I know if I’m paying attention to the right things?

Are there behaviors or warning signs of an imminent threat that I should know about?
Profile of An Active Shooter

- An individual, or group of individuals, actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area

- Active shooters primarily use firearm(s), but now are using multiple types of weaponry; machetes, hatchets, knives

- No pattern or method to their selection of victims

- Could be anyone, within or outside your organization

- Consequences are potentially catastrophic

- Incidents over quickly (10-15 minutes)

Establishing a proper mindset and tools to react with purpose is called -

**Survival Mindset**
Profile of An Active Shooter

**Common Myths**

- Out of the blue
- Never saw it coming
- He just snapped
- Most situations will resolve themselves if given a cooling off period
- Warning signs are always predictive of violent behavior
- Violence is random, spontaneous, and unpredictable
Profile of An Active Shooter

Realities

- Threats are almost always present

- Leakage, warnings made through comments (intentional or unintentional) can reveal clues to feelings, thoughts, fantasies, or intentions that may result in violence

- Erratic/abnormal behavior is a principle warning sign of future violence

- Bullying is often a stepping stone to violence (youth)

- The path toward violence, is an evolutionary one with signs posted along the way (indicators)
WHEN DO I DO WHAT I KNOW I SHOULD DO?  Dr. Steve Albrecht

- When it *hurts our business*.
- When my *intuition* kicks in.
- When other co-workers or clients are *afraid*.
- When other co-workers or clients *complain*.
- When I know I need to set *limits and boundaries*.
- When it fails the “*reasonable person*” test.
- When I need to be *firm, fair, consistent, and assertive* to deal with people and protect myself and my co-workers.
A crucial step in any successful threat management process is knowledge of the players involved. Some individuals truly intend violence (known as hunters), while others merely want to threaten or draw attention to themselves (howlers).

All hunters are howlers, but not all howlers are hunters. Dr. Steve Albrecht –

http://drstevealbrecht.com/
Survivors have said...Center for Personal Safety

- Took responsibility for own safety
- Aware what was happening right away
- Prepared “What if” questions asked pro-actively
- Practiced, they practiced, they practiced

The first step towards this goal is to develop a survival mindset.

A survival mindset is a protective shield comprised of three components:

Awareness, Preparation, and Rehearsal.
Awareness, Preparation

**Awareness**, involves taking the time necessary to gain a basic understanding of an active shooter situation. Realizing that active shooter incidents happen at the individual working level to everyday people is the starting point for developing a survival mindset.

**Preparation**, includes looking at your work environment through a survival lens; a lens that focuses on the “what if” questions. “What if” questions are critical in developing effective response strategies.

**Survivors prepare themselves both mentally and emotionally to do whatever it takes to make it through their situation.**
Rehearsal

Rehearsing, your plan will reduce your response time and build your confidence. In essence, your rehearsal serves as a survival test so that you can readily recognize sights and sounds (gunshots) that are foreign to the environment. A pre-determined survival mindset will help you take rapid, effective actions in a stressful situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trained</th>
<th>Untrained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxious</td>
<td>Panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recall what they learned</td>
<td>Fall into disbelief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare to Act</td>
<td>Lost in Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commit to Action</td>
<td>Descend into helplessness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Survival Mindset

- Enables you to act quickly and effectively
- Mindful, not fearful
  - Airline safety briefing
  - Better able to make that first, critical decision

Continuous Assessment Process

- Allows you to take appropriate survival action
- Use all senses
- Trust your intuition—that “gut” feeling (knowing without knowing why)
“Run, Hide, Fight”


This video, recently produced by the Houston Mayor’s Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security, dramatizes an active shooter incident in the workplace. Its purpose is to educate the public on how to respond during such an incident. Warning: The initial sequence in this video may be disturbing.

http://www.activeshooter.lasd.org/

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has created this video, Surviving an Active Shooter, to help people answer the question "What would you do?"

• If you have to immediately exit a location, how can you do so safely?
• If you cannot get outside and away from the threat, how can you secure yourself and those with you against attack?
• If you must confront your attacker, how can you do it in a way that gives you the best chance of success?
Run - Hide - Fight
“Run when it’s safe to run. Hide where it’s safe to hide. Fight if you or others around you have no other options.”

Under the stress of these intensely frightening events, would you be able to remember to do ten things or only three?

We’re simply asking all employees to remember Run-Hide-Fight, in that order, in the rare but catastrophic event where an active shooter arrives.

Millions of employees in this country will go through their entire careers without ever encountering an active shooter in their workplace. A small number might.

The concept was designed for all, to save the few who may need it.

Course of Action

Get Out *(Run)*
- Move quickly; don’t wait for others to validate your decision
- Leave belongings behind
- Survival chances increase if you are not where shooter is or go where he can’t see you

Call Out
- Inform authorities
- Call 9-1-1 and tell them the name of shooter (if known), shooter description, location, number and type of weapons
Course of Action

Hide Out

- May not be able to get out
  - Shooter between you and the only exit
  - Would have to enter area where shooter is positioned

- Hiding place
  - Well hidden and well protected
  - Avoid places that might trap you or restrict movement
Course of Action

Keep Out

- Find a room that can be locked with objects to hide behind
- Blockade door with heavy furniture
- Turn out lights; become totally silent
- Turn off noise-producing devices
- Call 9-1-1 (If you can do so without alerting the shooter)
Course of Action

Take Out - *(Fight)*

- Assume shooter’s intentions are lethal

- Shooter will succeed in shooting all those with whom he comes in contact, UNLESS you stop him

- Develop a survival mindset that you have “what it takes” to survive when your life is on the line

- You must be prepared to do whatever it takes to neutralize the threat

*You must choose to survive*
Law Enforcement Responders

Interacting with Law Enforcement Responders

• **DO NOT** expect officers to assist you as you get out
• Primary job is to locate the shooter and neutralize the threat
• Medical assistance will follow once the threat is neutralized

• Law Enforcement must assume everyone is a threat to their safety. Be prepared to:
  - have weapons pointed in your direction
  - be subject to search
  - be handcuffed
  - be questioned
Law Enforcement Response

Interacting with Law Enforcement Responders

When Law Enforcement officers enter the room, do not present a threat to them

- **DO NOT:**
  - Point at them or the shooter
  - Make quick movements
  - Run towards them or attempt to hug them
  - Scream or yell
  - Have anything in your hands; officers are taught that “hands kill”
Law Enforcement Response

Interacting with Law Enforcement Responders

**DO:**

- Raise your arms
- Spread your fingers
- Show hands as you drop to the floor
- Spread arms and legs, stay very still
“Situational Awareness”

“paying attention to what is going on around you.”

“ability to scan the environment and sense danger, challenges and opportunities, while maintaining the ability to conduct normal activities.”

In other words, to pay attention to your surroundings while not appearing to be paying attention.
Jason Bourne – Situational Awareness

http://www.artofmanliness.com/2015/02/05/how-to-develop-the-situational-awareness-of-jason-bourne/

Developing Mindfulness

Being Present

Make Better Decisions

Hone Powers of Observations in all areas of your life
Mastering the OODA Loop

http://www.artofmanliness.com/2014/09/15/ooda-loop/

• Decision making process by military strategist John Boyd – Fighter pilots.

• **Observe, Orient, Decide, Act.**

• We associate the “Observe” steps with situational awareness; but...

• “Orient” tells us what we should look for when observing, then puts the “Observations” into context so we know what to do with the information.

**Observe + Orient = Situational Awareness.**
Observe + Orient = Situational Awareness.

But how can we become better observers so that we can improve our situational awareness?

And how should we orient ourselves so that we observe the right things and understand the context for what we’re seeing?
Gun-fighting expert Jeff Cooper in his book “Principles of Personal Defense” laid out a color code system to help warriors gauge their mindset for combat scenarios.

Each color represents a person’s state of awareness and focus:

Condition Yellow is best described as “relaxed alert.” There’s no specific threat situation, but you have your head up and you’re taking in your surroundings with all your senses.

Most people associate situational awareness with just visual stimulation, but you can also learn a lot about a particular scenario from the sounds (or lack thereof) and even smells in the environment.
Tips to Improve your Observational Skills

• Put Yourself in a position of optimal observation.
  • Allow yourself the optimal visual picture
  • CPTED – Natural Surveillance = Receptionist

• Play the Awareness Game.
  • Practice observational skills
  • Master Memorization.
Trust your instincts: **Objects**

- Unattended bags, purses;
- Items appear to have leaks, loose wires, stains;

Trust your instincts: **People**

- Security related questions of staff and or watches drills and or tests procedures
- Guests reluctant to interact with others; or non-responsive when asked questions
Trust your instincts: **People**

- Sits in a vehicle for an extended period of time, including after work hours;
- Loitering near the facility or in the lobby;
- Arrives without prior notification and says they are contractors or service technicians, etc;
- Attempt to deliver packages or other items to an office or to a specific person;
- Attempts to bypass security, even “accidentally” walking past a check-in desk;
Trust your instincts: **People**

- Are uncooperative, dismissive or pretend not to understand what you are talking about if challenged by a representative of the company.

- Boundary probing (trying to get into areas they should not see if anyone stops or questions them)

- Creates a distraction, disruption, etc. If this occurs, watch the others who are with him/her.

- Rearranges clothing excessively
Trust your instincts: **Vehicles**

- Scrutinize all vehicles which enter the facility.

- Look for vehicles where the person driving the vehicle does not enter the facility but may walk or run away after parking;

- The car or truck appears to be sitting very low on its springs, indicating a great weight;

- The car or truck is parked illegally (or too close) to the building;

- Fuel trucks pose an extreme danger. Be extremely alert to fuel laden tanker trucks parked near or that drive by the facility.
Orient: Baseline, Goals and Action Plans

Ask yourself:

• Baseline Questions: What is normal?

• Anomaly Questions: “Anomalies are things that either do not happen and should, or that do happen and shouldn’t” - Patrick Van Horne author of “Left of Bang”.

Observe + Orient = Situational Awareness.
Kinesics: “conscious and unconscious body language” – Van Home

- Dominance / submissive behavior
- Comfortable / uncomfortable behavior
- Interested / uninterested behavior
Three Effective Ways to Stay Aware

- **Monitor the Baseline**
  - Requires conscious effort
  - Does the behavior fit or is it an anomaly

- **Fight Normalcy Bias**
  - May require you to be paranoid for awhile

- **Avoid Focus Locks**
  - Transition Areas
  - Cell phones, look up .. Just look
  - Don’t look vulnerable
Practice, Practice, Practice

• Situational awareness is a mindset (survival) that you purposefully have to cultivate

• Consciously practice; start today

  • How many exits, where are they, how many ways can I get out? How many ways can people get in?
  • Start observing people and establish a baseline
  • What are anomalies at work, the gym, Starbucks
  • Talk about this at staff meetings

• Be Mindful not paranoid
Form a PD Partnership

- Offer your company as a training location
- Use employee badges
- Use Video Surveillance
- Have a plan
  - Lockdown locations
  - Safe areas / shelter in place
  - Run, Hide, Fight
- Practice your plan
  - Table Top Exercises
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

1. **Natural Surveillance** - A design concept directed primarily at keeping intruders easily observable. Promoted by features that maximize visibility of people, parking areas and building entrances: doors and windows that look out on to streets and parking areas; pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and streets; front porches; adequate nighttime lighting.

2. **Territorial Reinforcement** - Physical design can create or extend a sphere of influence. Users then develop a sense of territorial control while potential offenders, perceiving this control, are discouraged. Promoted by features that define property lines and distinguish private spaces from public spaces using landscape plantings, pavement designs, gateway treatments.

3. **Natural Access Control** - A design concept directed primarily at decreasing crime opportunity by denying access to crime targets and creating in offenders a perception of risk. Gained by designing streets, sidewalks, building entrances and neighborhood gateways to clearly indicate public routes and discouraging access to private areas with structural elements.

4. **Target Hardening** - Accomplished by features that prohibit entry or access: window locks, dead bolts for doors, interior door hinges.
Closing Thoughts

- Treat Employees with respect and care
- Create and ensure open communications with employees
- Be aware of what is going on, don’t forget the receptionist
- Honoring intuition: Body language and red flag visitors
- “Tailgating” and “Shadowing”: Two easy ways into your facility
- Panic buttons, alarms and code words
- Designating safe rooms and identifying “hard points”
- Where I will go and where I WILL NOT go!!
Closing Thoughts

• The survival versus denial mindset: Visualizing response options: No two situations are alike

• Examine current theories on workplace violence prevention – Threat & Assessment teams

• Review current events and determine “best practices” as it relates to an effective workplace violence prevention program

• Know these concepts, discuss with staff “Run, Hide, Fight”

• Situational Awareness; fight your normalcy bias
References

- Safety Guidelines for Armed Subjects, Active Shooters Situations, Indiana University Police Department, April 2007

- Safety tips and guidelines regarding potential “Active Shooter” incidents occurring on campus, University of California Police

- Workplace Violence Desk reference, Security Management Group International

- How to Plan for Workplace Emergencies and Evacuations, US Department of labor, OSHA 3088, 2001


- Science, Strategy, and War by Frans P.B. Osinga (The best resource on John Boyd’s work. It’s expensive, but if you really want to dig into the development of the OODA Loop, it’s a must read.

- The Mind of War: John Boyd and American Security by Grant Hammond

- Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War by Robert Coram

- A Vision So Noble by Daniel Ford

- Curtis Sprague of Dark Horse Tactical. His insights on how to apply the Loop in tactical situations was invaluable.
An Active Shooter Course

DHS Course, Active Shooter, What You Can Do, Response to an Active Shooter Training (Online)

http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS907.asp
Be Aware, Be Alert, Be Prepared

Be Jason Bourne

Cathi L. Marx; ALCM, COSS, COSM, CHS-V
President Aspen Risk Management Group