ACTIVE SHOOTER

***SURVIVAL***

EMERGENCY DRILL

HANDBOOK

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this training is to increase confidence and reduce response time. The faster your employees act upon the options of *RUN, HIDE, or FIGHT*, the safer they will be.

In order to maximize your benefits to training and reduce the stress inherent in this type of exercise, we recommend the following three-part process:

1. First, conduct a complete security survey.

2. Second, hold classroom training on your emergency response plan (in general) and specifically your response to an **Active Shooter.**

3. Lastly, conduct your exercise at a walk-through pace.

Following these steps will allow your employees sufficient time to adjust to the idea that this could happen to them. It will also give those who wish to opt out time to make that decision.

Please include your local law enforcement in any and all of these steps. They have unique insight to this type of crime and they are an important part of every business’ emergency response plan.

**TRAINING ELEMENTS**

1. The *SECURITY SURVEY* is a tool used to evaluate the basic physical security of your site. Some elements of the survey include: natural surveillance, access control, lighting, and communication. It should include an assessment of the immediate neighborhood and each horizontal/vertical component of your site.

2. The *CLASSROOM TRAINING* is conducted in a lecture or PowerPoint format and is a great time to go over the improvements or deficiencies noted by your team during the *SECURITY SURVEY*. This classroom session does not need to take more than two hours, but should be at least an hour long to introduce the topic and include the Run, Hide, Fight video produced by the Houston Police Department. This training session is a good time to solicit ideas and feedback from your employees.

3. The *ACTIVE SHOOTER SURVIVAL EXERCISE* is the last element of your training. With the help of local law enforcement, and other emergency services such as Fire and Ambulance, plan on at least 2 hours to conduct the pre-brief, exercise, and de-brief.

**PRE-BRIEFING**

The importance of this step cannot be over emphasized. Just the mention of an Active Shooter, conjures up terrible images and increases our stress level. *STRESS* is the element that must be controlled in any training if we want to maximize *LEARNING.*

A pre-exercise briefing reduces the overall stress of the event so the participants can learn.

Introduce all of the “players” and their assignments. Identify how many “bad guys” there will be in this exercise. Communicate the code word (such as “King’s X”) that will immediately end the exercise if anyone says it. And, make sure that everyone knows they have the power to stop the exercise for any reason. Show the “fake” weapon, i.e. a starter pistol that will be used in the drill.

Identify the geographic limits of the exercise. In real life, you would tell people to run until they were miles away from the scene, but for the purpose of this exercise, getting safely out of the building will be sufficient.

Communicate a general *Start Time*, give or take 10 minutes, and establish a definite *End Time*. That will allow everyone to reconvene for the de-brief in a timely manner, and save you from having to search everywhere for those who decided to hide out.

Ask at this time if there are any injuries and if there is anyone who wants to skip the training or take a position on the perimeter as an observer. And reiterate that this is not a “hands-on” drill. No one will touch anyone.

**EXERCISE ASSIGNMENTS**

**& OUTLINE**

**Assignments:** Here are some typical assignments for an Active Shooter Drill. It is important that these people be identifiable as “out of play”. We have our people wear high-visibility traffic vests.

* **Notifications** (to 911 and nearby businesses)
* **Perimeter Monitor** (1 for each entrance)
* **Interior Monitor** (1 for each floor)
* **Videographer** (accompanies shooter)
* **First Aid** (just in case)
* **Shooter-Actor** (Consider using a police officer)
* **Safety Monitor** (to accompany the Shooter)

THE REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN **FIGHT, FLIGHT, OR FREEZE,** IS **TRAINING**

**Outline:** After the Pre-Briefing, tell everyone to go to their normal locations for an average work day. Have the shooter start off site and make his approach, allowing for the possibility that someone inside might notice his approach as suspicious and sound the alarm.

Have the shooter go through the facility until he is “stopped” by someone indicating they would have acted with force to stop the threat. At that point call “King’s X” and move to de-briefing.

**EVERY FLOOR IN YOUR WORKPLACE MUST HAVE AN EMERGENCY BAG WITH TRAUMA GRADE BANDAGES, TOURNIQUETS, AND A HEMOSTATIC DEVICE**

**DEBRIEFING**

Consider this element just as important as the pre-brief from the standpoint of reducing stress and maximizing learning. Do not cut this portion short and be prepared to extend it in order to allow everyone involved to participate.

Begin with a roll call and ask if there are any injuries as a result of the exercise.

Then go around the room, beginning with the “shooter”, and give each person a chance to speak about their experience: what they did that worked and what challenges they faced during the drill.

**FOLLOW-UP**

Your employees will think about this training for days and weeks to come. They will consider what worked and what didn’t. Create an avenue for feedback that goes beyond the initial de-brief. This can be an anonymous suggestion box or just the “Ok” to communicate with Management on the topic. It is a good idea after some time has passed to send a general query and see if anyone has any new ideas related to the exercise.

**FUTURE TRAINING**

It is our recommendation that this initial exercise at your facility be conducted at a walk-through pace. The training objectives are “*RUN”* and *“HIDE”.* To accomplish that, we do not recommend fake wounds, airsoft, excessive screaming or any other device designed to increase stress or add variables.

In future trainings or to train specific teams within your office, such as a medical response team, there can be great benefit in engaging actors from the local community college and piping “scream soundtracks” through the public address system. To take your training to the next level, consider blocking the most common exits or conducting the exercise after dark and turning the lights out.

If learning is our primary goal, then retention is our second. In order to maximize retention this topic must be revisited before it fades from memory. We recommend drilling each of the 3 emergency response options: *EVACUATION, SHELTER-IN-PLACE,* and *LOCK DOWN* once each year.

It is also a good idea to time your training with the arrival of new employees or season/temporary workers.

**CONCLUSION**

Thank you for your commitment to preparedness in the workplace. While some disasters are seemingly unavoidable, the damage done during these events can be mitigated through training and preparation.

Your Local Law Enforcement is committed to safety and public service and we will be glad to help you conduct any of these elements in your training program.

**The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.**

[Edmund Burke](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/e/edmund_burke.html)