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Keeping Up With Dr. Steve



A quarterly newsletter from Dr. Steve Albrecht about emerging issues in HR, security, training, and leadership best practices.

<http://drstevealbrecht.com>



The Active Shooter Response: Run-Hide-Fight

The bad news is that incidents of workplace violence involving active shooters, who intend to take many lives in their rampages, seem more common than ever. The shooter at the Navy Yard in Washington, DC last September killed 12 employees. The good news, however, is that these cases are actually quite rare and many people will survive them if they follow the national protocol: Run – Hide – Fight. It's easy to remember and easy to do, even under life-threatening stress. Your firm should conduct a drill once per year, set for 15 minutes. It should not be a highly-disruptive event. At the appointed time, have a representative from Facilities, HR, or Security make a building-wide PA announcement: "There is an unusual occurrence in the Lobby" or "There is police activity on the third floor." This means all employees (including senior leadership) should stop what they are doing and make one of two important choices: either leave the building immediately, via the fastest route, or leave their work areas, head to a "safe room," and shelter-in-place. These rooms could include a restroom, break room, training room, storage closet, conference room, file room, or even their own office if it can be locked or barricaded. During an active shooter drill, each employee should focus on protecting himself or herself first, but bring as many colleagues with them as they can gather. Wait for 15 minutes outside the building or inside the safe room, and then return to work. For more guidance on this important topic, go to YouTube and watch the six-minute "Run-Hide-Fight" video, created by the City of Houston, TX and the Department of Homeland Security. Although I believe the video is well-done, I would suggest starting it at the 1:30 mark. In their attempt at realism, the video folks used a Vin Diesel lookalike to walk around dressed in black, shooting people with a shotgun. While there is no blood, it's realistic to be sure. So to prevent frightening anyone, I would just skip the opening scene. The video offers valuable information which is easy to remember and do.

Ask Dr. Steve

“Our company has a substance abuse policy that prohibits possession of illegal drugs or alcohol at work, or the abuse of prescription drugs. What do we do about employees with Medical Marijuana Cards?”

In California and other states where people can get a Medical Marijuana Card from a physician, the employer still has the right to uphold its drug and alcohol policies. Under current federal law (which may change), marijuana is still an illegal drug and a controlled substance per the DEA. As such, courts have supported employers who use pre-



employment drug testing, reasonable suspicion/for-cause testing, post-accident testing, and random testing (for safety sensitive employees). While an employee's Medical Marijuana Card may be valid per a healthcare professional, employers still have the right to demand employees come to work and stay sober. Here is some updated policy language you may want to include as you review your substance abuse policy: "Having a Medical Marijuana Card and/or a cannabis prescription from a physician does not allow you to use or possess any cannabis products (marijuana, hash, or hash oil) on our properties, while working as an employee here, or while 'on call' and subject to return to work. The federal government still classifies cannabis as an illegal drug, even if our state has decriminalized its possession or use. Unlike .08 blood alcohol levels, as yet there is no 'acceptable level of driving impairment' when it comes to cannabis use and driving our equipment or vehicles. You are still subject to testing under our reasonable suspicion, post-accident, or 'safety sensitive employee' policies, and receiving discipline, suspension, or termination for a positive cannabis test."

***Call or e-mail for information on coaching services,
training workshops, risk assessments, and HR support.***

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