



TOPIC: Workplace Violence

ACKNOWLEDGE: Thank you for being here and participating in this safety talk. I know your time is valuable, so I will ensure every moment of this talk is worth your while (*Make eye contact with the entire group*).

Training Tips:

Ask a lot of questions while delivering your Safety Talk. Questions 'hook the mind' and engage your participants. The simple act of asking questions is a High Impact Training technique!

Raise a hand when asking questions directed to your audience. You'll often find that people are more willing to answer your questions and become active participants. . . try it out! Also, pause for a moment after asking a question; waiting for and encouraging responses from the group.

Provide an example of a personal experience (or a recent news event). For instance: "A close friend of mine once _____", or "Just last week _____". This is a very effective method to help participants relate to your topic. It often helps them to realize: '*Yeah, this could affect me. I should listen to this.*'

ASK: Did you know, between 2006 and 2010, 372 **health care workers** missed work due to injuries caused by workplace violence? (Source: Winnipeg Free Press article, "[An industry working in fear.](#)")

Would you believe that over a recent four years period, employees from each of the following four **service worker** categories (1. cashiers, 2. bartenders, 3. cleaners and 4. janitors) have taken time off work because of injuries from assaults and violence? (Source: Winnipeg Free Press article, "[When work puts you in the line of fire.](#)")

What's In It For Me (WIIFM)?: Victims of violence can suffer devastating effects including physical and psychological injuries. Even the perception of violence alone can cause a person to suffer psychological effects. We don't want any of our employees engaging in violent behaviour nor do we want any of you to suffer the effects. Doing your part to prevent workplace violence is good for everyone! Also, workplace violence is against the law. Any person accused of violence can face charges under the Criminal Code (employees, managers, employers, contractors, customers – anyone).

More Workplace Violence News from The Winnipeg Free Press (Summer, 2011)

Peril part of public safety jobs: According to the WCB, in a four year period, 70 **security guards**, 58 **police officers** and 52 **correctional officers** took time off work due to workplace injuries caused by workplace violence.

Kicking and biting is "part of the job": Teacher assistants are the 8th most likely type of employee to fall victim to workplace violence. 51 **teacher assistants** were injured on the job between 2006 and 2010.



ASK: Did you know?

Some of the psychological effects are similar to those associated with workplace harassment. For instance:

- Impaired ability to make decisions and poor concentration (stress factors contribute to 60% of workplace accidents);
- Loss of self-confidence and self-esteem;
- Panic attacks, anxiety disorders, depression, social phobia (withdrawal from usual social interaction) and deteriorating relationships with family and friends.

ASK:

1. What kinds of behaviour or activities might be considered violence, in your opinion?
(Possible answers: Threats of physical harm. Being slapped in the face. Purse snatching. Armed robbery. Being pushed during a dispute.)
2. Who might be the cause Workplace Violence?
(Possible answers: Customers. Strangers. Employees. Supervisors. Employers. Contractors. Family, friends or acquaintances of employees.)
3. What days, months or times of the year or times of day may cause additional risks for violence at our workplace?
(Answers will vary from one workplace to another but may include: Weekends. Summer. Christmas season. Spring Break. Midnight shift.)
4. Where are the greatest risks for Workplace Violence in our organization?
(Answers will vary from one workplace to another but may include: Reception area. Locker room. Off site, like making bank deposits.)



(Pause between the questions to allow participants to think about each one. Help them along by prompting and encourage participation.)

STATE: Now that we've discussed some of our own thoughts about what kind of behaviour constitutes violence, who might be the cause and where our organization is at the greatest risk for violence, let me read off the definition offered by Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Regulation MR217/2006, Part 11:

Violence is:

- a. the attempted or actual exercise of physical force against a person; and
- b. any threatening statement or behaviour that gives a person reasonable cause to believe that physical force will be used against the person.

STATE: If you are aware of the potential for a domestic dispute to spill over into the workplace, please consider letting your manager know.



ASK:

What Do You Think You Should Do If You Encounter an Aggressive or Violent Persons in the Workplace?

Practice Situational Awareness!

When encountering an unknown person (or persons) in your workplace, be aware of your surroundings and ask yourself _____ (below are possible answers):

- Does he/she appear to belong here (could he/she be an intruder)?
- Am I alone in the area (where's the nearest friendly person)?
- How many strangers are there (are you 'out-numbered')?
- Can I position myself away from the person (or across from a barrier)?
- Are there any objects in his/her hands that can be used as a weapon?
- Where is the nearest exit and what is my escape route?
- Are there fire alarm pull stations nearby that I could use to cause a distraction if I am attacked?



ASK: What if you are attacked? (Possible answers: scream as loud and for as long as possible and **try to escape**. If you can, run towards an exit and to an area with other people or a neighbouring building or well-lit area (**constantly calling out for help**).

ASK: What if someone grabs your purse, wallet or other personal property? (**do not resist** and **do not chase the person**).

ASK: What do you do when you've reached safety? (Call the police. Describe the appearance & mannerisms of the offender.)

ASK: Now what? Who else do you inform? (Inform your supervisor of the incident).

The Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Regulation: Amendments to Part 11, 'Violence in the Workplace' (Effective August 31, 2011)

STATE: Amendments to the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation have made it mandatory for workplaces that provide public services (and other specific workplaces that are believed to be at risk for workplace violence) to develop and follow a Violence Prevention Policy (as described in the regulations). Also, all other employers not specifically listed in the regulation must perform a Violence Risk Assessment to determine whether they need to develop and implement a Violence Prevention Policy.

FACILITATOR NOTE:

If you are required to have a Violence Prevention Policy, the items on the following page are just some of the elements that must be included in it. If you're not required to have a Violence Prevention Policy it is a good practice to follow as many of the items listed below as you can. During this safety talk, discuss whatever items are



STATE & DISCUSS. . . Our violence policy includes the following elements:

- Measures to summon immediate assistance when violent or threatening situations occur.
- A description of the worksites at our workplace where violence has occurred or may reasonably be expected to occur.
- A description of the specific job functions where employees have been or may reasonably be expected to be exposed to an incident of violence.
- Procedures for employees to follow to report an incident of violence to your manager/supervisor.
- Procedures that (COMPANY OWNER'S) must follow to document and investigate any incident of violence, and for putting control measures in place to eliminate or reduce the risk of further occurrence as a result of any violent act.
- A statement that any personal information disclosed, regarding an incident of violence, will be the minimum amount necessary.
- Encouragement for any worker who has been harmed as a result of a violent incident at the workplace to consult their health care provider for treatment or referral to post-incident counseling, if appropriate.

(If you have implemented any other relevant measures, discuss them here.)

TAKE AWAY:

Violence is not acceptable at our workplace; ever and it is illegal! If you are a victim of workplace violence or if you've witnessed violence in the workplace, ensure you notify your supervisor immediately. If you are not comfortable with speaking to your supervisor about the matter, then talk to your Workplace Safety & Health or human resources representative (*replace WS&H or HR Rep with whatever is appropriate for your workplace*).

STATE: If you have any questions regarding the topics discussed today, please let me know. If I don't have an answer for you now, I will direct your question to another individual, if you are comfortable with that. We want you to be safe and feel safe while at work!

Facilitator, remember to:

1. Ask for the commitment of your employees,
2. Answer all questions,
3. Thank them for their time and
4. Document that this safety talk occurred.



RECORD OF SAFETY TALK	
Date:	Time:
Talk Given By:	
Company Name:	Work Location Dept.:
Results of inspection, demonstration or other activity or suggestions during talk:	

List of All Employees Who Attended the Safety Talk:	
Name (PRINT)	Signature
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
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18.	
19.	
20.	

Signed: _____

Position Held: _____