



# Would You Drop to the Floor If Shooting Broke Out In Your Workplace?

Insights

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With depressing regularity, we receive calls asking for guidance in evaluating and responding to potential workplace violence threats. The threats are rarely serious but in this era, one can never ignore concerns. There are no easy formulas to determine if a threat is genuine. If you review the factors that may indicate that someone is ripe for workplace violence, you may decide that you fit the bill about mid-morning on a bad Monday. I've written about the signs and factors associated with workplace violence before and that is not today's topic.

Do you and your employees know what to do if you hear shooting? The most common reactions are freezing in place or dropping to the floor, and neither action is generally a sound survival strategy. Dropping to the floor or hiding in a place with no escape route may simply make the shooter's job easier because he is not faced with moving targets. Honestly; have you ever thought about what you and your employees should do if a shooter is stalking through your workplace?

The good news is that it doesn't take much effort to provide at least basic active shooter training. The bad news is that few employers do so. The analysis is that a workplace shooting is unlikely, so why train employees about how to respond. The answer is simple risk analysis ...

1. A workplace shooting is unlikely;
2. But if a workplace shooter appears, the results will be horrific.
3. Training is simple and short;
4. So simple risk analysis suggests that you should provide the damned training.

The training will probably never be needed, but if an incident does occur, your training may save your employees. The instruction might also save them or their family outside of work.

## Resources

The Department of Homeland Security maintains [a site with plenty of information, including a 90 video.](#)

But you don't need 90 minutes ... show your employees this [five minute YouTube video by DHS.](#)

I'll share a brief summary of suggestions. If you hear shooting, RUN! If you cannot run, only then should you hide. If you have no other option, fight.

More importantly, teach yourself to practice "situational awareness." I fought for many years, and as I aged, I had to deal with guys half my age. "Situational awareness" and quick reflexes were survival skills when one is in their late 40s fighting with guys in the 20s. My fighting, combined with other training and experiences, resulted in me always considering my environment. When I'm in a theater, I note the exits. I ponder what I would do in certain circumstances. It's second nature. It doesn't take a lot of time. I simply stay alert. Do you?

Howard

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