



TDCJ Risk Management's Training Circular

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JANUARY KEEPING ANGER IN THE "GREEN ZONE"



A new year is here and it is time to take the Christmas tree down and put all those decorations back in the boxes for next year. We have eaten our cabbage and black-eyed peas for luck. We have made New Year resolutions, some we know we will keep, others we hope we can keep, and some we know we aren't going to keep. You go to the mailbox and instead of the colorful sale circulars, you find the dreaded bills. With the thoughts of how to pay those bills, and of a new year at work with deadlines, budgets, and projects that needed to be completed yesterday, **STRESS** and **ANGER** may build up without warning.



DEALING WITH ANGER IN THE WORKPLACE

A person under the influence of anger can not rationalize, comprehend, or make good decisions because anger distorts logical reasoning into blind emotion. Suppressed anger, when ignored, can quickly turn into rage and violence.

How many times have we been driving home and flip through the radio channels only to discover "breaking news" that yet another individual's anger has turned to a rage and they are shooting employees at the place or prior place of employment?

TDCJ or any company is not immune to previous or current employees who have decided to act on their anger in an unhealthy manner. We live in a high stress, fast paced world with constant demands placed on us at home and

work. It may not take much to push an individual from a state of anger to one of rage. It is only natural that we understand the stress and strain that can push a normally sane person to the edge. Know the signs and keep your anger in the green.



CAUSES OF ANGER

Direct cause is the immediate emotional response:

- * Frustration
- * Pain
- * Disappointment

Indirect is the secondary emotion that comes later, if the direct emotion is not dealt with:

- * Stress
- * Physical ailments
- * Accidents

SYMPTOMS OF PHYSICAL ANGER

- * Tense muscles
- * Anxiety
- * Flushed face
- * Withdrawal from other people
- * Head and body aches
- * Teeth grinding
- * Crying
- * Vulgar language

SYMPTOMS OF HIDDEN ANGER

Aggressive

- * Complaining
- * Dwelling on the past
- * Sarcasm
- * Talking "behind another's back"
- * Needing to be "right"

Passive Aggressive

- * Procrastination
- * Lying
- * Intimidation
- * Ignoring
- * With holding information
- * Retaliation

Effects of anger

Negative

- * Poor attendance
- * Accident prone
- * Low productivity
- * Depression



Positive

- * Increased energy
- * Increased productivity, if directed correctly

The worst effect of anger are the ruined relationships, because:

- * People become less open
- * People fear arguing for their opinion
- * People start avoiding others
- * People stop volunteering for team projects

Is it OK to be angry?

YES !!

- * If the world does not meet your expectations, then you have the right to be angry.
- * But you **DO NOT** have the right to lash out at other people

MANAGING ANGER

Ask yourself the following questions when you get angry:

- * Is this a valid reason to get upset?
- * Is this really that important?
- * Will I remember it next week?
- * Am I willing to suffer the consequences if I lose?
- * Is this a personality or work-related conflict?



Three approaches to anger management are:

-Expressing

- * Using an assertive, not aggressive, approach.
- * Most healthy way.

-Redirecting

- * Converting anger towards something more positive.

-Calming

- * Control your outward behavior and internal response.

Anger Management Tips

- * Change the way you look at things.
- * Become a better communicator.
- * Change your environment.
- * Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- * Learn and practice relaxation and breathing techniques.



IDENTIFYING AND PREVENTING WORK-PLACE VIOLENCE

Any physical assault, threatening behavior, or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting is workplace violence.

A workplace may be any location either permanent or temporary where an employee performs any work-related duty.

This includes, but is not limited to, the buildings, and the surrounding perimeters, including the parking lots, field locations, parole home visitation, traveling to and from work assignments.

Workplace Violence Statistics Homicide

Take a look at the statistics that the SORM provide:

- * #1 cause of death in the workplace for women
- * #2 cause of death in the workplace for men
- * 76% workplace homicides committed with a firearm
- * 71% workplace homicides robbery related
- * An average of 20 people are murdered and 18,000 are assaulted every week while working

Hidden Cost of Violence

- * Increased worker’s compensation rates

- * Legal fees
- * Increase in health care cost
- * Decreased morale in the workplace
- * Loss of experienced workers
- * 3 times the cost of workplace accidents



Types of Workplace Violence

The State Office of Risk Management (SORM) breaks the types of violence into 4 types. SORM places The Texas Department of Criminal Justice into type 2.

- * Type 1-Violence by strangers
- * Type 2-Violence by customers/clients
- * Type 3-Violence by co-workers
- * Type 4-Violence by domestic relations



What’s happening at work?

- * Only one in five physical threats are ever reported

- * Attackers are likely to be customers or clients
- * Job stress is both a cause and an effect
- * Effective prevention programs result in fewer incidents of violence

Contributing Factors

Situations that have potential for violence

- * Increased stress, anger, or conflicts
- * Inadequate training
- * Lack of awareness and denial
- * Unemployment and social issues
- * Access to firearms and other weapons
- * Lack of direction or commitment from management

Recognizing the Warning signs

General Behaviors

- * Reduced productivity
- * Increased need for supervision
- * Need to blame others
- * Inconsistent work behavior
- * Excessive tardiness or absences
- * Strained workplace relationships
- * Unreciprocated romantic obsession
- * Always stressed
- * Depression threats
- * Substance abuse



STOP and be observant

Warning Signs*Profile of a violent worker*

- * Tends to be a loner
- * May have a history of conflict or violence with others
- * May exhibit signs of depression, paranoia or exhibit other behavior characteristics of personality disorders
- * Likely to exhibit self destructive behaviors such as substance or alcohol abuse
- * May demonstrate a fascination with weapons

What you can do*Prior to and during an escalation*

- * Project calmness
- * Listen with empathy
- * Focus your attention on them
- * Keep your posture relaxed but attentive
- * Acknowledge the persons feelings
- * Ask for specific small favors
- * Use delaying tactics in order to give the person time to clam down
- * Ask open-ended questions
- * Break big problems down into manageable units
- * Accept criticism positively
- * Use the persons name
- * Ask for recommendations
- * Repeat back what is requested

- * Position yourself so that your access to an exit is not blocked

What NOT to do*Prior to and during an escalation*

- * Use communications styles which generate hostility
- * Reject all the persons demand from the start
- * Pose in challenging stances
- * Engage in physical contact, finger pointing, or trying to stare them down
- * Make sudden or threatening movements
- * Threaten, dare, belittle or make them feel foolish
- * Act impatient or criticize the person
- * Attempt to bargain with the threatening person
- * Make false statements
- * Make promises you can not or not will keep
- * Take sides or agree with distorted points of view
- * Invade the person's personal space

What you can do when violence occurs

- * Escape
- * Use cover
- * Call for help
- * Surrender property
- * Put yourself in a protective position (45 degree angle)

**What you can do when it is over**

- * Seek medical attention
- * Report and document
- * Accept offers of help

Stress is not what happens to you;

Stress is how you deal with what happens to you.

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