

Preventing Workplace Violence Facilitator's Notes

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Objectives

After this workshop, you will be able to:

- Define workplace violence
- Recognize the risk factors associated with workplace violence
- Recognize some strategies to prevent workplace violence

This is a 90 minute workshop. Be conscious of the clock and move dialogue and activities along in order to complete the agenda in a timely fashion.	
3 minutes	Introductions, Objectives, Logistics, Ground Rules and Review of Agenda
10 -15 minutes	What is workplace violence?
5 minutes	Here's What We Know
20 minutes	Workplace Violence Risk Factors
20 minutes	Prevention Strategies
20 – 25 minutes	Finding Solutions
2 minutes	Wrap Up: Final Questions/Answers; Evaluations

Participants' materials (one each)	Provided	Have
Risk Factor Worksheet Workplace Assessment Checklist OSHA factsheet – Workplace Violence NY State Violence Prevention Factsheet		
Power point handouts		

Supplies	Number	Provided	Have
Sign-up sheet and evaluations for participants	1		
Flipchart	1 - 2		
Markers	Several colors		
LCD Projector/screen			
Power point slides			

Preparation and Set-Up:

- If possible, have room set up with small tables for groups of 4 or 5.
- Prior to the session try to get information on any health and safety contract language and any injury and illness reporting procedures that the workshop participants are covered under.
- The workshop will run much smoother if you and your training partner determine who will present which section. Once that's agreed upon the other team member not presenting at the time can assist with recording on the flipchart and any handouts, etc.
- Before starting the session, post either the objectives power point slide or write the learning objectives on flipchart paper to review with the group.
- Also prior to the beginning of the session, hang a blank piece of flip chart paper on the wall and let the group know that this will serve as a "parking lot". The parking lot can be used for the group to post any questions or topic that they wanted to address that you didn't have time to get to. Be sure that they have post its available at their tables or rows. Ask them to write questions on the post its and post them on the parking lot and that you will try to get to the questions if there is time. Ask them to include their e-mail address in case you need to follow up with them after the session. Hopefully, this will help expedite the session and limit the amount of drawn out discussion.

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

TIME: 3 to 5 minutes

• **Introductions:**

- Be sure to begin on time and welcome participants. Introduce yourself and your co-facilitator, and identify your local and what you do at your school or workplace.

• **Logistics and Ground Rules:**

- Go over location of bathrooms, length of workshop, how you want to handle questions, refreshments, if any, etc.
- Ground rules could include respecting each other's comments, turning cell phones to vibrate and any others you think are important. The group may want to add a couple also.
- There is a lot of material to cover in a limited amount of time. To help expedite discussions and activities you may want to let the group know that there is a signal that you will use to quiet them down and get their attention when you need to move on. So, whenever you show this signal you will need their attention.

• **Agenda and Learning Objectives:**

Review learning objectives below for the workshop.

- **By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:**
 - Define workplace violence
 - Recognize the risk factors associated with workplace violence
 - Recognize some strategies to prevent workplace violence

Explain the “parking lot”:

- The parking lot can be used for the group to post any questions or topic that they wanted to address that you didn't have time to get to.
- Ask them to write questions on the post its and post them on the parking lot and that you will try to get to the questions if there is time.

- Ask them to include their e-mail address in case you need to follow up with them after the session.
- Tell them if you don't get to their post it before the end of the session, you'll contact them by e-mail.

INTENT:

This is a warm-up activity to get participants to think about what workplace violence means to them.

You will record their responses on a T-Chart and then post the official definition of workplace violence from NIOSH and allow the group the opportunity to add other examples to the T-Chart.

Allow time for people to talk about their stories or concerns but this section should be no more than 15 minutes in length.

2. *What is workplace violence?*

TIME: 10 – 15 minutes

Prepare to show power point slides: NIOSH Official Definition; Examples of Workplace Violence

INSTRUCTIONS:

- To get the discussion started, ask participants to introduce themselves to the others in their group or the persons nearest themselves.
- Have the groups discuss the following question: What kinds of actions come to mind when you think of work-place violence?
- Give the group about three (3) minutes to talk to each other and then ask for some examples. Allow enough time for report backs so that people can share their personal stories, but try to limit it to around five (5) minutes. Record responses on a flipchart

POINTS TO COVER:

- Most people think of violence in a workplace setting as a physical assault, such as student against student or employee against employee.
- However, workplace violence includes a much broader spectrum of incidents such as threatening emails or a bullying boss.
- These incidents can affect staff and employees quite significantly, but this impact is not usually thought about or even considered.

SHOW SLIDE: NIOSH “official” definition

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) defines workplace violence as:

“Violent acts, including physical assaults and threats of assault, directed toward persons at work or on duty. The spectrum of workplace violence ranges from offensive language to homicide.”

Now that you’ve seen this definition, is there anything you’ve experienced or that comes to mind that you’d like to add to the list you’ve created? (Add their concerns to the T-Chart)

SHOW SLIDE: Examples of Workplace Violence. Review any examples listed below if not raised by the group to get their reaction. Then go on to the questions below.

- **Threatening behavior** – shaking fists, destroying property, vandalism, sabotage, theft, throwing objects.
- **Verbal or written threats** - expression of intent to inflict harm.
- **Harassment** - behavior that demeans, embarrasses, humiliates, annoys, alarms or verbally abuses a person and that is known or would be expected to be unwelcome. Included are words, gestures, pranks, arguments, psychological trauma, rumors, intimidation, bullying, or other inappropriate activities.
- **Verbal abuse** - swearing, insults or condescending language.
- **Physical attacks** - hitting, shoving, pushing or kicking. Extremes include rape, arson and murder.
- **Bullying** - uninvited physical contact; “sarcastic jokes” and “teasing” used as insult delivery systems; withering e-mail flames; status slaps intended to humiliate their victims; rude interruptions; two-faced attacks; dirty looks; recruiting others to be bullies; treating someone as if they are invisible.

By a show of hands, how many of you have ever experienced any of these acts at work?

At the time, did you think of them as acts of workplace violence or something else?

If you thought of the act as “something else”, what did you think it was? (limited discussion)

INTENT:

Statistics on workplace violence will be shared with the participants and you will lead a brief discussion on what factors might be causing such an increase of workplace violence today.

3. *Here's What We Know*

TIME: 5 minutes

Prepare to show power point slides: Nonfatal Violent Crimes; Workplace Homicides; Workplace Bullying

By a show of hands, how many of you think that the rise in workplace violence incidents is due to “worker on worker “violence?

Well, according to the Northwestern National Life Ins. Co, workers are twice as likely to be attacked by clients/customers/patients as by co-workers.

Does this surprise anyone?

SHOW SLIDE: Nonfatal Violent Crimes

Even though the rate of violent crime against employed persons has declined significantly since 1993, according to the most recent Bureau of Justice National Crime Victimization Survey:

- In 2009, approximately 572,000 nonfatal violent crimes (rape/sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault) occurred against persons age 16 or older while they were at work or on duty.
- Among teaching occupations, no occupation had a higher rate of workplace violence than persons working in technical or industrial schools.
- Only about 47% of workplace violence was reported to police.
 - About 38% of workplace violence was not reported to the police because the incident was reported to another official.
 - About 22% of workplace violence was not reported to police because the victim thought the incident was a personal matter.
 - About 24% of workplace violence was not reported to police because the victim believed that the incident was not important enough to be reported.

SHOW SLIDE: Workplace Homicides

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, an average of 564 work-related homicides occurred each year in the United States from 2004 to 2008.
- About 70% of workplace homicides were committed by robbers and other assailants while about 21% were committed by work associates between 2005 and 2009.

SHOW SLIDE: Workplace Bullying

- Data on lesser forms of workplace intimidation is also troubling. A national survey on workplace bullying from Zogby International reported that about 54 million Americans report being bullied at work with an estimated 43,800 acts of harassment, bullying and other threatening behavior in the workplace every day.

Why do you think the incidents of workplace violence happen? (Allow for a few responses and add any examples listed below if not raised by the group to get their reaction.)

- Job loss and the “great recession”
- Down-sizing / right-sizing
- Cuts in public services and education
- Increased drug and alcohol abuse
- Ethnic and gender polarization
- Loss of hope

4. **LET'S TALK ABOUT WORKPLACE VIOLENCE RISK FACTORS:**

TIME: 20 minutes

Hand out Risk Factor Checklists (2 per person) and flipchart paper; prepare to show power point slide: Risk Factors.

INTENT:
This section will provide participants with the risk factors associated with workplace violence. They will do an assessment to evaluate how many risk factors are associated with their own jobs and other jobs at their workplace.

So we know there are factors that might lend people to commit violent acts. But let's look at what we already know about conditions or risk factors that may contribute to workplace violence.

- A **risk factor** is a condition or circumstance that increases your risk of exposure to a violent incident.
- NIOSH research found that these risk factors are pretty universal and cross the path of many job titles in our workplace.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Break the group into teams or smaller groups and give each person at least two Risk Factor Checklists and each group a piece of flipchart paper.
- Ask the groups to discuss the various job tasks/titles present at their worksite.
- Using the checklist ask them to use a separate chart for each job title they want to review. Then, ask them to check yes or no if that job title has any of the recognized risk factors associated with the job duties.
- Then, ask them to choose 2 of the job titles from their list that they think are most at risk and write them on a piece of flipchart paper in the first column of a three column chart (see side note).
- Ask them to identify on their flipchart what risk factors are associated with each of the jobs .

Flipchart:

JOB TITLE	RISK FACTORS	SOLUTIONS

- Then, ask the group to think about some possible solutions to the risk factors identified.
- Give about 10 minutes for this portion of the activity and then ask for a few groups to volunteer to report on their findings and ask the other groups to post their flipcharts on the wall so they can be viewed by the larger group later.
- Mention that you'll be coming back to solutions a bit later in the workshop. After report backs, review the "Risk Factors" slide as a summary of their activity.

SHOW SLIDE: Risk Factors

So, you can see that many of the jobs you and our members do have quite a few workplace violence risk factors associated with them.

- Contact with the public
- Providing service, care, advice or education (e.g. health care staff, teachers).
- Having a mobile workplace such as a taxicab, school bus or police cruiser
- Working with unstable or volatile persons in health care, social service, educational or criminal justice settings
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Working late at night or early in the morning
- Working in high-crime areas
- Guarding valuable property or possessions
- Handling money

Risk of violence may be greater at certain times of the day, night or year. For example:

- Late hours of the night or early hours of the morning,
- Report card time or parent interviews
- Performance appraisals

5. *Prevention Strategies:*

TIME: 20 minutes

Prepare to show power point slide: According to NIOSH and then hand out Worksite Analysis Checklists

Are there any policies in place at our workplace to protect staff from work-related violence? If yes, what policies do you think protect you? (Let them brainstorm about what policies they know of and post any responses on a flipchart)

How would you “grade” those policies – do they help prevent workplace violence and bullying? Are your co-workers aware of them? Does anyone actually report incidents? (Record their “grades” next to each policy/process they’ve identified)

SHOW SLIDE: According to NIOSH

- According to a study done by the National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health, more than 70 percent of American workplaces do not have a formal program or policy in place to address workplace violence.
- In today's environment, no workplace is immune to the possibility of workplace violence. Employers have legal duty and/or a moral obligation to provide a safe workplace. To prevent loss of life and injuries employers should institute policies and procedures to prevent violence from occurring in their workplaces.
- These policies may include means to identify the potential for violence, procedures to prevent the occurrence of violence and, in the event prevention fails and an incident of violence occurs, plans to respond and mitigate further damage.

So, by a show of hands, how many of you have ever reported a workplace violence or bullying incident you’ve experienced to your employer? If not, why not? (List the reasons given on flipchart)

By a show of hands, how many of you think that your co-workers are reporting the incidents they are experiencing?

INTENT:

The section starts with a discussion of reporting workplace violence and workplace bullying. Most of our members are probably not reporting these types of incidents and the goal here is for people to recognize that the problem can’t be corrected if it isn’t reported in the first place.

The discussion will end with participants filling out a workplace analysis checklist so that they can start to see what types of preventive measures could be put in place to eliminate or minimize some of the risk factors they identified earlier.

If you and your co-workers aren't reporting, how do people at work talk about the violence or bullying they are experiencing? (Take a few examples and move on to next question)

What kind of problem does non-reporting of incidents present? (Hopefully someone will say that the problems can't be eliminated in no one reports they exist in the first place!)

- Because violence can be predicted, it can also be prevented. There is a lot of good expert advice for workplace safety out there.
- There are definite changes that can be made to any workplace to help make it more secure and offer staff who works there more protection from acts of workplace violence.
- In the next activity you're going to think about what is or isn't in place where you work. Be sure to add any ideas that you may have that you think would make your workplace safer.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- **Hand out the Worksite Analysis Checklist and ask them to fill it out based on what they think is in place at their workplace.**
- **Give them at least 5 to 10 minutes to work in teams for this activity. Then, refer back to the earlier activity where they identified risk factors and possible solutions.**
- **Ask the groups if there are any additional solutions they'd like to add to their charts. Ask for a few volunteers to report on their additional solutions before moving on.**

INTENT:

This section will introduce the solidarity chart as a valuable tool for resolving health and safety issues in the workplace for both individuals and the union.

This section will end with a quick review of the NY State Violence Prevention law, which is something the union should be striving to achieve in not only state legislation but through policy and/or contract language at their workplace.

7. Finding Solutions:

TIME: 20 minutes

Prepare to hand out Solidarity Solutions Chart; NYS Workplace Violence Law Summary

A tool that you might find helpful when taking on an issue at work is this “solidarity chart” handout.

Many of our members have found this chart helpful in plotting out a course of action – both individually and as a union. It makes you think about potential allies you have in your cause and it helps to identify some barriers you might come across during the process.

The chart also allows you the ability to think both short-term and long-term as far as what you’d like to accomplish.

It’s a great resource and you may want to take it back to your building rep or local leader to help begin discussions around resolving workplace violence risk factors.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Let the groups spend about 10 – 15 minutes working on the solidarity chart. You have several options with this activity, depending upon time.

1. Select a common problem that was identified by the group. As one big group, walk through the chart (using a big poster up in the front of the room) and ask for volunteers to provide you with their ideas for each section.
2. Have each group work either on a small chart or on a poster sized chart on an issue they self-identify.

Ask for a volunteer group to share their map with the larger group.

POINTS TO COVER:

Some States have been very proactive in taking on the issue of workplace violence.

For example, New York State has enacted legislation that requires public employers to

develop and implement workplace violence prevention programs that cover all employees at each of their worksites.

The Law is the most comprehensive standard in the country. It is intended to reduce workplace violence, making all public workplaces safer for the workers and the public they serve.

The law mandates provisions like management commitment and employee involvement, risk assessment and worksite analysis, hazard prevention and control through things like training and education and reporting and record-keeping procedures.

This law should be the model we strive for in other state legislation and within our own workplaces through policy and/or contract language.

7. *Final Questions/Answers and Evaluations:*

Wrap up the workshop and, if time permits, ask for any final thoughts or questions and address any parking lot issues if they weren't addressed.

Thank participants for attending make sure to collect evaluations from each participant.