Workplace Violence Indicators

FOLLOWING ARE SOME PIVOTAL QUESTIONS DESIGNED TO IDENTIFY RISK FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO WORKPLACE VIOLENCE:

What is motivating the individual to make the statements or take the actions that led to concerns about the safety of the workplace and its employees?

What has the individual communicated to anyone concerning their intent, by threats or other disclosures or actions?

What interest has the individual shown in violence or its justification, violent persons, guns, or extremist groups?

Has the individual engaged in planning and preparation for violence, such as approaching a target or site, breaching security, conducting surveillance, harassing, or stalking a target?

Does the individual have a current or past history of a mental disorder or substance abuse? Has the individual exhibited symptoms of paranoia, delusional ideas, hallucinations, extreme agitation, despondency, or suicidal tendencies, especially with any violent content? Has he or she ever acted on such beliefs?

How does the individual manifest any anger problems, and how focused is this anger on other individuals in the workplace?

What kinds of serious oppositional or counter-productive attitudes or behavior does the individual present in the workplace? For example, does the individual blame others or exhibit a strong sense of entitlement, defensiveness, self-centeredness, or intolerance of others' rights?

How does the individual manifest any anger problems, and how focused is this anger on other individuals in the workplace?

Has the individual experienced (or is he or she likely to in the near future) any serious personal or financial stressors, such as divorce, custody disputes, job or status losses, or deaths in the family? Does he or she show poor coping skills in reaction to such events?

What is the individual's known history of serious interpersonal conflict, violence, or other criminal conduct, in domestic or other settings?

What is the nature of any organizational, supervisor, or work group problems that have contributed to, provoked, or exacerbated the situation, and how do those problems influence the individual's perception of his or her circumstances?

THESE QUESTIONS ARE AIMED AT DISCLOSING FACTORS THAT MAY LOWER THE RISK OF VIOLENCE:

Does the individual have positive, valued, family, or other personal attachments?

Has the individual expressed genuine remorse for making threats or engaging in the behavior that has generated a concern for safety?

Upon the completion of the initial risk assessment, situations that are evaluated as presenting no or low risk of violence should be followed-up and resolved outside the crisis management process, for example through relevant human resources channels.

Has the individual responded positively to defusing or limit-setting efforts by others?

All other situations should be forwarded to the Crisis Management Team for further review.

Has the individual engaged in appropriate problem solving or sought professional treatment or legal recourse as a way to manage the situation or problems at issue?