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<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/violcont.html>

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## Workplace Security Plan: Does Your Company Have One?

“The threat of violence whether it emanates from a disgruntled employee or the threat of terrorism requires both a concerted and an individual response. Terrorism in any form is terrorism.” So begins an article by Felix R. Nater, President of Nater Associates, a security management consulting firm, published in [www.sitesecurity.articlesarchive.net](http://www.sitesecurity.articlesarchive.net). Nater believes that the potential for disaster is at every employer’s doorstep. In this article, Nater draws a correlation between the ‘disgruntled employee’ and ‘the Terrorist from within.’

In an investigation Nater conducted several years ago, an otherwise hard working employee with a diagnosed personality disorder was reassigned from his regular duties due to a medical determination. It was to have been a temporary change. However, during the ensuing assignment, he was exposed to constant abusive taunting and harassment by co-workers. In response, he began retaliating in his own way, initially innocuously and eventually more aggressively. The verbal threats directed at co-workers and supervisors escalated to more hostile conduct. It was clear that he was sending a message of his displeasure. While left alone at the computer terminal, he began browsing the Internet for bomb making sites. He had been engaged in this clandestine operation for several days before a sharp supervisor noticed his strange behavior. In an effort to protect the evidence, the supervisor used a ruse to get the employee away from the terminal until an investigation could take place.

Protecting your company from “terrorism from within.” Nater cites Louis Rovner, Ph.D. who believes that the Employee-Terrorist is ‘calculated’ and will wait for the opportunity to strike. “Like the Terrorist who awaits the call to action, the disgruntled employee is ‘event driven’ by circumstances. Both the ‘Terrorist’ and the ‘Disgruntled Employee’ share some other common opportunities as ‘employees’; they have access to the company and are familiar with company secrets.”

Nater suggests that employers be “a bit more aggressive during the hiring phases” and thoroughly investigate the background of potential employees. Verification of all data during the hiring process is critical. Most ‘terrorists’ possess a number of the same traits. Tactfully worded questions during the interview process will alert the interviewer to the basic personality of the job applicant. Individuals with personalities aligned with ‘Terrorists’ tend to be: loners; dissatisfied with their lives; have low self-esteem; are true believers; are antisocial; lack pity or remorse; and have strong grievances against others.

Workplace security requires a practical plan. For everyone’s safety, employers should have a Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and a way to address any breeches of safety or security. Employees should receive relevant safety/security training. Vigilance and security awareness is everyone’s responsibility. How prepared is your business to thwart violence?