



# INFORTAL WORLDWIDE

STRATEGIC CORPORATE INVESTIGATIONS

## WORKPLACE VIOLENCE WARNING SIGNS

This article is designed as a brief guideline to assist you in creating greater awareness of workplace violence issues. This information will help in recognizing some of the warning signs and provides a brief review for post-employment termination. This article is not intended to be comprehensive and is not a training manual.

There are myriad issues involved in workplace-related violence. We strongly recommend that you consult with professional security experts that are capable of performing threat risk assessments any time that you become aware of someone exhibiting threatening, bizarre, or hostile behavior. Other concerns may include expressing suicidal thoughts, searching for weapons online at work, or desire to injure or harm people at work.

There are numerous instances where these types of warning signs were ignored in the workplace and which became active shooter situations that may have been diffused or prevented.

### RECOGNIZING THE WARNING SIGNS: 25 Red Flags

The following is a list of 25 red flag issues that may indicate increased potential for violence, however, this is not intended to be a comprehensive list. This information must be evaluated in combination with various other factors known about the person and should include a detailed background check, including criminal history, various public records, personal behaviors, any unusual or bizarre statements, and threats made (if any).

Threat risk assessments should be made by security specialists, law enforcement, or workplace trauma/forensic psychologists with specific experience in assessing workplace violence. These items, in various combinations, are often red flags regarding characteristic behaviors of potentially violent and threatening employees:

#### 25 Red Flags:

1. History of prior violence (including domestic violence)
2. Bullying & intimidating behavior
3. Emotionally unstable behaviors
4. Exhibiting paranoia concerning co-workers & others (belief that others constantly watching or talking about them)
5. Have mentioned they have stopped taking medications for personality disorders
6. Expressed interest in weapons (Note: **all weapons** should be taken seriously including high velocity archery sets, guns, knives, glass, etc.)
7. High degree of interest in military, law enforcement & other groups (may include hate groups & survivalist groups)
8. Verbalized approval of prior violent or aggressive incidents carried out by others
9. Frequently blaming others for their issues
10. Deteriorating work habits
11. Increasing or escalating performance issues
12. Escalating distraction & extreme nervousness
13. Poor personal hygiene (especially deteriorating personal habits)
14. Financially pressured and/ or high personal stress: recent death, in a messy divorce or child custody

- battle, home foreclosure, etc.
15. Prior issues with law enforcement (resisting arrest, evading police, road rage, concealed weapons violations, substance abuse, etc.)
  16. "Loner" behavior (socially self-isolating)
  17. Force their beliefs on others; spreading rumors/ gossip to elevate their own position
  18. Argumentative, unreasonable & disparaging behavior
  19. Constantly protesting about their boss/ the company/ filing multiple claims of unfair treatment
  20. Makes verbal or written threats:
    - Direct threats: "I'm going to kill you at work in front of your friends".
    - Veiled threats: "I'll get him someday", "I know where you take your kids to school", "I know where you jog every morning"
  21. Addiction behaviors: alcohol, drugs (street or prescribed), obsessive romance
  22. Harassing others regularly or frequently
  23. Lacking basic people skills
  24. Say they feel hopeless often or feel suicidal
  25. Wants to bring a briefcase or purse into an exit interview & will not voluntarily part with the item.

**FOLLOW UP:**

1. Always err on the side of caution & use armed security presence if you have any concerns
2. Never meet with a terminated employee in person. Conduct any meetings via conference call.
3. Identify who will follow up with employee post-termination event; this is an important step that should not be overlooked.
4. Conduct Debrief Session: Identify what worked well and what improvements are needed for future threat situations

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Infortal Worldwide directly at:

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