PREVENTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

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Abstract: With Violence in society a growing problem, the importance of taking measures to prevent workplace violence has become increasingly urgent to business that want to protect the safety of their employees.
While violence is one of the major causes of death in the work place, nonfatal cases are more common. Overall, the occupational Health and Safety Administration estimates there are about 2 millions of cases of workplace violence a year. The surprisingly high number of incidents vary between verbal and physical abuse homicides. It is also estimated that about 25 percent of workplace violence goes unreported. The identified factors that contribute to the workplace violence along with their dealings to prevent such causes are discussed in this article.

Keywords: Workplace violence, Organisation Behaviour, Human Resources Management, workplace aggression.

SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION

Human Resource Management, Psychology, Organisational Psychology, Organisational Behaviour.

Type (METHOD/APPROACH)

Empirical Analysis, Literary Analysis

INTRODUCTION:

Workplace violence refers to incidents where worker are abused, threatened or assaulted, either by people from within or outside their workplace. Workplace may have severe negative consequence for the workers affected, their co-workers and families as well as for organisations and the society as a whole. The aim of this article is to discuss the main types of workplace violence and finally provide an informed commentary on the methods and practices used to manage and prevent this work related issue.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE:

Workplace violence or occupational violence refers to violence usually in the form of physical abuse or threat, that creates a risk to the health and safety of an employee or multiple employees. Violence includes threatening behaviour, verbal or written threats, verbal abuse, physical attacks, etc;

Generally speaking any action or behaviour, from rumours, swearing, verbal abuse, pranks, arguments, property damage, vandalism, sabotage, pushing, thefts, physical, assaults, psychological trauma, anger related incidents, rape, arson to murder, are an examples of workplace violence and/or harassment.

Work related incidents can also occur at off-site business related functions (conferences, trade shows) at social events related to work, in client's home or away from work but resulting from work (a threatening telephone call).

CAUSES OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE:

Violence in a workplace take many forms and has many causes depending upon an individual's state of minds. For example, an employee having personal issues, or stressed out, or having conflicts with coworkers, may deliver and express anger at a workplace. In this way an employee releases frustrations, which directly an employee is affected, where an employee may get fired or an employee may become a harm or threat to others in the surrounding.

Further, causes of workplace can be divided into two parts,

Work related causes that include anger over disciplinary action, rigid style of management, loss of a job, resistance to policies, downsizing, layoffs, depression due to transfer, lack of promotion or advancement, failure to recognise efforts, obsessive love affairs, termination, disagreements and stress.

Non-work related causes that include domestic disputes or domestic violence,
Unstable economy, road rage, hate incidents, psychological instability, lack of individual responsibilities, and stress.
To prevent such causes, hiring companies must conduct a test during an interview process to eliminate such violent candidates for a smooth operation of workplace.

PREVENTION:

1) Complete background checks on new employees
2) Create a policy that prevents harassment
3) Create an effective line of communication.
4) Training and awareness are key factors in workplace violence prevention.
5) Establish a strict anti Violence Policy.
6) Encourage employees to accept individual differences.
7) Prevent conflicts from turning into harassment / violence.
8) Manage visitors and provide security monitoring.
9) Encourage everyone to report any / violent incidents.
10) Deter robbers with limited assets on hand.
11) Identify organisational risks factors that could lead to violence.
12) After an incident or near miss perform a thorough analysis.
13) Assemble a crisis management team.
14) Mobilise professional advisors.
15) Create a crisis management plan.
16) Establish a violence protection policy.
17) Know the employment laws.
18) Take disciplinary action.

CONCLUSION

Violence at a workplace can be prevented by proper training and preparation. Supporting system process such as recognition of potential violent situations, indicators of potential violence by an employee, identifying risk factors, and procedures can truly minimise the situation of workplace violence and its threats.

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