

Employee Procedures For Challenging Unknown Persons

TRUE SECURITY INTEGRATION



A  **FIRSTSERVICE** COMPANY



EMPLOYEE PROCEDURES FOR CHALLENGING UNKNOWN PERSONS

The Business Environment – Interactive Hierarchy

In and around our work area, we will interact with many groups of persons including:

1. Department Co-Workers & Contractors

Our immediate section, and/or area co-workers, and/or regular visiting contractors. Through frequent contact, we will be able to make positive visual identification and will generally have knowledge of their first and last name(s).

2. Area Co-Workers & Contractors

Varying degrees of contact with transitory co-workers and/or contractors due to meetings and/or deliveries in our area. Usually positive visual identification and some knowledge of first and last name(s).

3. Transitory Co-Workers & Contractors

Regular employee and/or contractor visitors who attend infrequently. *Somewhat* positive visual identification. No knowledge of first and last name(s). The general understanding being if they do not look lost, and they are not stealing anything, then they are probably authorized to be on the premises.

4. Strangers

Complete strangers whom we do not recognize because:

- a. We have not seen them before.
- b. They are unaccompanied by someone we recognize.
- c. Their appearance is inconsistent with our dress code.
- d. They are lost and are asking for directions.

Complete strangers can be from many different groups including:

- e. New employees from your company.
- f. New representatives from authorized contractors.
- g. Genuinely lost, authorized visitors to our company or other building tenants.
- h. Criminals conducting pre-theft ‘probes’ to help identify potential target property, escape routes, and to acquaint themselves with current security procedures.
- i. Competitors, or their hired representatives, on-site to ‘obtain’ proprietary information such as pricing, new product launches, promotions, client lists, and trade secrets etc.

Criminals are aware of this hierarchy and will use it to their advantage. They will try to ‘blend in’ by acknowledging greetings or inquiries from others. Criminals will not run off when challenged unless they feel threatened or they have been ‘recognized’.



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The Business Environment – Interactive Hierarchy cont'd

Once on-site, criminals look for ‘targets of opportunity’ such as wallets left in unattended jacket pockets, women’s purses left out in the open, laptop computers, etc. Criminals will normally steal highly portable, concealable items of high value. They can escape by calmly walking to an elevator or down a stairwell. Some of these thieves are transients or substance abusers. Often they will have a foul odour about them and appear unkempt.

Questioning Strangers

All strangers should be politely challenged. After observing any stranger and before you approach them, *pause* and evaluate the situation with your ‘sixth sense’. Try to determine if they could represent a threat to you.

Obvious signs that they could be a threat include:

- a. Signs of alcohol use such as a flushed face, glassy eyes, and odour.
- b. Signs of drug use including dilated pupils or ‘pinpoint’ pupils.
- c. A weapon, or something that could be used as a weapon, in their hands.
- d. Company property in their hands.
- e. Unkempt appearance including body odour, extremely dirty clothes, skin, or hair.
- f. Their presence makes you feel uneasy, anxious, or afraid.

If you feel this person is an obvious threat:

- g. Notify a co-worker or supervisor in the immediate area.
- h. Notify security or your supervisor and give him/her a description, location, and direction the person is travelling. (**Note:** It is appropriate to develop a series of ‘code words’ so that you can secretly notify co-workers that you are dealing with a suspicious person).
- i. If you feel safe to do so, maintain surveillance of this person until security or your supervisor arrives.

(**Note: Do not** challenge any person you feel represents a threat to you. If you feel that the person should be challenged, but you do not feel comfortable doing so alone, notify a supervisor or co-worker and have them accompany you).

When challenging persons:

- a. Maintain a safe distance between yourself and the person being challenged.



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Questioning Strangers cont'd

- b. Be persistent. Do not be easily 'blown off'. Many thieves and competitor spies will give you a brief explanation and just keep on going. For example:

"Sir, may I help you?" "No thanks, I'm fine."

Now, use an open-ended question:

"Who are you here to see?" Or, "What department are you visiting?"

A phone call should be made to verify the accuracy of their 'appointment'. Generally, once the conversation starts to get detailed, an unauthorized person will either admit why they are there, or make a run for it.

- c. As soon as their story starts to unravel, notify security or your supervisor. Notification should be done by another employee, 'out of earshot' of the suspected criminal. At this time, several other employees should be keeping an eye on the suspicious person.
- d. If the suspect becomes threatening, abusive, or violent, back off and wait for security and/or your supervisor.

(**Note: REMEMBER** when challenging strangers, your safety is our first concern).

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