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Clinical Approach to Crime Detection

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CRIME SCENE



Licensed private investigators play a vital role in helping their clientele decipher both reactive and proactive crime-related risk exposures. Investigative firms that do not have a strong background in proactive crime control planning and security simply offer reactive solutions to identified crime problems. Alternatively, investigative firms with extensive expertise in proactive crime control planning offer a much broader selection of services from both the reactive and proactive universe of security services. Having the capacity to offer both proactive and reactive crime solving techniques is a much wiser business model; especially in today's turbulent world. This is especially true for corporate security in the business sector where security-enhancement dollars are scarce. One of the central reasons why security dollars are scarce is because oftentimes in the business sector, security is **not** considered a profit contributor, but rather an expense that CFOs must keep in check. Contradicting this premise however is an age-old truism: "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Companies may be saving money at their peril!

THE TECHNICAL DEFINITION OF PROACTIVE CRIME CONTROL PLANNING

Proactive crime control planning, aka crime prevention, is commonly defined as the anticipation, recognition and appraisal of a crime risk and the initiation of an action to mitigate identified risks. Security firms and corporate entities that employ community crime control planners (CCCP) have a step-up on their competition in that they have an internal capability to capture crime exposures before they have an opportunity to wreak havoc and possibly devastate a company's reputation and standing within the mercantile community. Three recent articles authored by the undersigned speak to how the security survey is the go-to investigative tool often used by investigative firms to uncover business-related crime risk exposures, and the third article offers a menu of low-cost security enhancement strategies to help in the never-ending war against criminal wrongdoing:

- "The Security Survey: An Investigative Tool – Part I & II": Issues 156 /159 – PI Magazine
- "Squeezing the Most from you Security Dollar" – The Texas Investigator Magazine: Spring 2018

IS THERE A NEED FOR PROACTIVE CRIME CONTROL?

The simple answer is a resounding YES! Contemporary issues such as budget cuts, revenue shortfalls, terrorism, computer hacking, social unrest, and political tribalism among other issues, have left many security administrators searching for new and innovative approaches to crime control.

FASHIONING A PROACTIVE SECURITY PROGRAM

The building process begins by the investigative company pulling either one or two investigative operatives from the investigative assembly line and properly school them in the ABCs of proactive crime risk management. During their studies operatives are taught to evaluate crime risk exposures and formulate strategies to mitigate identified exposures. (This is an especially difficult aspect of training since many operatives are quasi-law enforcement/security-oriented candidates who work in a reactive role and are rarely asked to come up with proactive crime reduction remedies – it's simply not their job.)

Over and above education in theoretical proactive security axioms, operatives are taught to apply crime prevention and environmental design concepts and strategies utilizing today's sophisticated security technologies and machineries. The process begins by selecting the right candidate to work in this role. Selection criteria should include candidates who possess above-average reading and cursive skills and have the wherewithal to get up in front of small and large audiences and effectively deliver the proactive security message effectively.

Sample proactive security curricula might include, but should not be limited to:

- Introduction to today's new millennium security technologies
- Introduction to crime prevention 101
- Introduction to physical security 101
- Aspects of applying environmental design concepts
- The role of the crime prevention specialist
- Developing employee and/or citizen participation
- Using metrics in security evaluation and planning
- Evaluating programmatic impact

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROACTIVE SECURITY ADVOCATES

In the main, proactive security advocates perform the following tasks:

- Preparation of security surveys
- Reviewing and analyzing incident reports, employee hotline missives, complaints and other relevant correspondence
- Preparing and presenting lecture programming and special exhibitions
- Networking with facility engineers and architects on security design issues
- Reviewing the functionality of existing security systems
- Maintaining and/or establishing a security / safety library
- Conducting and/or updating facility security surveys. *It's important to note that security surveys be prepared on an annual schedule to ensure that security and safety issues remain adequate*
- Maintaining accreditation by taking required continuing education credits

PROGRAMMATIC EVALUATION

A system of evaluation needs to be promulgated so that the actual program effect is accurately measured. It's most important that a schedule of before and after studies is developed to help determine actual crime level reporting numbers, decipher crime patterns, promulgate / maintain crime mapping initiatives, and help decipher crime dispersion patterns. All in all, a structured program of evaluation should accurately measure the entity's response to proactive crime control planning and the long-lasting effects of the promoted strategies.

USING METRICS IN SECURITY PLANNING

To better understand the role that metrics can effectively play in security and safety planning, the undersigned coauthored a trilogy of articles that directly address this issue: "An Alternative View in the Development of Security Metrics"

-Vol. 31., No. 2 - 2015 / "Resources Available for Applying Metrics in Security and Safety Programming" - Vol. 32., No. 1 - 2016 / "Applying Metrics to 21st Century Healthcare Security" - Vol. 33. No. 2 -2017: Journal of Healthcare Protection Management: a publication of the International Association for Healthcare Security and Safety. These three articles offer a roadmap to follow when using metrics in the security and safety habitat.

THE FINANCIAL VALUE OF USING METRICS

It's only recently that many security executives have begun speaking the language that all CFOs know and understand when going hat-in-hand asking for additional security dollars for their facilities. In competent hands, metrics can vividly show fluctuation in service delivery variations, enhancement options, and service curtailment calamities among other yardsticks. As a practical matter, CFOs understand numbers very well (they usually are bean-counters), and security administrators need to make their case for additional dollars by showing simple verifiable facts to support their case. Support documentation includes: response time inconsistencies, incident report upsurges, criminal activity spikes, calls for service hikes, square footage comparisons vs. other similar facilities, conjoining incident rates to visitations, and conjoining incident rates to response durations. These and other yardsticks will go a long way in justifying security expenditures to the individuals who control the company's purse strings.

THE ROLE THAT ROBOTICS MIGHT PLAY IN SECURITY MANAGEMENT

Robert J. Gordon a professor at Northwestern University in his excellent work "Rise and Fall of American Growth: U.S. Standard of Living Since the Civil War":_Princeton University Press, 2016 - whilst speaking of the possible use of robots in a wide variety of applications outside of the manufacturing and warehousing sectors including: supermarkets, restaurants, and hospitals; hypothesizes that the 60 million dollar question we should be pondering is: what role will robotics play in all industries in the coming decades? If innovation is said to drive commerce, I expect that robotics will have a central role in the coming decades simply because security technologies are becoming smarter and smarter. Just think how far we've come when the simple door bell and smart phone can bring us into the inner environs of our home or business, whilst we are thousands of miles from the scene!

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Private investigators and corporate security administrators should strongly consider establishing a proactive crime control operation that can effectively diagnose crime risks *before* they are able to breed further devastation. Community crime control planners serve as the agency's advocate to spread the gospel that "security is every one's responsibility." CCCPs also help senior security management make the financial case to CFOs that security is a profit center and not simply a cost contributor.

A FINAL THOUGHT

Security executives always have an extremely hard time trying to champion how much crime they averted, using metrics could help make your case! **PI**

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