

Personal Safety at Work

Whilst at work you may need to make a quick risk assessment to decide on what action to take to avoid potential danger and stay safe. It is always a good idea to think through options if you know of any potential risks you may face. Below are a few helpful points to consider to reduce risk. This is by no means intended as an exhaustive list, your company will have its own policies and guidance specific to your workplace which you should make yourself aware of:

IN A PREMISES

1. Be in control of your work environment

Be confident but not confrontational. Make eye contact and politely engage with customers/clients as they enter your premises.

2. Trust your instincts

If you have to deal with confrontation be polite, don't raise your voice and use your own communication skills early on to defuse a difficult situation. Your volume, tone, and body language are key elements to consider.

3. Never underestimate a potential threat

If you feel uneasy, start to act. Create some distance between you and the individual. Try not to enter the aggressor's personal space. They may see this as a threat.

4. Map out a pre-planned second escape route

If you have to leave, ensure you have means to communicate with others to get help. An example may be to explain that you will get someone else to help them and escape to a safe room. Familiarise yourself with your building layout.

5. Security Measures

Is there an effective CCTV system in place covering your premises? An emergency alarm, two-way radio or mobile phone should be carried at all time so you can summon help; ensure it is tested regularly. Do people know how to respond? Your business community working together can reduce the risk.

OUT AND ABOUT

1. Plan ahead

Know where you are going and the best way to get there. Let people know where you are going, your expected arrival, duration and departure times.

2. Be alert

Walk with confidence and be aware of your surroundings and who is around you! This will make you appear in control and less vulnerable. When meeting someone alone, place yourself between the other person and the door to give yourself an exit route if needed.

3. Listen to your instincts

If you feel threatened, head for a safe place where there are lots of people, such as a pub, shop, garage etc. Do not become involved in confrontational situations. If, for example, your 'gut' feeling is telling you not to enter a property listen to yourself and act with your safety in mind.

4. Only take with you what you need

Think worst case scenario if you were to be a victim of crime. If someone grabs your belongings, let them go. Your safety is more important than your possessions.

5. Avoid quiet or badly lit areas

Stick to busy, well-lit streets whenever possible. Take the safest route, not necessarily the shortest.