Crime at the workplace
Denial and solutions

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29 November 2001 Amsterdam/ Mönchengladbach Germany

This paper tackles denial of crime at the workplace. Simple solutions are not offered. Suggestions to solve the denial of crime are presented in this paper using a Safety & security/ Development stages matrix.

Keywords: laws and guidelines niche market and a structural approach.

Introduction

Crime prevention at the workplace does not start without a crisis. Poison need to be placed inside a package of soup. The director's wife needs to be stabbed. A jealous husband has to threaten the director of a firm. First, the man with an axe must enter the social services before one considers fighting crime at the workplace.

These type of crisis's are in general the start of victim assistance, crime prevention or zero tolerance at the workplace. Therefore, crime is tackled from one 'corner' only. Which corner that will be depends on the fashion. The urgency of the crisis dominates. No mental room can then be made for an integral approach of crime at the workplace.

Managers furthermore do not receive 'proper' education in tackling crime at the workplace. Such a crisis as mentioned before might be the first educational step. About the approach of crime their daily papers inform managers. The message in the daily papers in the Netherlands is 'the police leaves from the 1.3 million notifications of crime 1 million at stock'. The implication of this message could be 'if the police does not worry, we should not worry at all'. In other words, the criminal justice system provokes managers to deny the crime problem at the workplace.

However the other side is that if a manager decides to tackle crime at the workplace a consultant might claim that all their personnel should be trained in crime reduction techniques, such as verbal and physical techniques. From one day to the next they have to spend 10-25% of their regular budget. Other consultants will claim that managers have tot spend their budget on target hardening measures. Since managers do lack knowledge they tend to follow the advice of the consultant they met by accident.

One might think that these examples are only put forward in order to provoke. This is definitely not the case. The lesson that can be learned from these examples is that rule number one from criminology is neglected. First a risk analyses then an inventory of the stakeholders of the crime problem and finally a solution.

This article therefore presents:
1. A safety and security matrix with several developmental stages.
2. A yardstick of laws, guidelines, working in a niche market and a structural approach of crime at the workplace.

'Yardsticks'
So far crime at the workplace has been a neglected area compared to crime at the street. Only recently the tide is turning. Crucial in the Netherlands is the law on working conditions. This law is a framework law and is also applicable on violence, aggression and sexual intimidation. A 'framework' law defines the responsibility only of the employer and employee on outlines. These outlines are:
1. Risk analyses (both on material and immaterial working conditions) should be committed but also an evaluation of the risks leading to priorities.
2. Personnel should be educated about crime risks and the approach of specific crimes proposed by the management of the firm/ institution.
3. Personnel should be educated about their rights and duties (including the right to strike if the working conditions are unsafe).
4. An institutional safety and security framework with suggested security and safety measures (including victim assistance) should be made.
5. Registration of crime experienced by both personnel and clients should be conducted. The employer furthermore should lead discussions of the outcomes of the registration in teams meeting to discuss work progress.
6. The employer has to prepare a policy plan with priorities and an evaluation of the risks that have been tackled. This policy plan should to be updated every other two year.

This law does not any more contain guidelines. Control of the responsibility of the employer is done in the Netherlands by the labor/ factory inspection. The inspection can sanction a firm with both fines and a (temporary) closing of the firm. Furthermore every serious incident (including illness of a member of the personnel) should be reported to the labor/ factory inspection. They will then investigate the incident. If the incident is a crime they will ask the public prosecutor to do their work.

Still, the employer can easy neglect the existence of laws on working conditions. Since the labor/ factory inspection can only visit on a yearly base a certain number of institutions and firms. The solution for this problem in the Netherlands is setting up a covenant/ agreement for a branch of firms or institutions. One of the covenants of the Ministry of Social Affairs on improving working conditions concerning violence, aggression and sexual intimidation is that with the welfare agencies, mental hospitals etc. So far no evaluation of the working of the covenant has been committed.

Another yardstick in the Netherlands is the long-term labor agreement between employers and employees organizations for certain branches. These agreements in the Netherlands contain guidelines about discrimination, aggression, violence and sexual intimidation. The agreements are furthermore specific about vulnerable groups like trainees and volunteers. The guidelines are very accurate. Several of these agreements are supported by Internet applications. Up till now violations of these agreements are not registered and sanctioned. Unions (organizations of

employees) are furthermore promoting these guidelines and making blackbooks of malpractice.

The last but not least yardstick is the UN document on rights of victims of crime. In Europe this has followed by a decision framework signed by the Ministers of Justice of the EU countries. This guideline contains rights for victims, such as the right to get compensation or the right to influence work conditions. For example, after a robbery in a large hotel in Amsterdam the workers asked the management to remove the cigarette automates in the hall of the hotel. By honoring their request the workers can easier refuse at night certain visitors. From the research of Professor Groenhuysen, Katholieke Universiteit Brabant in the Netherlands we learned that these UN guidelines are hardly implemented. In particular this is true for institutions and firms. These agencies have not been informed about these UN guidelines.

In summary, one might state that with the exemption of the work condition law the implementation of both guidelines and laws leave a lot to be desired. Recently lawyers in the Netherlands discovered this field. They help with success employees realizing financial claims because of unsafe working conditions on the employer. This development might push the implementation of tackling crime forward.

The 'risky' Netherlands and crime as a niche market

The key question still remains namely whether there is a need in the Netherlands to implement crime policy for crime at the workplace. Unfortunately, a direct answer is not available since the Netherlands does not conduct a national crime survey concerning crime on the workplace. The only other alternative is setting up an argumentation. We will therefore start with general crime trends in the Netherlands and extrapolate these with the help of the British Crime Survey (Mayhew, Elliot and Dowds, 1989).

Between 1950 and approximately 1965 the Netherlands had – together with Japan – the lowest crime figures in the world. From the halfway the sixties this situation changed dramatically. The number of crimes recorded by the police rose from approximately 200.000 crimes by a year halfway the sixties to over 1.200.000 crimes a year by the end of the eighties. In the nineties crime known to the police stabilised and even slowly diminished. The clearance rate by the police dropped from the sixties up to the eighties and is now stabilising between 10 and 20%. Metaphorically speaking the police only sees the tip of the crime iceberg: most crimes – e.g. for violence, vandalism and theft less than 10% - are never recorded by the police. From that small tip of the iceberg only 10-20% is cleared/solved by the police.

In the Netherlands victim surveys are conducted on a yearly base since 1979 (Van Dijk en Steinmetz, 1979. These data confirm the aforementioned trend in police data (www.cbs.nl) namely an increase of victimisation experiences till the onset of the nineties followed by stabilisation and a recent decline[1].

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[1] Victim Surveys first started in the Netherlands in 1974 by the Ministry of Justice (see Van Dijk & Steinmetz 1979), in the eighties the Central Bureau for Statistics did the work on a yearly and later on two- yearly basis. In the eighties and nineties there were more victim/population surveys launched: the police monitor having the biggest sample (90,000 respondents on a population of 16 million) and also the 'Big Cities Policy monitor' includes a complete set of victim survey questions (including fear of crime, etc.)

Halfway the nineties the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS, Mayhew & Van Dijk, 1997) shows that the Netherlands reached the top: 31% of the population became victim of crimes like theft, vandalism, burglary, robbery or (sexual) violence. The average international victimisation rate was 24%. This picture is more or less the same for the 1999 International Crime Victims Survey (Van Kesteren et al. 2000, ICVS). Hardly any one (including professionals) in the Netherlands believed the outcomes of this international research. After a similar result in the second ICVS (1992) a more rational critique was suggested namely: "the top position is the result of extremely high number of bicycle thefts in The Netherlands[2]. After a recount by omitting bicycle thefts the Netherlands indeed had a lower score but still ranked in the top three. Since these facts on crime could not be denied any longer local and central governments issued crime prevention policy plans (Van Soomeren & Woldendorp 1996).

Crime rates in the Netherlands are extremely high. If one looks at the type of place where crime occurs: e.g. at home, in public space or at work what picture will then be revealed. Research shows that the risks to become a victim at the workplace are two times as high as those risks in public space (British Crime Survey, Mayhew at. al. 1989; Mayhew 1995; Van Hoek et al 1996 and Huber & Poll 1996). The more contact an employee has with the public the higher the risk. High-risk jobs are public transport, schools/ educational institutions, shops and hospitals/ healthcare. The risk in these professions is approximately four to ten times higher compared to people at the street. By mainly using the British crime survey it is clear that institutions and firms in the Netherlands need tackling crime at the workplace. One might say that the barrier denial of the existence of crime at the workplace has been taken. This is what one calls 'playing a niche market'. Crime however is not been seen as the core business of institutions and firms.

But this is not the only barrier that has to be taken. Still another one exists. One might call this the organisational barrier. In the next chapter we will present a safety and security matrix with several developmental stages. Since the answer might be that every organisation has to pass certain stages in order to build a sound foundation for an integrated safety and security policy.

The 3S-development matrix: how mature is a safety and security policy?
Inspired by quality management (Demming, 1982, ISO 9001) a group of Dutch experts on crime prevention implementation (Van Hoek et al. 1994) designed a Safety & Security Development Stages matrix: the S&S/DS-matrix (also based on Crosby, 1991). This matrix presents the five stages that will be unfolded in founding an integrated policy for safety and security. These stages are denial, awakening, break through, management and integration.

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[2] It certainly is. The change your bike is stolen once (or more times) a year in Amsterdam was 16% in 2000 (it has never been so low).

Scheme 1:   S&S/DS-matrix: Safety & Security/Development Stages-matrix
            (source DSP, Van Hoek et al 1994)

Development stages Integrated Safety and security policy	Attitude of management	State of the art of safety and security policy	Approach
Denial	Act after the fact. Crimes are seen in isolation as 'acts of God'.	Safety and security are separated from the organisation. There is no policy or only an 'ad hoc' policy	Problems unknown and no one is allowed to define or research problems. First whistle blowers are ridiculed
Awakening	Safety and security risks are acknowledged, but management is not yet willing to invest in a Safety and Security policy. "Demands on police are becoming tougher: do your jobs so that we have time to do our job (which is not crime fighting)".	More attention for safety and security issues but main focus is technical (target hardening and security surveillance)	Problems are dealt with in a more focussed approach; still no long-term policy. Connections between inside/ outside are not made visible. 'Chain-features' in causal factors and prevention are denied (e.g. CCTV without any ideas about follow up)
Break through	Management learns about risks and studies costs and consequences. They realise that a different approach is necessary and more cost effective.	Safety and security officials connect with management. One manager is now in charge of safety and security policies (but is still RE-acting)	Systems approach: what is the problem, what best practices can solve this problem. Rational deterministic approach.
Management	An active safety and security policy is designed (mission statement and all). If necessary business processes are changed to support safety and security goals	Safety and security connects to adjacent policies like 'health and safety', quality management, labour issues, liability and insurance. A real policy emerges: prevention of incidents and proper procedures if still something goes wrong	More attention for early warning, root causes and chains of causal factors and/or chains of preventive measures. Process approach e.g. using scenarios.
Integration	Safety and security policy is integrated in core business (in processes and culture). Efficient working relations with other stakeholders are normal part of the job and the planning process	Paradoxical: safety and security disappear in other policies like service ("may I help you"), quality, heath, environmental policies, etc. Number of security officers and – officials is going down.	Safety and security is integrated in business and processes of all stakeholders. Policies are mainly proactive. Target hardening, hard-nosed security and law enforcement are seen as ultimo remedy.

Denial is the first stage that an organization has to conquer. In this stage remarks are made like if you are not able to deal with it then you better find another job. Denial furthermore goes hand in hand with black humor and cynicism. As one can easily find

in police and emergency organizations. The second stage is awakening. In this stage victims are prepared to inform others about their experiences. Support systems of colleges are viewed critically. The security industry is hired, locks and cameras are placed at the entrance of a building and other high-risk places. Break through is the third stage. By reviewing money and time managers learn that an enormous amount of time is consumed by crime. Time-consuming issues are dealing with crime, victim assistance, notifying the police, neutralizing the offender, reassuring personnel and dealing with work dissatisfaction. Interest of managers is growing to study the crime problem in the institution. Firms are then starting to register crime. A mayor next stage is when the manager is at stake. Mission statements are reformed. Institutional duties and rights are formulated (including house rules). Surveillance systems are created (including sanctioning and reinforcement) etc. These activities are resulting in a safety and security policy plan. The last stage is integration. For the first time the organization discovers that crime has everything to do with their products and services. If they are not of a standard quality crime arises. Managers will then focus on a client and quality oriented system.

Summary and discussion

From the British Crime survey (Budd, 2001) it can be seen that violence at the workplace but also worry about violence is tackled by individual training and advice. Remarkable numbers of personnel already have been trained in the UK. For example, 71% of the security and protective services, 47% of the nurses and 42% of the care workers etc received training and advice. Managers might jump to conclusions and start to train their personnel immediately on behalf of these results. Research (Kloosterboer en van der Vliert, 1987; Infantino and Musingo,1985) showed that it can hardly be proven that training's do have an effect on 'wanted' behavior.

Although they are very attractive our view is that simple solutions should be forbidden. In particular in many western countries where crime rates are reasonably high. An integrated approach of crime at the workplace probably suits the best. Components of such a integrated approach are victim assistance, crime prevention and zero tolerance for offenders. Other components are:
1. Formulating rights and duties for personnel and clients.
2. Creating surveillance systems (including intervening).
3. Formulating sanctions and rewards related to the rights and duties.
4. Discussing crime in teams based on the outcome of a registration system.

Training's are by-products of one of these components. Before a training start a policy guide should be available (including plans and strategies). Finally a distinction between components is a mission statement, a policy safety and security plan and an executive manual/ plans for different safety and security areas. This latter distinction in components should made dependant on a risk analyses.

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