

Safety and Awareness Suggestions: How can I feel safe(r) at work?

Simple behavior modifications can greatly reduce your vulnerability.

Parking: Whenever possible, choose a space that is "visible" to the normal flow of traffic or pedestrians. If you have to park a significant distance from your office, choose your walking route with the same goal of higher visibility.

Where do you select to park when you come to work? How early do you arrive and how populated is the area of your office? Do you expect the building exterior to be unlocked when you arrive? What about your office door?

If you know you will be working late and your parking privileges require that you park a significant distance from your building, consider retrieving your vehicle when the parking time restrictions expire. If you can move your vehicle to park closer to your building while you are working late, you will have a shorter distance to walk after dark and you will have altered your normal "pattern" of where you park.

Your **mental attention** to your surroundings: **Stop** multitasking with your phone. If you are walking, keep your eyes to your environment. Observe the activity taking place. Opt NOT to put in earbuds to listen toanything. Tune in to your surroundings. Your sense of hearing significantly adds to your sense of awareness.

If you are traveling by yourself on foot after darkness hours or if you are staying late at work/gym/class; let someone else know your plans/location/routes.

If you leave your office unlocked; reassess and recognize the value of utilizing that lock. Would you get more work done with the door closed and locked during the times you are not expecting to meet with someone?

A simple note on your door providing your office phone number will allow unscheduled visitors an option to contact you if you are available to meet.

Social Media: What are you openly sharing about your schedule? What information are you providing about your activities/locations/planned attendance at certain events?

Routines: Be aware of how "predictable" you may be. Do you arrive at work at the same time? Do you vie for the same parking space? Do you walk the same route, use the same entrance, stop for coffee at the same location, and take lunch/breaks at the same time/location? None of these are "bad" behaviors but viewed through the lens of safety, these behaviors make us vulnerable to anyone wanting to cause harm or take something from you.

If you have questions or are looking for recommendations for "best practices", enlist the assistance of your local law enforcement agency and fire department.