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Staffing

It is the still, small voice that the soul heeds, not the deafening blasts of doom.

William Dean Howells, author

People are the core of the hospitality business. I have found that hiring security officers is hard enough, but it is even more difficult when you consider that we need a candidate who is physically and mentally capable of dealing with problems. Compound that with our requirement for the officers to be pleasant and welcoming to our guests. This is quite a task and as Mr. Howells alludes to above, one person can have a huge impact on the business.

HIRING

Some may consider the hiring process the most important component of building a good security staff. There are several steps of the hiring process and if any one of them is weak, you are going to end up with the costly mistake of hiring the wrong person.

Recruitment

Most employers mistakenly post some minimum qualifications and hope they find qualified candidates out of a sea of applications that do not meet these qualifications. When you consider how much time you spend on this process, it really seems backward. You already have the profile of the perfect candidate in your head, so post those qualifications, and require applicants to disqualify themselves based on this list or certain application questions.

Before you start looking for a new recruit, establish a perfect candidate profile and the qualifications and experience needed. If you want military or law enforcement experience or a certain educational level, post it. If you are not going to consider certain criminal history, post it. Of course, check with your HR department to make sure you are legal.

Many security departments seek prior security or law enforcement experience. Ask yourself if these are your best candidates. We usually like this experience because they

may need less training or acclimation to our type of organization. Usually there is a tradeoff of skills for attitude. I would argue that a corrections officer, an army sergeant, or even a homicide detective is not necessarily suited for the hospitality environment. They may be better at handcuffing or dealing with violent suspects, but do not lend themselves to the customer service environment in a private business. I have found that it is easier to train a former restaurant host how to handcuff and deal with hostile persons than it is to teach a drill sergeant how to provide great service to a family in the hotel. Now, this is not to say that I discourage hiring anyone from a paramilitary organization because many of our best security professionals are from these fields. All I ask is that you not use this experience as your primary qualifier or even a prerequisite. You can train skills, but not attitude.

If you have a good team in place already and you want to add more just like them, have your team help with recruitment. A good portion of their friends and colleagues probably shares their attitude, work ethic, and experience. These referrals take some of the unknown out of hiring. It may be worth the cost to offer a finder's fee to your employees for these referrals. Another good source of recruits is employees from other departments. If you see an employee who possesses a great attitude and customer service skills, see if he wants to transfer. Most of the time, they have already considered it, but never imagined you would hire someone without security experience. Actually, they do have hospitality experience and you have already had a chance to watch them in action. This employee is not an unknown and you can easily train him or her technical stuff, but you cannot train attitude.

Application Process

Chances are your HR department has a good application process in place already. They use the same application for every department and it asks questions that maintain the very minimum requirements for employment like minimum age, criminal history, etc. If that is the case, you will have to have someone cull the applications for those that meet your department's slightly higher minimum standards. You can train the HR staff to do this or you may have to do it yourself. Some HR departments use more advanced application software that asks the applicant different questions based on the position. This automates the process for you as a first step in the hiring process.

Someone in your organization needs to have some training on reading applications. Besides the obvious legal limitations, there are several nuances in every application that can be gleaned if you know what you are doing. Reading between the lines is the best way to describe how you can disqualify applicants based on the words they use, the questions they answer, and their experience. You do not have time to interview every single applicant and even if you did, you would not learn the things you learn from an application in one tenth of the time. I would not presume to generalize or profile someone based solely on things they write on an application or résumé. When someone says he left his last job because of a "personality conflict," he needs to explain that in the interview. Make notes on the application of questions to ask.

Interview

Once again, whoever does the interview should be trained in interviewing skills. There are certainly legal dos and don'ts to adhere to, but many things can be learned from a 30-minute chat.

Start with start time. If you want your employees to be on time for work, then don't expect anything less for an interview. Someone who really wants the job and has prepared will do so by arriving early enough to find your office. The prepared ones will scout it out well in advance and do some "recon" of their own. This is another topic of conversation for an interview.

Before the interview, we can already start to evaluate our prospective employee. I like to have my candidates meet me at a different location on the property, such as the bell desk. I may watch them on camera, checking their body language, their interactions with others, and their demeanor. How enlightening it is to see someone paste on their smile and handshake when they see you coming, but were unenthusiastic and grumpy-looking up until then. You can also arrange with a trusted employee, such as a bell-person, to engage the candidate in conversation or test them in some other way before you arrive. A simple thumbs up or down when you arrive might save you some time or give you some more conversation topics. Remember that a candidate is on stage and giving his or her best performance during the interview. Attitude and answers are not always genuine, so any intelligence you can derive beforehand is valuable. In fact, in my personal experience, I have found that some candidates who are pleasant and courteous in an interview will treat the HR or other administrative personnel very poorly. This is a better indicator of future attitude with guests and employees. If your HR people tell you that an applicant was rude to them, cut your losses.

Traditionally, we expected an applicant to wear a suit to an interview. That may not be practical for a frontline employee, but that does not mean she wears jeans or a mini-skirt and sandals. Expect them to dress appropriate for the position: shirt tucked in, belt, well-kept shoes, and hair combed, clean, and presentable. From my experience, if they wear their pants sagging in the interview, they will wear their uniform in the same way.

You may learn much more from this preinterview than you will from hearing their prepared answers in the interview. How did they find their way? Did they introduce themselves to other people in the office? Did they make eye contact or look at the floor? There is so much information here.

One more thing before we start talking. If your security job involves report writing, have them write a paragraph for you. Look at penmanship, spelling, grammar, and sentence and paragraph structure. These are things you are not prepared to teach and will not have time to do so. If someone cannot form and write a paragraph, maybe you can recommend them for another position in the company that requires less writing. Writing is too important in our department. If everything you do is paperless, have them create a document on a computer.

Please open Word and write about 25 words on why you want to be a security officer, or how you traveled here today, or about your last vacation.

Look for computer skills. You don't have time to teach officers how to use a mouse and keyboard.

You should prepare your interview questions in advance. Some will be standard, but others may be unique questions that probe the application.

Standard Questions

The objective of the interview is to learn about your candidate's history and character. This is not to say we care about their history or their personal life, but those things may be an indicator of job performance. Keep this objective in mind as you write your questions. Your HR team may be able to help you with this as they have had experience and can keep you from violating laws and policies with the wrong questions. Security may be a little different from cooks and housekeepers in that we are looking for people who can multitask, are quick thinkers, leaders (and followers), and so forth.

Situational questions may be the best way to learn how a candidate thinks and makes decisions. "What would you do if . . ." is a great way to develop an idea of their decision-making process. The answer to the question may be less important than how they come up with the answer. See if they consider options, consult supervisors, place the guest and the company before everything else, and are flexible. Make sure they know how to find answers they do not know and can admit when they do not know the answer.

Make sure you cover the obvious questions like can they work varying schedules and holidays, get to work on time, wear a uniform, walk and stand, lift 20 pounds, pass a drug and background check, etc. Remember that standard questions must be given consistently to everyone to avoid the appearance of discrimination.

Specific Questions

The questions that came up when reading the application need to be asked here. Common inquiries include reasons for leaving a prior job, what did you do between jobs, how was that job similar to what you will do at our hotel, etc.

Aptitude and attitude are the things to look for in an interview. Your successful candidate must have the aptitude to learn your skills, culture, and mission. He or she must also have the attitude you want. If they do not display it in the interview when they are at their best, they will not learn it later. One cannot learn attitude. They have either a positive attitude or a negative attitude.

Second interview

A second interview is a good idea if you can do it. Use one of your supervisors, investigators, or even someone from another department. Use a different format for this interview. Make it more casual, less of a questioning, and more of a discussion. If done right, this will put the candidate at a comfortable level to speak freely. "You survived the interview with the big boss, let's have a Coke and talk. How do you like our department so far? What would you change? What position would you aspire to?" This type of questioning puts you on the same side and extracts attitude and feelings the formal interview will not bring out. If you do not like the candidate from the first interview, do not bother with the second interview.

Group Interview

The group interview is difficult to manage if only one department does it. If your HR department is interested in doing this, please participate, as you will get candidates with a great attitude and team spirit.

BACKGROUND

Several years ago, the FBI decided that the integrity of their agents was of the utmost importance. They continue to this day to spend tens of thousands of dollars to check the background of each employee. Their unwritten slogan regarding recruitment is: "Don't hire a problem." While every group of people will have a few bad apples, this policy seems to have worked for the FBI. They maintain an image to this day of clean, responsible, honest agents.

Does it make good business sense to spend an amount equal to an employee's annual salary on their background? Probably not for a security officer. But in this age of having information at our fingertips, it is negligent of us not to make some simple inquiries. Criminal history is a given, but what about job stability, violent history, drug use, and personal character?

If you do a background check (if you do not, then start today), this is the time to do it. Some of the nicest guys you will ever meet in an interview can turn out to be bank robbers, physical abusers, embezzlers, or alcoholics.

We have all seen guard companies that do a criminal check and a drug test and let the insurance cover the rest. That just does not work in the hospitality industry. We cannot afford to expose our guests and their property to an unknown personality. Look at the last five employees you fired for stealing. On how many of those did you file criminal charges? How many of those were convicted? Answer: Less than five. How many of your applicants may have stolen from their last five jobs? Answer: You have no idea because they are rarely a criminal case. If you do not check elsewhere, the criminal history check will not do it.

We have to look at the business picture here. A common business reaction to an employee stealing is fire the employee and reimburse the guest or try to recover the loss. What does this do to the reputation of the hotel? That guest might admire you for making it right, but deep down he or she is wondering what kind of people you hire and how many are bad that you don't catch. The background for a security officer just became important to every employee on your property and to the reputation of your hotel. Some background checkers will do job history and references and some will not. If yours does not, you should do this yourself.

Everyone is afraid to check prior employers because nobody wants to give out job information for fear of being sued. There are two things to do to deal with this. One is to check them anyway. Even if the former employer just gives dates of employment is a big verifier. Someone who was trying to hide a job where they were fired, or a period where they were in jail, would fudge on their employment dates. A simple check of prior employers would create a nice timeline. Second thing to do with prior employers is call them personally. Do not just call HR; call their former boss. During the interview, you may have

asked the candidate: "What would your former boss say if I asked him about you?" You should actually ask the former boss if he or she would hire the person again. This does not violate any policies and it is off the record. This will take away all doubt, or add to it. Never disclose to the candidate what you found in the background check.

I think many employers are also afraid to call references because they fear the candidate has primed them. This may be true, but you can still learn a great deal from a couple of phone calls. First, do not ask them the obvious questions. Ask them about a previous job on the application or about a gap between jobs. If they have known the applicant as long as they claim, they will know what he was doing for those four months between jobs. If they say he was in school and the candidate says he was overseas with the Peace Corps, you have a problem.

Many privacy and credit reporting laws, most of them federal, put severe restrictions on what you can find out in a background check. Be sure you use a licensed company or that you are following these regulations and using proper waiver of privacy forms. More information on background checks is in Chapter 11.

DRUG TESTING

I know of few companies not using drug testing for preemployment screening. The ones that do not are probably thinking that what people do on their own time is their own business. You can resolve this question for yourself by asking your decisionmakers these questions: If they break drug laws, will they break any others? If they use drugs at home while they are taking care of their family, why wouldn't they take them at work? If their decision process between right and wrong did not pass the simple "Just Say No," then how will it work for other important decisions? Will drug use at home affect their attendance, performance, and even medical insurance costs?

Speak to a Workers' Comp physician or other companies in your area about the type of testing and testing facility. Many use blood and urine tests, but fail to realize that many drugs only stay in the system approximately four hours. Most applicants can hold their habit for a few hours to get a job. Another method is hair testing. Chemicals stay in the hair for days, weeks, and months. It will not show today's drug use so it is not good for postaccident testing, but it is great for showing a history. Be sure to ask the testing facility about prescription drug abuse. This problem is on the rise and is easy to explain, such as having chronic back pain.

BEFORE HIRING

One final thing before making the offer, or even if you have already made the job offer. If you find out they lied on the application or during any part of the interview process, fire them immediately. Nobody lies just once and if the person lied during this process, it was to keep you from uncovering something that would disqualify him or her. Integrity is the most important nontrainable skill your officers will have.

ORIENTATION

News flash: New hires do not remember anything you tell them or show them on the first day except where to pick up their paycheck. Keep this in mind as you devise your hiring process. It is probably better to receive information from them than it is to ask them to start absorbing your information. So, have them fill out payroll forms and get fitted for uniforms and such rather than ask them to study a manual or memorize sexual harassment policies.

Put yourself in your new recruit's place. She needs to go home, celebrate with family, buy some new uniform shoes, and dream of being your boss. Have her start work the next day or in a couple of days. This way her head will be clear when she starts and you will have her full attention.

The training process is discussed in Chapter 6. Whether or not you provide classroom training, it is unlikely that every new recruit will start his or her new job in a classroom. They are more likely to go directly into field training with another officer. This is a good day to do orientation. Review new policies, go over the geography of the property, tell them where to take breaks, and where to find the equipment and supplies needed for the job.

DEPLOYMENT

I hope that you or your predecessor has not used the "shotgun" deployment method. This method, more common than you think, consists of someone, somewhere who decided your hotel needs "X" number of officers. Then the officers were sent out and told to evenly cover the property. This force tends to become lazy, ineffective, and reactionary.

This is why we developed the Security Plan in Chapter 2. There, we calculated the amount of officers needed based on posts and patrol areas. Most of the work is done; we just need to contend with some variables—volume, shifts, and other duties. I suggest that even if you have staff and a schedule, you do this exercise. You may find some areas to make your staff more efficient or cost-effective.

Start with your minimum staff by listing your posts (fixed and roving)—hotel patrol, outside patrol, common area patrol, other areas, dispatcher, lobby key check, nightclub, etc. Do this for every block of time in a 24-hour period and for each day of the week. You do not need to do it hourly unless your posts change every hour. It might be 4-hour blocks or 8-hour blocks. We do the blocks because some posts are not staffed all hours, such as the nightclub. You may also want to add roving officers based on guest volume. More people up and around might require more security during those hours.

Next, add to this number a breaker for every 4, 6, or 8 posts depending on your total break time. (Six officers who get 30 minutes of break time in your 4-hour block will get about one breaker officer.) Also, decide if you want to add any extra staff for report writing, emergencies, administrative duties, covering call-offs, and so on.

Now that you have this spreadsheet, create 8-hour shifts (or 6- or 10-hour shifts if you prefer). Do not hesitate to use staggered start times if that is how your shifts work out. You should end up with variable staffing levels that change with need and volume rather than

the shotgun. You may have even justified that dreaded 10-hour workday that you have been trying to pull off.

In the next section, we will work on days off.

SCHEDULES

There are several ways to work out a schedule. I will show you an easy way to do it. Suppose you need six officers on the weekdays and eight on the weekends. Each officer works a 40-hour workweek with consecutive days off. We will work on just one shift to make it easy. You can change these numbers depending on how many you need on each day.

In Figure 5.1, I used a piece of graph paper (or scratch paper with a table drawn like this one) and created a draft schedule. Days of the week go across the top and the rows are left blank, but indicate the name of each employee being scheduled. I made nine rows. Make several more if you are not sure how many positions you will need. I then start creating position schedules. Since everyone has consecutive days off, I start on Monday marking an “X” for each day off. Line 1 is off Monday and Tuesday, line 2 is off Tuesday and Wednesday, and so on. When I got to Saturday on line 6, I knew I probably would not have two officers off on Saturday, so I skipped and gave that line Sunday and Monday off. At that point, I did a quick count of each day (counting blank boxes in each column) to see what my officer count was for each day.

That quick count told me I was running about four each day and five on the weekends. Since my goal was six and eight, I was on the right track and just needed to add a few more positions with the days off evenly dispersed. The next three positions were added with different days off, giving nobody Saturday off. This schedule worked out almost perfect. I have six on weekdays, eight on Saturday, and seven on Sunday. If that is acceptable, great. To fill that spot on Sunday, I could use overtime, part-time, or hire one more position and over-staff on other days. If that works for your budget, I would do it, because there will be sick calls, vacations, and extra days off that will decrease much of that extra payroll.

This simple exercise can be expanded to any number of officers. Those who use the “shotgun” approach mentioned in the last section can do this scheduling method, only

Officer	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1	X	X					
2		X	X				
3			X	X			
4				X	X		
5					X	X	
6	X						X
7	X						X
8		X	X				
9				X	X		

Figure 5.1

backward. Start with the number of officers you have in the left column, and then do the same process, filling in the days off as you go down the line until days off are equally dispersed.

Do your staff a favor and create a schedule that you can stick with and not change every week. I am sure you have a restaurant manager who creates a weekly schedule with split days off, and does not tell his employees until the Friday before the week starts. This is not considerate of employees' lives and does not promote loyalty or positive morale. Inconsistent scheduling with split and different days off will not benefit the company either. You will have more sick calls (to get their consecutive days off), employees who are not properly rested, and in the extreme you may have those who will join unions to get better work conditions.

WAGE STRUCTURE

Wages are the most important thing to your employees and your management. Employees want them to be higher and management wants them as low as they can be to increase profits. Whether you are establishing a new department and a new wage structure or need to modify your existing one, here are several elements of a good wage program.

Survey

Competitive wages are important to morale and vital to recruiting a competent staff. Before starting the survey, you need to determine with whom you will be comparing salaries. Like the Risk Assessment, we have to compare to the local market, the national market, and the industry in general. However, if you live in Houston, Texas, you should not expect to pay as much as in New York City.

A good HR department will do a wage survey for you, but you can probably do it easier yourself. Your colleagues at other properties should be more than willing to participate in a survey, especially if you share the results with them. A survey should be done once per year.

Base Wage

Naturally, you would like to be at the top of the market in pay. This attracts better applicants (well, more applicants) and can promote longevity and morale. The survey will help you appeal to your boss for a competitive wage for your staff. Where you place—and where you want to be placed—in the survey is dependent upon several other factors. These include the amount and frequency of raises, training provided, experience required, specialized positions, benefit package, and the reputation of your organization.

Raises

Most companies provide a cost of living adjustment (COLA) and possibly a probationary increase. I recommend a structure based on experience and training. This recommendation is outlined later in this section. As for determining the base wage, you may want to

start a bit below the highest payer, if you have a substantial probationary increase. Or, you might start highest if you have no such type of raise. Another consideration is if you pay more for armed officers, experienced officers, EMTs, etc.

Training

Providing compensated training is rare in our industry. If you provide it, then that is a benefit and should be included as such when you publicize an open position. When you calculate your starting wage, consider this paid training. (Lower starting pay is more attractive if you pay training and other hotels do not.) By the way, I would never recommend providing training without compensating the employee, but some organizations do it and get away with it.

Experience

Many businesses base the starting salary on experience or education. This is a double-edged sword. You may attract better candidates, but as mentioned earlier in the Hiring section, experience is not always a plus. If you do provide this added pay, your base pay should be lower than the competition. This goes the same if you offer pay right off the bat for those specialized positions mentioned previously.

Benefits

Human Resources will tell you that the benefits that the company provides are worth \$4 per hour. If you provide these benefits and the other hotels do not, that is plenty of reason to have a lower base pay. If everyone has similar benefits, but you start them at four months and others start them at six months, for example, then you also have an advantage.

Reputation

Finally, the reputation of your department and your hotel may affect at what pay you start your officers. If you have an iconic brand name, or your security department has a reputation for being good to its employees, you can afford to start at a lower pay because your applicants are not drawn to you for money, but seek prestige.

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (ODP)

I now propose to you the Officer Development Program (ODP). Although not unique, it is certainly an unusual way to organize, motivate, train, reward, and pay your officers. It was developed by officers for officers and I have seen it work quite successfully.

The premise of the ODP is to compensate officers based on their skills and to allow them to give those skills back to their fellow officers through training. This plan has four levels of officer: Officer Trainee, Level I, Level II, and Level III.

An officer starts as a trainee at the entry-level wage. (For the sake of this example, let us say \$10 per hour). To advance to the next level (Level I), the trainee needs to earn a minimum number of training points. Points earned during the normal course of work are less than those earned off-duty. For example, a mandatory CPR class might be worth 2 points, but a seminar taken at a local college might be worth 15 points. After spending at least six months in the trainee position and earning at least 25 points, the officer advances to Level I. He or she gets a raise of 50 cents.

In Level I, the officer is encouraged to continue taking classes provided by the company, outside opportunities, and classes taught by other officers. Once again, he or she must earn 25 points and spend six months or a year at this level, before advancing to Level II. Another 50-cent raise is earned.

Level II changes slightly, as the officer is encouraged to complete advanced or specialized training, such as bicycle patrol, medical, dispatch, investigations, or training officer. The Level II officer must attain at least one specialty, earn the required points, and spend the minimum time at that level before advancing to Level III. A raise of 50 cents or \$1 is earned.

In Level III, the learning cycle is completed as officers start to give back to the department. Officers in Level III now earn two types of points. They still have to earn their minimum training points, but also have to earn instructor points. To do this, they can create their own class or use an existing syllabus provided by someone else. This develops your senior officers into instructors and mentors while creating a training-rich environment that is also economical.

The minimum months of service required to reach the next level, the percentage increase in wages, amount of points to be earned, and the point value for each class, are variable and at your discretion based on your situation. After the first year, and in order to sustain the program, you will have to develop a test for each level. The test will not be necessary for the first year, but at the end of that year, the officers will have to prove proficiency in that level to maintain that level.

Remember that level increases are not promotions, but advances. This may be semantics, but your HR people are more likely to buy into this program if you are not creating layers of supervision. You are better off comparing levels to kitchen workers, who have been using levels for years. Their system is a little different, but the first level workers might be prep cooks, who then advance to line cooks, fry cooks, chefs, and so on. It is important that you do not create supervisors with these levels.

You can add some bells and whistles as well to this system by creating a rank insignia, such as chevrons on the uniform. You also may want to adjust the wage increases to match your local wage survey. I also suggest a pay differential for those specialized positions mentioned previously.

As for the 20 percent of your employees who just want to come to work, do their job, and go home, let them. Some people will just want to stay at Level I. That is fine because you actually need a few of those people who will do the basic work. Soon, they will see the newer officers pass them by, making more money and they will jump on board. You also will have those who will race to the highest level and then go back to stagnation. This makes the test and the annual renewal of points essential.

Ideally, you will end up with staff that are smarter and more motivated to learn and share their knowledge with their co-workers. Morale should improve and sustain itself with the program. The best part of the ODP is your Level IIIs. These senior, more experienced, and better-trained officers now make up the bench strength for your next generation of supervisors and managers. You can even start training them as such and watch them work in that capacity.

Feel free to use all or part of the ODP and customize it for your own use. The cost of the increases is negligible, most of the training is free, and it is more rewarding than your average wage structure or COLA raises that you are using now.

PROPRIETARY VERSUS CONTRACT

Personally, I prefer proprietary security staff—as you can gather from most of this book. I think hiring, training, and managing your own staff outweighs any cost savings you can get from using an outside service. Most of those agencies are quality companies that strive to recruit and retain qualified officers. The ones that do not, do not last long. However, a staff that you develop and manage is more likely to serve guests as if they are in their own home and protect assets as if they are their own.

Having a proprietary staff is entirely dependent on your motivation to hire and train such a staff. If you do not, then contract is the way to go. Many reputable companies actually train officers to work in the hospitality industry. This is a question to ask when interviewing these companies. You do not want the same “guards” used to secure a warehouse serving your guests in a hotel.

If you have at least one staff member that you can devote full time to hiring and training, then you can run your own security officers. Even though there are a few variables and a couple of minor details, this is the easiest way to break it down. Determine how many officers you need, including supervision and breaks. Get your bids from outside companies, making sure to account for costs that they will cover, such as hiring costs, benefits, uniforms, equipment, and liability insurance. Then make your own bid for the same thing—wages, benefits, equipment, etc. Be sure to account for that one extra training position. If it is less for you—or close—then it is probably worth doing it yourself.

There are some exceptions to this equation. First is liability. Find out if a contract security company assumes all liability for its officers as well as any losses incurred. If not, to what extent are you responsible? Some put this right into their contract and the reality is the deepest pocket may be held liable. Check with your attorney on this, especially if you are self-insured. Workers’ comp insurance is also a consideration. Second, check with your HR department. They may or may not be willing to provide hiring services for you. They also may not want your staff on their benefit plans. Alternatively, they may welcome having more employees on the rolls because it gets them a discount on group plans. Finally, you may have an owner or manager who is already set on having proprietary or contract. You may be able to prove your case in the opposite direction, but this will be dependent on your research. (See budget proposals in Chapter 3.)

Many hotels and tourist destinations find it necessary to augment their proprietary staff with contract security during special events. I find this to be poor judgment for the same

reasons as mentioned previously—and more. As I mentioned several times in this book, do a little Risk Assessment in your mind. Determine the probability of a contract officer doing something that will put you both in a position of liability (false arrest, excessive force, etc.). Then determine the severity of that incident to your company. In other words, if one of those things happens, who will be sued and who will be defending it? Chances are that even if there is a contract in place limiting your liability, your deep pockets will be a target.

To put it another way, will a security officer from an outside source handle even minor situations with the same discretion that an inside officer would? Think about these situations: An intoxicated hotel guest wanders into the wrong party and causes a disturbance; a man walks into an event and starts shooting; 25 women show up at a conservative political rally and start heckling the speakers about abortion; a 16-year-old is caught drinking alcohol provided by her father at a wedding party. These are all difficult scenarios for any security officer, but more so for new or outside officers.

A woman who walked into a drugstore in California to return some items was accused of shoplifting by the store's contract loss prevention agents. (The agent did not witness the alleged crime.) The agent put his hands on the woman's shoulders and forced her into a back room. When she tried to make a call, the cell phone was knocked from her hand. The agent also made sexual advances toward her. The woman sued the store, the contract security company, and the agent. She was awarded \$3.45 million.

Though small businesses, including hotels, cannot always have proprietary security, there is some risk involved in using those who have no loyalty or direct oversight from management.

You may find it less expensive, both operationally and legally, to pay overtime to your current staff for special events.

MANAGEMENT

Managers and supervisors are a very important part of your team and are integral to the success and efficiency of your staff. They play several roles and some of them are described here.

Responsibility

Any team or organization needs one person at the top to take responsibility. For the department, it is the director. For a shift or other group—depending on how the team is organized—it is the manager. This responsibility cannot be shared, so if the group is large, there may be supervisors running smaller teams that report to the manager. Several managers can report to a higher manager like an operations manager.

Responsibility provides for accountability, which means that each person has a job to do, ensures that it is done correctly, and is held accountable for it. The manager holds his

or her officers accountable for their actions, and is in turn accountable to his or her boss for his or her actions. Accountability includes job supervision, training, coaching, and discipline. It also provides for delegation.

Supervision

The difference between a supervisor and a manager is the level of responsibility. Supervision is also something that both managers and supervisors do. Because managers are responsible for the actions of those persons on their team, they need to oversee all of the work being performed by those persons. Other steps in the supervision process are discussed next, but first, we must observe. Managers tend to be caught up in administrative tasks, such as reports, schedules, and meetings. These are all important duties, but a good manager knows he cannot take responsibility for the performance of others if he does not witness it for himself. Guest interaction, technical duties, patrol techniques, and confrontational skills are a few of the skills that a manager should be observing for all of his team members.

Training and Coaching

Training does not conclude after initial training is complete. Officers (and managers) will be constantly learning as they encounter new situations. It is the manager's job to organize and conduct this training. Some of this education comes in the form of group meetings, such as briefings, pullout training, and scenarios. Other opportunities for developing officers come during and after each incident. As the officer is collecting evidence or witness statements, responding to a domestic disturbance, or after a medical call are all good times to evaluate and coach officers on their performance.

Discipline

Also a form of coaching, discipline should be designed to correct behavior, not to punish for it. Either poor performance can be corrected or it cannot. If it can be corrected, we retrain, coach, and evaluate the new behavior. If it cannot be corrected, then discipline is used as a progression toward termination. This function—discipline—falls upon the manager when accountability fails.

Delegation

Delegation is the process of passing responsibility to the lowest level where it can be satisfactorily handled. Managers often confuse delegation with slavery. "Everyone else can do all of the work while I do other things I want to do." Giving officers new responsibilities develops them professionally, gives them better job satisfaction, and prepares them for more responsibilities. Delegation needs to be done carefully so as not to overwork officers who are already busy and not to exceed their capabilities. For example, if you have an officer who has mastered her other job duties and wants to learn more about the business, it would be prudent to have her start working on break schedules for the other officers. The

manager would have to supervise this to make sure it is done fairly and correctly so she does not make new enemies. Managers err when they delegate too much work and do not follow up to make sure it is being done properly.

Managing Managers

As mentioned previously, managers usually get into trouble when they try to delegate too much. The opposite can be said for some managers who feel they have to do everything themselves. Therefore, this is a fine balance between tasks and responsibilities. If the manager delegates too much, he or she is likely overworking the staff and proving that the job may be unnecessary. On the other hand, handling all the calls, doing all the breaks, and writing all the reports is even worse because then the manager cannot supervise, evaluate, and coach as we discussed before.

A manager who is doing a proper job is one who is everywhere at once, knows everything that is going on, and has a competent and well-trained staff. This is simple for a director to observe. Start by observing the activities of the team. Do they handle routine situations without assistance? Is the manager consulted or advised on the resolution of all situations? Is there chaos during an emergency or order? Next comes some questioning. As we will discuss in Chapter 12, the director should work alongside officers and ask them how their manager is doing. Finally, test the manager and hold him or her accountable. Randomly check logs and reports and see if the manager is informed. Observe an emergency, or create a mock emergency scenario, and watch the manager's participation. Managers can make your job easy or difficult, but it is up to you to hold them accountable.

