



TRAIN YOUR STAFF WITH THE 6 C OF ROBBERY PROTOCOL

Membership Magazine February, 2024

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The 6 Cs of Robbery Protocol

As an owner or manager of a convince store it is important that you take all necessary steps to prevent a robbery from happening. Even with the best prevention strategies, though, you can't completely protect your store. You can, however, make sure your staff is prepared for the worst. All employees should go through robbery preparation training, and you should follow up with informal mentoring, role-playing, and frequent exercises. Reviewing the Six Cs of Robbery Protocol is a quick and easy refresher for convince store employees.

1. **CALM.** If someone approaches you with the intention of robbing the store, stay calm. This will certainly be easier said than done, but it's critical to your safety. If you panic, the robber's adrenaline will rise even higher and could lead to tragedy.
2. **COMMUNICATE.** Listen to what the robber is asking you to do.
3. **COOPERATE.** No one expects you to be a hero in a robbery. Your safety and the safety of customers in the store is the number one priority. Give the robbers what they want.
4. **CLOSE AND CALL.** As soon as the robbers leave the building, lock the door and call 9-1-1.
5. **CONTROL.** Once you're safe and the threat of robbery is over, take control of your emotions and the surroundings. Do not conduct any business, and do not touch anything. If other customers are in the store, ask for their patience while you wait for the police to arrive. Do not give out any information, except to police and company management.
6. **CONFIDE.** Being the victim of robbery is a traumatic experience that can be difficult to process. Talk about your feelings. If you need help, talk to your manager or HR department.

PREVENTING ROBBERY

What's the Difference Between Robbery and Shoplifting?

Shoplifting is when a person takes something from a store without intending to pay for it. It also includes changing price tags on items and then buying them. Shoplifting is something people do hoping to be unnoticed - successful shoplifting means no contact is made with staff. Robbery is different because it involves taking money or valuables under the threat of violence and by intimidation.

Robbery and shoplifting are potentially hazardous to workers and customers. Employers have to protect workers from the risks of violence associated with both.



What are Some of the Hazards Associated With Robberies?

By definition, all robberies are marked by the threat of violence. Many robbers claim to have concealed weapons; some may show a weapon to their victims. The whole point is to scare the victim into handing over money or valuables.

Most robberies do not involve actual physical violence. But physical violence can occur when things don't go according to the robber's plan. The adverse effects on staff can be both physical and emotional – and lasting.

Workers need to know what to do in case of a robbery in order to minimize the chances of the situation turning violent. Money and merchandise stolen during a robbery can be replaced. A human being can't be.

What are Robbers Looking For?

In convenience stores, robbers are usually looking to steal money and other things of value, like lottery tickets and tobacco products. They are looking for an easy target: one that will allow for the greatest reward and the lowest risk of getting caught or being identified.

That's why robberies are most likely to happen at night. An isolated location, late at night, with a single worker is more inviting to robbers than one in a busy area, in the middle of the day.

How Can Robbery be Prevented?

There are a lot of good, proven strategies for minimizing the chance of a robbery. Robbery Prevention goes hand-in-hand with Violence Prevention and procedures for Working Alone.

Strategies to deter both robbers and shoplifters include:

1. Cash Handling
2. Visibility and Store Layout
3. Limiting Access Routes and Hiding Places
4. Interacting with the Public
5. Surveillance
6. Prepayment of fuel
7. When all else fails, manage the robbery.
8. Cash Handling
9. Good cash handling procedures are considered the most effective robbery deterrent as they limit the amount of accessible cash and other valuables.
10. Some tips for staff handling cash include:
11. Keep the cash register fund to a minimum
12. Use a drop safe with a time lock on it. Don't hide money in a drawer or under the counter
13. Drop all bills over \$5 into the drop safe as soon as they are received. Let customers see you making drops
14. Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bill possible
15. Encourage credit or debit card payments
16. Vary the time of day that the cash register is emptied
17. Only operate one register late at night through early morning. Open the unused register drawer and tip it for display

18. At night, run an “empty register” – just \$5s and change
19. Store extra lottery tickets and tobacco products in the time lock safe when they are not needed
20. Keep “bait money” (several bills with recorded serial numbers) in the cash tray for positive identification in the event of a robbery

Post signs visible to the public indicating that

1. There is a time lock safe in use and it cannot be opened during late night hours
2. There is a limited amount of accessible cash and lottery tickets on the premises

Visibility and Store Layout

Put the cash register where it can be seen by people inside and outside the store. Don't put the cash register near the exit or entrance

Maintain good visibility into and out of the store

1. Keep shrubbery around the outside of the store to a minimum
2. Keep the windows and counters clear of posters and obstructions
3. Have good, bright, balanced lighting both inside and outside of the store
4. Keep shelves low for good visibility inside the store
5. Keep the shelves tidy
6. Install mirrors so that all areas of the store can be seen from the sales counter
7. Design the counter high and deep enough to provide some physical distance from a threatening person

Limit Access Routes and Hiding Places

1. Keep back and side doors locked to minimize escape routes and keep people from entering the store unnoticed. At night, remove large signs and displays that could provide hiding places
2. Do not use the back entrances to let people in
3. Do not leave by exiting into poorly lit, unobserved areas

Surveillance

1. Use surveillance monitoring equipment
2. Put up a sign advertising the fact that the premises are monitored by video surveillance
3. Use CCTV monitors and cameras. These should be visible to customers
4. Equip workers with personal emergency transmitters (“PETs”) that are monitored by a security company 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
5. Install a “panic button” at the sales counter
6. Consider providing workers with a warning device that triggers if movement or signals are not detected within a set time
7. Make sure all security cameras, monitors and PETs are regularly tested. Record and keep copies of the tests
8. Install height markers at the doorways
9. Install one-way observation windows so that workers in the back room can see out into the store

Interacting with the Public

1. Greet everyone who enters the store. Be friendly and look briefly into their eyes
2. Don't stare. That could be interpreted as a challenge or threat
3. Offer help to people alone in the aisles. Customers will like the attention but robbers won't
4. If someone suspicious is standing in line, ask the person ahead of them “Are you together?” The person ahead will usually turn around and look at the other person. This action may deter the robber and allow the person to make identification

5. Wear conservative clothes (such as your uniform). This will help police to quickly identify you if there is a robbery
6. Move away from the sales counter when there are no customers. Robbers prefer to enter and leave quickly. If there are no workers near the counter, the business may be a less attractive target
7. Be aware. Look for anyone who appears to be loitering in or around the store. If they do not leave, call the police and ask for a patrol check

Prepayment of fuel

Workers must be trained to follow fuel prepayment rules. The requirement to pay for fuel before it is pumped has helped to significantly reduce violent incidents and potentially deadly gas-and-dash situations. Prepayment is a requirement 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There are no exceptions.

If There is a Robbery:

1. Obey the robber's orders — Let the robber know you intend to cooperate. Hand over cash and merchandise and do exactly as the robber says. If you are not sure what the robber is telling you, ask. Don't argue
2. Keep it short — The longer a robbery takes the more nervous the robber becomes
3. Stay calm — Handle the entire situation as if you were making a sale to a customer. Try to pay attention to what the robber is wearing, and what he or she looks like. Try to note the robber's height on the height marker as soon as he or she leaves
4. Don't try to stop the robber — Trying to fight with a robber is foolish. Even if you don't see a weapon, always assume the robber has one

After the robber leaves:

1. Don't chase or follow the robber — This will only invite violence, and it may confuse the police as to who is involved with the robbery
2. Write down information immediately — As soon as the robber has left, make notes about their appearance, mannerisms, and specific features, as well as the time and the direction they took when they left. If possible, get a description of their vehicle and write down the license plate number, but never leave the safety of the premises or follow a vehicle to do so!
3. Call the police — Dial 9-1-1 as soon as it is safe to do so. Don't hang up until they tell you to
4. Lock the doors and protect the crime scene. Discontinue business until the police are finished.
5. Don't touch any evidence
6. Don't estimate the amount of the loss. If you're certain of the amount, tell police, but don't guess
7. Call your employer as soon as possible
8. Write a report describing the robbery and include all the information you can



What About Shoplifting?

As with robbery, employers need to instruct workers on what to do if they see or suspect a shoplifter.

Some tips for workers to follow if they suspect someone of shoplifting are:

1. Never approach or confront a shoplifter, especially if you are working alone. Let them go, but try to get a good look at them and see which way they go when they leave
2. Do not try to apprehend the shoplifter. Don't chase or follow them – that will only invite violence
3. Contact security, the police, or someone professionally trained to deal with the situation
4. After the shoplifter leaves, write down as much information about the incident as possible, including the shoplifter's height, weight, hair and skin color, and clothing. If a vehicle is involved, write down the make, color, approximate year, and license plate number

Are your Robbery Prevention Strategies Working?

As with any policy, procedure or program, robbery prevention strategies need to be reviewed from time to time to make sure they're working. Start by carefully examining the circumstances under which a shoplifting or robbery incident occurred.

Ask some questions like:

- What was going on when it happened?
- What could be done to help prevent it from happening again?
- Can you see any patterns in the time, place, or situation in which incidents happen?
- What could be changed or improved?
- Did workers follow procedures?
- Is it time for some refresher training?

No store is 100 per cent theft-proof. Not having any instances of robbery or shoplifting isn't necessarily an indication that the Robbery Prevention Program is perfect. Maintain the program with regular refresher training and continue to make improvements to prevention measures.



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THE SECOND AMENDMENT.

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to keep and bear arms
shall not be infringed.”*



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