

Avoidable Risk

How Safer with SCOUT Is Changing the Way Organizations Think About Safety

You can hardly watch a news cycle these days without seeing a report of violence in a workplace, school, healthcare facility, public venue or other organizational setting among the headlines. It's also true that organizations have never had more tools available to help protect their people.

So why does it seem like we're losing ground?

Part of the answer may be found in WHERE we've traditionally chosen to start.

For decades, much of organizational safety training has focused on the incident itself. Run. Hide. Fight. Lock down. Evacuate. Barricade. Call for help. And to be frank, these are important skills, and when a violent event is underway, knowing how to respond has been shown to absolutely save lives.

But by then, something has already gone terribly wrong.

Safer with SCOUT starts earlier.

We believe the most effective approach to modern organizational safety must include preparing people to survive a critical incident, but it cannot begin there. It must also help organizations recognize the human behaviors,

changing circumstances and developing concerns that may exist hours, days, weeks or even months before there is an incident to survive.

That is the fundamental difference in the SCOUT approach.

We don't begin with the attacker.

We begin with the human being.

People enter workplaces, schools, hospitals and public environments carrying lives that were already in motion before they arrived. Financial pressure, relationship problems, anger, loss, substance misuse, resentment, personal conflict, fear, disappointment and countless other human realities aren't created by the organization, but the behaviors they influence can eventually become organizational problems.

Organizations don't create those realities.

They inherit them.

And as those realities begin influencing observable behavior, organizations may have opportunities to recognize that something is changing before it becomes something far more consequential.

That is where SCOUT focuses much of its attention, and where we believe a significant amount of **avoidable risk** exists.

Moving Upstream

Traditional critical incident programs generally begin near the end of the risk cycle. There is a threat... There is an aggressor... There is an emergency... Now, what should people do?

Again, those capabilities matter. SCOUT includes critical incident preparedness because there will always be circumstances that cannot be anticipated or interrupted.

But imagine organizational safety as a timeline.

At one end is ordinary human reality. Somewhere along that timeline, circumstances may begin affecting behavior. Behavior may become concerning. Concerns may escalate. Eventually, organizational risk can become organizational consequence.

Most reactionary safety programs concentrate heavily on that final portion of the timeline.

SCOUT deliberately moves the starting point to the left.

Can people recognize meaningful changes in behavior?

Do they understand what they're observing without immediately jumping to conclusions?

Do they know when a concern should be communicated?

Does the organization receive enough information to identify patterns?

Can a supervisor recognize possible impairment?

Can an employee navigate an angry interaction without unnecessarily escalating it?

Can a developing concern reach the people equipped to assess it while there are still multiple options available?

None of those capabilities guarantees that an incident will be prevented.

They do something more realistic.

They give the organization opportunities it didn't have before.

And the earlier those opportunities appear, the more choices an organization generally has about what to do with them.

One Problem, Not Six Training Programs

This philosophy also explains why SCOUT looks different in execution.

Workplace violence prevention, behavioral threat awareness, reasonable suspicion, situational awareness, non-escalation, de-escalation and critical incident preparedness are often treated as separate training subjects.

That's convenient for a training catalog.

It's not particularly representative of the real world.

Consider a supervisor dealing with an employee whose behavior has been noted as having changed significantly.

Is that a performance issue? A reasonable suspicion issue? A behavioral concern? A potential workplace violence issue? Something that should go to HR? Something Security should know about?

The honest answer may be: **we don't know yet.**

And that's precisely the point.

Real situations don't announce which training module applies.

SCOUT therefore approaches these areas as connected elements of human-risk. We help people become better at observing what is happening, recognizing when something may matter, understanding it within context, communicating concerns, documenting appropriately and responding when necessary.

That is very different from simply teaching someone what to do once the alarm sounds.

It creates awareness across the lifecycle of risk.

Making Existing Safety Investments More Effective

None of this means organizations need to abandon the systems they've already built.

Quite the opposite.

SCOUT is designed to make those systems more useful.

A threat assessment team is only as effective as the information that reaches it.

HR can only evaluate patterns it can see.

Security can only assess circumstances it knows about.

A supervisor can only respond intelligently to behavior they have been prepared to recognize.

Technology can monitor doors, send alerts, capture video and accelerate emergency communication. But technology cannot replace the everyday human awareness of the people already inside the environment.

SCOUT connects those people to the systems already designed to protect them.

The objective isn't to make employees security professionals. It's to give ordinary people enough knowledge to recognize when something deserves attention and enough understanding to know what to do next.

That's why our philosophy is simple:

Knowledge is Safety®.

Not because knowledge eliminates risk, but because knowledge creates options.

The Modern Problem Requires an Earlier Approach

The environment organizations operate within has changed.

The speed at which personal conflicts develop, grievances spread, information moves and situations escalate has changed with it. Organizations are increasingly dealing with human pressures and behaviors that originate far beyond their walls but can arrive at work very quickly.

A safety model built primarily around reacting well at the moment of crisis addresses only part of that reality.

Organizations still need to know what to do when the worst happens.

But they also need to become better at recognizing what may be developing before it does.

For example: A person can arrive at work in a perfectly reasonable mood, sit down at their desk, and receive a message on that little technological rectangle we all carry in our pockets or bags. It might be personal news that changes their day instantly. It might be a story that hits an already

exposed nerve, or a political, social, or belief-anchored message that directly challenges something they hold deeply. Within seconds, their emotional state can change dramatically, even though absolutely nothing within the organization caused it.

Twenty-five years ago, that kind of outside stimulus didn't follow most people into the workplace continuously, instantaneously, and in the palm of their hand. Today, it's only one of countless external influences capable of affecting human behavior at remarkable speed. **That is a modern challenge, and it requires a modern approach to organizational safety.**

That's the evolution Safer with SCOUT represents.

Prepare for the incident, absolutely. But don't wait for the incident to begin thinking about safety.

Observe earlier.

Recognize earlier.

Understand earlier.

Communicate earlier.

And when necessary, respond effectively.

We cannot promise an organization that every violent act, confrontation or human-risk event can be prevented.

Nobody responsibly can.

What we can do is help organizations reduce the number of opportunities they miss along the way.

Because somewhere between the first observable change and the final emergency are decisions, conversations, observations and interventions that may change what happens next.

That's avoidable risk.

And Safer with SCOUT was built to help organizations address it before all that's left to do is react.