

CPR for a troubled mind!



Insider Threat Programs examine concerning behaviors with a multidisciplinary team to deter, detect, and mitigate risks associated with insiders. This proactive strategy often identifies and resolves issues before a potential insider becomes a threat to themselves or protected resources such as personnel, information, and property. Insider Threat

Programs can only address these behaviors if they are reported. Many of us feel conflicted about reporting when we notice concerning behavior and worry that we'll cause problems "over nothing." However, it's essential that all concerning behavior be reported. If it's nothing, no action will be taken. In the cases of increased risk, Insider Threat Programs have an opportunity for intervention prior to any negative event. The goal is to get the person help, before the situation gets out of control.

The following events are based on a true story.

The Insider Threat Office of a US Government Agency observed a significant number of agency personnel who were experiencing some type of mental health crisis. They observed signs and symptoms of depression, anxiety, psychosis and in some cases suicidal ideation.

The Agency's Insider Threat - Threat Management Unit (TMU), made up of investigators from the Agency Police Force, wanted to do more than just be responders "after the fact". They identified an external program taught to both lay persons and police officers called "Mental Health First Aid" (MHFA). Just as CPR helps you assist an individual having a heart attack, Mental Health First Aid helps you assist someone experiencing a mental health or substance use-related crisis. Mental Health First Aid teaches students how to help overcome the stigma of mental health issues, how to identify the physical and behavioral signs and symptoms of mental illness and how to approach and encourage those suffering to seek professional help and treatment.

The TMU members attended the training and were so impressed by its content, became certified instructors themselves.

In the Mental Health First Aid course, participants learn risk factors and warning signs for mental health and addiction concerns, strategies for how to help someone in both crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help.

Senior leadership at the Agency was approached about the value of bringing MHFA to their employees and agreed to the implementation of a MFHA program for the Agency.

What were the Potential Insider Risk Indicators?

- Altered mental health
- Symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Diagnosed psychosis
- Some cases of suicidal ideation

What was the outcome?

- Agency Police Officers and Insider Threat staff are trained in MHFA
- Threat Management Unit conducted numerous training courses to other divisions and supervisors
- Employees were trained to identify co-workers and even family members struggling with a mental health crisis and provide a way for early intervention