Security Insights: Stakeholder Influence
Spotlight: Stakeholder Influence

AlliedBarton Security Services recently completed a research project that gathered opinions from security professionals across several sectors.

The objectives of the research project were twofold:

1. Gain a deeper understanding of the issues that challenge security and safety professionals in today’s complex and dangerous world.

2. Identify best practices used to manage and administer security and safety programs.

Research Theme: Don’t underestimate the power of stakeholders.

Note: For the purposes of this research, the term “stakeholder” refers to persons who directly benefit from safe and secure environments. They are the tenants in commercial office buildings, medical professionals and support staffs in hospitals and clinics, and faculties, students, staff and parents in colleges and universities.

The research uncovered a compelling theme that carried across vertical markets and geographic locales: respondents expressed a widespread concern over what can best be characterized as stakeholder influence. The research uncovered ways that negative stakeholder perceptions could be mitigated. But in the end, it boiled down to this: It is critically important to effectively engage stakeholders in their own safety and security. This engagement can include regular emergency preparedness training, soliciting management support for all security and safety-related activities and, finally, understanding and managing perceived risk. Security leaders can begin to receive positive and tangible input on the success of their efforts as a result of more involvement from and interaction with stakeholders – a group that is pivotal to security success.

Activities designed to educate and engage stakeholders can greatly reduce stakeholder indifference, improve cultural (management) acceptance of the value of security services, and enhance the safety and security of a given environment. According to respondents, engaged stakeholders better appreciate the importance of safe and secure environments. This sense of well-being has the potential to add substantial value to the relationships that facility managers have with their security services partners. The 2014 research initiative was conducted with respondents involved directly with manned guarding. Sampling used B2B (and B2C) online panels, along with a variety of lists which included 60 stakeholders or customers of the clients. 486 responses to the online survey provided a margin of error of +/- 3.98%.
Insights

In a world that presents unprecedented threats to individual safety and security, buyers of security services feel underequipped to manage the potential level of actual violence; to estimate and neutralize the risks that threaten their environments; and to be able to quantify the value of security services when the consequences of a worst-case scenario are so high.

Ten considerations that influence the security and safety of your environment were identified through this research:

1. Frequency of stakeholder training
2. Common stakeholder training practices
3. Most relevant stakeholder training topics
4. Most important measures of security officer performance
5. Measurements of security program success
6. What keeps security professionals awake at night?
7. How to assess risk
8. The perception of security
9. Balancing humans with technology
10. Create a culture of safety and security

Learn more
**Frequency of stakeholder training**
A majority of respondents train internally either once or twice per year. Only 17% train more often, while 14% train much less or not at all.

**Insights**
The majority of respondents train, or attempt to train, their internal stakeholders (tenants, students, faculty and parents, doctors, nurses and medical staffs) either once or twice per year. The healthcare industry trains most frequently, followed by higher education and commercial real estate.

**Best Practices**
Stakeholder training is minimal and perception of security is low, yet a quality security program exists. In this scenario the logical best practice is to increase stakeholder training. When stakeholders are involved, prepared and informed, their understanding and perception of security will increase.

**Common stakeholder training practices**

**Insights**
These training practices stand out as most common:
- Training content is developed internally
- Training occurs at regular intervals
- Training is most typically conducted face-to-face
- Training is designed by security/safety experts
- Training is standardized across all stakeholders

**Best Practices**
To increase training, it needs to be streamlined and easy to deliver. Consider utilizing existing resources — your security provider; material available from the DHS — to expand your curriculum. Implement online training to increase retention and frequency between large in-person events.
Most relevant stakeholder training topics
Topics that security professionals feel best prepare their stakeholders for breaches of security:

1. Natural Disaster
2. Workplace Violence
3. Active Shooter

Best Practices
Address concerns by making the unknown, known. Conduct drills and simulations to better prepare stakeholders.

Insights
Large scale events are more pressing training topics than day-to-day security procedures. The unknown or less frequent scenario poses a greater concern.

Most important measures of security officer performance
This question asked: “What is important to you in measuring security officer performance?” Responses were grouped according to frequency, from Most Important to Less Important.

Most important:
• Responsiveness/reliability
• Quality of security officers
• Understanding organization’s needs and culture

Less important:
• Cost
• Brand reputation
• Integration of technology

Best Practices
Identifying a security program’s value – in addition to quality and reliability measures – and reporting those findings to stakeholders and decision makers helps to establish worth and combat negative perceptions.

Insights
While cost is often cited as a major concern, the truth is absolute cost of security officer services is in the second tier of considerations. The actual concern comes down to perceived value of services. This also points to the reality that the cost – in both time and budget – of managing a security program involves much more than security officer wages.
Measurements of security program success
Positive stakeholder feedback tops the list for measuring security program effectiveness.

Insights
This graph illustrates how dramatically stakeholder opinions and perceptions combine to dominate the overall assessment of security program value (A). As such, stakeholders play a key role in driving security management decision making.

Best Practices
Involve stakeholders in security planning, share success stories with them and request their assistance in maintaining security protocols that directly influence their safety. Stakeholder engagement needs to be a goal at all times – not just during budget season or in response to an incident.

What keeps security professionals awake at night?
A revealing statistic about our changing world: The item of greatest concern to security professionals is the presence of an active shooter.

Best Practices
Address current hot topics and recognize the importance of extended education. In addition to informing stakeholders of how to prepare for a crisis within the workplace, prepare them for how to respond to a crisis in their home or community.
How to assess risk
Data used to develop risk assessments can come from a virtually limitless variety of sources. This chart indicates the three most commonly-cited places.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Emergency response plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Plans coordinated with law enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Random security drills and inspections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Best Practices
Risk assessments need to be comprehensive, and their results acted on. In addition to a review of security measures and needs, you should also survey stakeholders and security officers to cover all vantage points.

The perception of security
The following four points specify the elements that respondents believe an effective security/safety program should include:

- Qualified security officers
- Top quality training for security officers
- Buy-in from stakeholders
- A culture of support for security and safety from management

Best Practices
1. Recognize the importance of stakeholder feedback.
2. Cultivate it and react to it. If the perception does not match the reality, more engagement is needed. If stakeholders aren’t seeing the value of security, that value needs to be better communicated.
Balancing humans with technology
Respondents ranked the relative importance of the technology tools used by security officers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security video cameras</td>
<td>74.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access control systems</td>
<td>68.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident management system</td>
<td>50.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart cards/badges</td>
<td>48.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alarm/intrusion systems</td>
<td>38.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor management systems</td>
<td>35.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Multiple responses were allowed.

Best Practices
Ensure that security officers are the right fit for the job responsibilities and that ongoing training exists to support their use of technology solutions.

Create a culture of safety and security
The overall theme of the research leads to the conclusion that better trained stakeholders—along with fully engaged management—helps to promote the perception of a safer, more secure environment.

Management and stakeholders + Education and engagement = A safer, more secure environment

Best Practices
A comprehensive approach is the best approach. Every individual on the property – regardless of job responsibility – must be engaged in maintaining a safe and secure environment. Leadership needs to set the tone and establish this expectation.

Insights
While security managers all value the use of technology as force-multipiers and for purposes of security officer tracking, they stressed that the presence of such tools not only does not eliminate the need for quality security officers, it actually demands a better, more highly trained security team.

Safety and security cannot be a program or initiative – they must be a part of the culture. Stakeholders are not bystanders – they are as much a part of upholding security policies and reporting suspicious activities as the security officers.

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