

AVOID THESE SEVEN PITFALLS OF SELECTING THE WRONG PRIVATE SECURITY GUARD COMPANY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If you are reading this white paper, then chances are you are either:

- 1.) Interested in obtaining contracted private security guard services, or
- 2.) Ensuring that you make the right decisions this time when contracting private security guard services

Either way, you are probably concerned about the potential downfalls of the private security services you are seeking to acquire. The information forthcoming will make you more aware of the risks associated with entering into a business relationship with a private security company. The goal of this white paper is to help teach you how to avoid the seven common pitfalls that can lead to unreliable and ineffective private security guard services. By taking the proper steps to avoid the following pitfalls, you increase the likelihood of experiencing efficient and dependable private security services.

Security is a blue-chip field nowadays. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), as of May 2013 there are nearly 1.1 million private security guards currently employed in the United States.¹ With so many private security guard companies available to provide services, it is important to select the right one to secure your business.

WARNING!

CONTRACTING THE WRONG PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANY IS DETRIMENTAL.

With growing security concerns, choosing the wrong security company could risk the safety of your staff, customers, visitors, property, and profits while exposing you to serious insurance liabilities, expensive lawsuits, and damage to your company's image for years. When choosing a private security company to secure your residence or organization, you want to make sure that the following seven pitfalls are controlled for.

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Number	Pitfall
1	Poor Security Analysis
2	Improper Management of Security Services
3	Inadequate Screening and Training of Security Guards
4	Underinsured
5	Lack of Compliance
6	Weak Business Continuity
7	Failure to Secure Data and Safeguard Confidential Information

PITFALL #1: POOR SECURITY ANALYSIS

WHAT IS A SECURITY ANALYSIS?

Security analysis is the systematic breakdown of security and protective services with the goal of exposing potential risks which may pose as a harmful threat to the general well-being of the organization and community.

WHAT CAUSES POOR SECURITY ANALYSIS?

Many companies, both small and large, in the private security sector focus too heavily on the desire to profit from services provided rather than to focus on the needs of the clients receiving such services. Sacrificing proper security analysis strategies and management protocols can be detrimental to the client. Poor security analysis also comes from a lack of understanding of private security.

Organizations that are relatively new to practicing private security are inexperienced and less likely to provide optimum security services for your business or residence. Additionally, local private security companies are better able to provide security services for you because the guards, supervisors, and managers will naturally have a greater overall understanding of the location.

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HOW DO I ENSURE I AM RECEIVING THE BEST SECURITY ANALYSIS?

A good security company will provide a free security consultation by an experienced security consultant, who will observe the client's business in an effort to expose potential risk factors. The security consultant will take the time to ask management questions that will enable further understanding of the way business is conducted at the facility. Based on the findings, the security consultant will make recommendations for a security plan.

TACTICAL RISK AND INCIDENT ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS

Figure 1 - Strategic Risk Assessment Process



In addition to the security plan and Post-Order, the private security company should provide you with details as to how the security firm goes about assessing risks and handling incidents. If you are considering private security services, then you understand some of the risks that threaten you; however, there are probably more risks that the private security team will be able to address through thorough security analysis by utilizing a Strategic Risk Assessment Process.

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Figure 2 - General Incident Classifications

LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	HOT!! (Active)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Icy walkways - Light bulb blew out - Jammed doors/gates - Flat tire on client car - Broken stairs/railings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Door left unlocked - Gas leak (odor) - Footprints noticed - Damaged property - Unscheduled delivery - Alarms/security cameras/scanners malfunction - Boiler overflow - Power outage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smashed in window - Kicked in/forced open door that should be closed/locked - Alarm going off - Cut-off security latches - Evidence of trespassing - Threatening protestors - Flooding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire - Natural disaster - Bomb threat - Shooting - Toxic chemical spill - Burglary - Person collapses - Larceny - Violent protestors

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Figure 3. General Incident Reporting Procedures

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officer takes pictures and/or contacts Supervisor on duty to explain details of incident 2. Supervisor contacts client (usually email) and reports details of incident 3. Supervisor opens and logs the case electronically and keeps case updated 4. Convert to hard-copy 5. Save case in files 6. Close case 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Officer takes pictures and/or contacts Supervisor on duty to explain details of incident 2. Supervisor contacts client (usually email) and reports details of incident 3. Supervisor opens and logs the case electronically and keeps case updated 4. Convert to hard-copy 5. Save case in files 6. Close case 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call appropriate Emergency Services if stated by Post-Order (Fire, Police, or EMT) 2. Officer calls the Supervisor on duty and explains details of the incident; Officer will take pictures & send to Supervisor 3. Supervisor contacts client (email and/or phone call) and reports details of incident 4. Supervisor opens and logs the case electronically and keeps case updated 5. Convert to hard-copy 6. Save case in files 7. Close case 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call appropriate Emergency Services immediately (Fire, Police, or EMT) 2. Officer then calls the Supervisor on duty and explains details of the incident; Officer will take pictures & send to Supervisor 3. Supervisor contacts client immediately (phone call) and reports details of incident 4. Supervisor opens and logs the case electronically and keeps case updated 5. Convert to hard-copy 6. Save case in files
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The private security company should generally clarify how all types of incidents of security breaches are handled, reported, and documented for the client. Incident reporting should be unique to the client’s specific needs.

POST-ORDERS

Once the security plan has been accepted and a contract is signed, then the two parties can construct a Post-Order unique to the site being protected and secured. A Post-Order is a document containing the security analysis of the client’s site requesting services. The Post-Order is constructed and organized in cooperation with both the private security company and the client. A post-order is a confidential document only viewable by the contracted organization and the private

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security guard company. The post-order is the go-to document for the private security guard who is on duty at the organization’s location requiring security services.

A post-order contains desired specifications regarding the assignments of the private security guard company such as:

- Positioning
- Patrolling
- Access control
- Monitoring all incoming and outgoing traffic
- Emergency evacuation policies and procedures
- Alarm system information
- Organization contact information
- Emergency services contact information
- Uniform specifications
- Necessary equipment
- Security camera systems
- Any scanning procedures
- Building closing information
- Reporting guidelines for incidents.

PITFALL #2: IMPROPER MANAGEMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES

WHAT ARE THE ASPECTS OF SECURITY MANAGEMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES?

Security management consists of maintaining and organizing the operations of both the security guards and the security supervisors. There are three tiers to proper management of security services.

Executive Support – Services backed by an executive management team whose primary focus is on quality assurance involved in helping to formulate strategies for your security program throughout the year.

Account Managers – Each account should be assigned a dedicated Account Manager who quickly becomes experts on your site by providing a support system ensuring that you receive the attention and responsiveness you deserve.

Security Supervisors – Qualified supervisors with specific knowledge of your security program available to solve any challenge that may arise. They perform daily patrols at each account and are involved in all hiring, training, scheduling, and supervision of your account.

WHAT CAUSES IMPROPER MANAGEMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES?

- Lack of focus on client’s security needs
- Poor communication with the client
- Poor communication with the guards
- Inadequately training
- Inexperience
- Lack of leadership

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- Subpar security intelligence
- Laziness

HOW CAN I AVOID IMPROPER MANAGEMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES?

Select a management group that has proven leadership that goes beyond industry standards. In addition, select a company with a successful combination of both an innovative administration structure and an ethical business practice. When selecting a security guard company, confirm that they are not just trying to staff a person in uniform at your organization.

Proper security goes way beyond the guard alone. It is the entire organization and training behind the guard that counts. Supervisors should frequently visit your site to ensure that security services are provided according to the security plan and post orders. The security consultant should return after a couple weeks to check and make necessary adjustment to the plan after seeking input from management, security guards, and security supervisors.

PITFALL #3: INADEQUATE SCREENING AND TRAINING OF SECURITY GUARDS

Problem	Impact
Unreliable trainers	Failure to train guards appropriately
High turnover rate	Waste of training resources

The failure to apply proper screening procedures for security guard applicants can result in careless hiring of individuals who are not suitable for the position of security guard, which could put the contracted organization at risk.

HOW CAN I AVOID INADEQUATELY SCREENED AND TRAINED SECURITY GUARDS?

The “as long as somebody is there” mentality is not an intelligent approach. Before signing the contract, your organization should ensure that the private security guard company has a successful screening program for the private security guards which they choose to hire. Just because some guards have been in the industry for years doesn't mean that they know how to provide adequate security for your business.

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Ask for the Private Security Company’s Screening Protocols – which should contain at minimum:

- Written application form
- Reference checks
- Resume analysis
- Orientation program
- Personality test
- Drug test
- In-person interview
- Background investigation

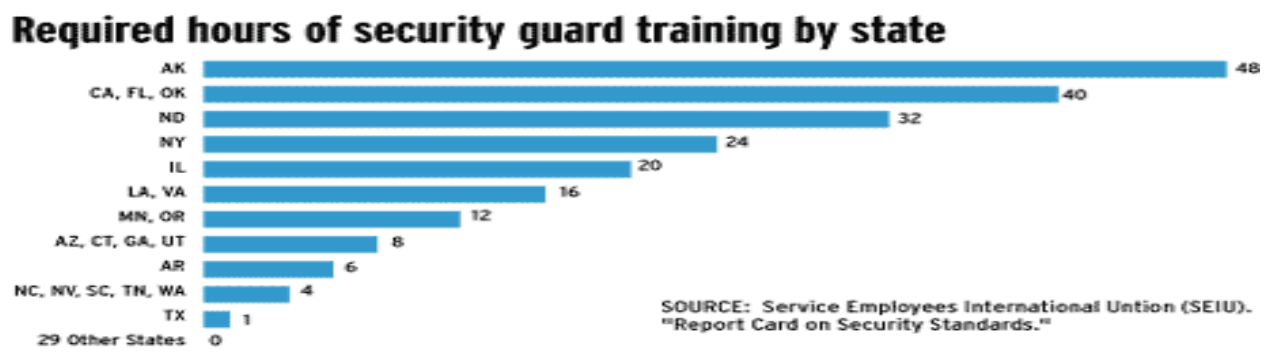
Ask for the Private Security Company’s Training Procedures – which should contain at minimum:

- **Classroom training**
 - Observation
 - Communication
 - Documentation
 - Tour Reports / Incident Reports
- **On-site training**
 - Handling Difficult People
 - Liability and Legal Aspects
 - Public Relations

CONTINUOUS TRAINING WILL TAKE PLACE BY BOTH THE SECURITY SUPERVISORS AND THE EXECUTIVE MANAGERS

On-going training is provided to all our security officers in quarterly 4 hour in-depth sessions. These trainings are required by each Security Officers to remain Nonviolent Crisis Intervention® Certified as well as “ISI Certified”.

Figure 4 - Required Hours of Security Guard Training by State



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PITFALL #4: UNDERINSURED SECURITY GUARD COMPANIES

Most people feel that as long as their vendors have “some type of coverage”, then they don’t have to pay additional detail to coverage. This is not true.

Problem	Impact
Underinsured	Increases client’s liability

HOW CAN I CHECK IF A PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANY IS PROPERLY INSURED?

Ask to see the security company’s certificate of insurance and make sure all policies are up to date and provide adequate monetary coverage. This will provide you with peace of mind if the unthinkable occurs. Finally, make sure to check the private security company’s liability levels, which should be **at least a \$5 million dollar aggregate**.

PITFALL #5: LACK OF COMPLIANCE

WHAT IS COMPLIANCE?

Compliance refers to all of the federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations that an organization is obligated to uphold. The failure of a private security company to comply can be detrimental to your business.

Problem	Impact
Failure to Comply	Unethical security services

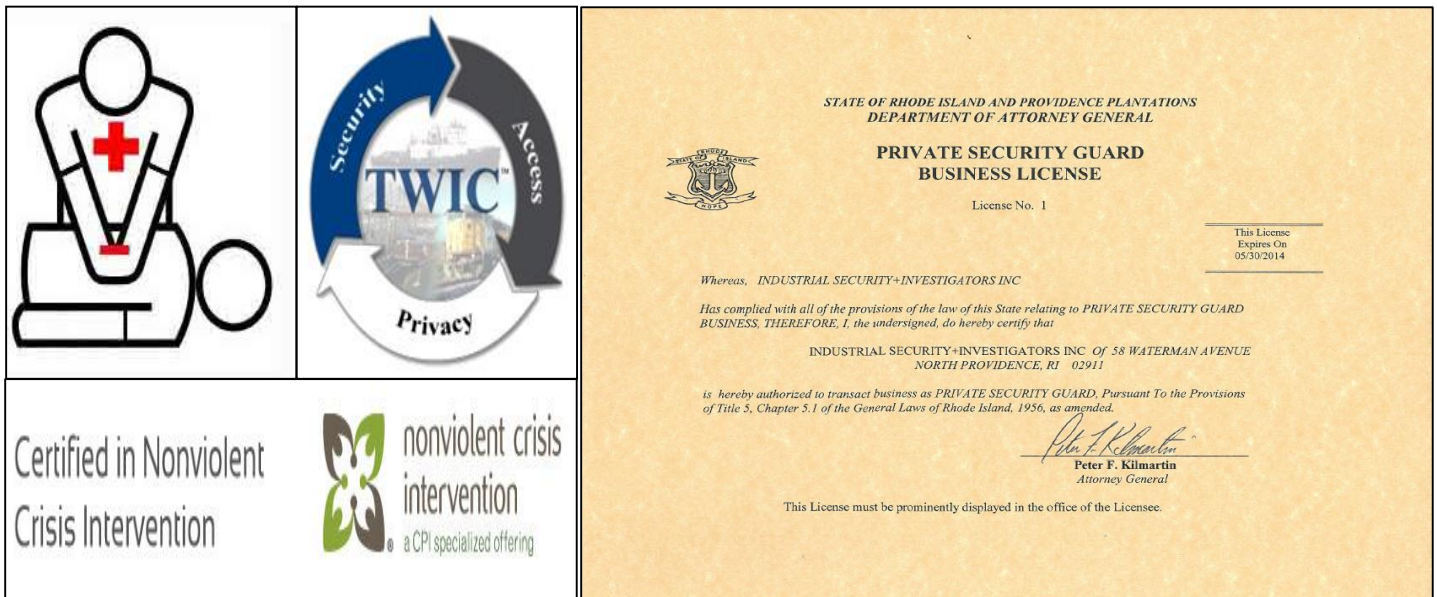
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HOW DO I CHECK TO ENSURE A PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANY IS COMPLIANT?

It's very important that the private security company you select is properly **licensed and bonded** in the state you require security, as well as being in **full compliance** with all federal, state, and local labor laws. Time and time again you see a reduced services rate to the client that is based on short cuts which places quality and future services at risk.

Figure 5 - Licenses and Certifications



PITFALL #6: WEAK BUSINESS CONTINUITY

WHAT IS BUSINESS CONTINUITY?

Business Continuity refers to those activities performed daily to maintain service, consistency, and recoverability. These actions are taken by an organization to ensure that critical business functions will be available to customers, suppliers, regulators and other entities that must have access to those functions.

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HOW DO I VERIFY A PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANY’S BUSINESS CONTINUITY?

In order to provide for an orderly recovery from an unanticipated occurrence or disaster that could disable a firm’s computer systems and/or damage or destroy the building and their contents, check and see if the security company has adopted a Disaster Recovery Plan. These plans are designed to enable your security guard company to return to normal business operations in as short a time as is possible following emergency situation keeping your services uninterrupted. Be sure to ask for a copy of their Business Continuity Plan.

PITFALL #7: FAILURE TO SECURE DATA AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Problem	Impact
Data Insecurity	Lack of trust with matters of security

Today, there is an increasing concern in both the public sector and private sector regarding the protection of proprietary data sent to vendors. Keep in mind the security guard company you select will have all your confidential information including your location, ease of access, and vulnerable security areas. Make certain the storage and protection of your sensitive data is best of breed.

Data Safeguarding

Housing clients’ confidential security information is extremely important. Therefore, implementation of an Information Security Program using strict industry standard security controls to keep your data safe is necessary. Company data security and confidentiality plans can adequately train employees in this area. Access to sensitive data is to be provided strictly on a need-to-know basis as appropriate. Before selecting a private security company, be sure they handle and safeguard your sensitive data properly.

Off-Site "Cloud" Backups

Rest easy knowing your files are encrypted and backed up safely offsite. Cloud backup assures that your data is recoverable and protected. With industry-leading encryption and security practices, cloud-based data is highly secure.

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Secure Electronic Data

A private security company is responsible for securing sensitive data. Limited sensitive data is encrypted and stored in password protected areas. A secure SSL and encryption is used for all transmission of data. Also, private security companies should only select reputable and reliable vendors that can support data security requirements.

IN CONCLUSION

Simply putting a security guard at the entrance or exit will not address the actual problem and will not prevent theft from happening again. Putting the wrong security company in charge will do more harm than good because it will provide a false sense of security. A good private security company will work professionally by conducting research and by presenting a clear plan of action. To protect your investments and personnel, choose a solid private security guard company that takes the necessary precautions to avoid the above mentioned seven pitfalls.

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