

Security and Safety of Special Events: A Perspective

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Introduction

One of concerns for planning a special event, in relation to security and safety, is what impact the visual presence of security has upon the quality experience of the event? (Bailon *et al.*, 2000; Simos, 2015) In many cases, heavy security was often chosen as a way to keep the safety of an event. However, heavy security may also have a side effect: a negative psychological impact to attendees. Consequentially, it may influence the quality of the experience. According to Boyle and Haggerty (2009), there are two distinct event types related to security and safety: spontaneous and controlled entrance events. The spontaneous events are those that can be accessed from any point of entrance and controlled events are those that can be accessed from only a few points of entrance. Moreover, there are many other methods to guard the safety other than simply place heavy security on an event. For example, the culture could be a very important element to be taken into consideration for event security approach, because the culture is a primary factor that influences the nature of security. (Whelan, 2014) This does not suggest that every approach or procedure is different based upon culture. What is being suggested is an individualized approach. Most of the principals are the same, but the culture is a filter for implementation. It must also be recognized that this is a dynamic process that is evolving. As technology has increased, so have security procedures.

Research Background

One of the often overlooked elements in event security is preparation, both short-term and long-term. Most of the information about security deals with management topics such as risk, liability, etc. (Hall *et al.*, 2012; Perter, 2002) Most of these approaches are instantaneous and do not deal with the preventative aspects. There are different preventative perspectives.

One is global and tries to work with the larger systems to reduce conflict before the event. This type of prevention is working with external influences to overcome problems before they occur. Another focus of prevention is the long-term training of the participant in how to react to different situations to protect themselves. This is primarily a function of the educational institutions and is a lifelong process. The other aspect of this is education by the event of how to react to security situations in case of emergencies during the event. (Kennedy, 2007)

Purpose

It is not the purpose of this manuscript to examine different types of security issues. So, a brief presentation will be made to bring these issue into contexts. There are many natural disasters that are outside the control of an event. The primary respondent to these types of emergencies are the UN, native governments, Red Cross, neighboring nations, etc. These can include hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, and tornadoes. Other emergencies are man-made. Some are accidents and others purposeful acts. Man-made disasters are oil spills, forest fires, etc. Purposeful acts are those that are contrived to do harm and include terrorism, crimes, etc. The focus of this manuscript is on preparation of security for individuals and events. Polkinghorne, *et al.*, (2013) and Preston (2015) pointed out that the individual and events have very little control over natural disasters or man-made accidents. This point of view could be evidenced in a global perspective: Japan has instituted a national program for preparation for natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis that is a model program. In the 1950s, the United States had a civil defense program that was in preparation for nuclear war. Countries with imminent danger such as Israel and South Korea have civil defense programs that recognize man-made events and their impact upon other nations. These programs serve as a model for man-made events. These programs are at the governmental or organizational levels. At the other end of the continuum are programs to help the individual deal with crises. There must be educational programs to help with self-reliance and emergencies. These programs must be part of the educational institutions on a long-term basis. There must also be specific programs that are developed for specific events. These educational programs are the primary focus of this manuscript.

Programs

The national and/or regional governments set the tone for creating policies regarding natural and man-made emergencies. The event is often under the direction or influence of national and/or regional governments. The amount of assistance of each of these entities directly depends upon the cultural and governmental control or influence. (Klauser, 2015; Klauser, 2008) This sets the frame by which event planners have to develop their security apparatus. At the other end of the continuum are the abilities of the individual to cope with security emergencies. Often, risk is the focus of the event planner. The focal point should be upon the event and providing an environment that is conducive to the implementing of a successful event. Beyond this concern for the development of the proper environment, is the safety and security of the participating audience. The two givens in the equation are governmental policy and the skills of the participant. It is evident that there needs to be a long-term program to educate different audience segments on the development of personal safety. The institution that provides these educational programs has to be universal and has to be effective. This is not being done in most cultures in a comprehensive way to develop life skills. In the future, to achieve effective security, educational institutions within a culture must be developing long-term safety and security programs. In the meantime, there are a diversity of participant abilities to help in the security of an event. This type of program is the primary objective on a short-term basis of event managers. (Saadat *et al.*, 2010) This is also an educational program that has to be implemented by the event. Most events have documents that individuals sign that holds them not responsible for any injury or damages during the event. The perspective should be on providing information on emergencies and how to react. This is done on cruise ships to some extent, but these programs have to be expanded to include effective emergency procedures where the individual takes the initiative. These programs in most cases are not in existence and need to be developed. There are examples where individuals have taken personal responsibility to avert disaster. One example of this was during 9/11 in the United States, where passengers on an airplane bound for Washington aggressively attacked the terrorists.

The plane ultimately crashed, but the individuals saved hundreds and maybe thousands of lives. There are many examples that provide qualitative data to suggest that individual responsibility in action helps to avert disasters. It must be reemphasized that these programs have to be within the confines of government and the participant's skill to handle different emergencies. Also connected with this approach is the issue of liability or held responsible. Many events do not have these kinds of programs because of the fear of being sued.

Because of this fear of liability these individuals carry insurance to protect themselves. The primary concern of any event manager should be the security and safety of the client. Most of the event managers, because of this liability issue do not provide any instructional information on emergencies and how to deal with them. The philosophy is adopted that the event professionals will provide the necessary leadership to avert disaster. This is not effective. The more help that the event professionals have, the more effective the response to the emergency. In many cases individuals panic and this leads to more problems.

It must be noted that the long-term education for security and safety cannot evolve into a culture that is based upon "tattle tale" reporting of one individual on another for minor offenses. (Klauser, 2015; Klauser, 2008) This type of culture can easily be developed if the government puts rewards in place. Another element that can give rise to this type of culture is fear. In the United States there is great controversy over guns or no guns. One side argues that guns are the cause of many incidents because they are not controlled. The other side argues that if individuals have guns and a violent act occurs, these individuals could have been stopped. Many issues and controversies will arise in a particular culture if individuals try to put a long-term educational program for safety and protection in place. The current problem for event managers is that this system is not in place, except in societies where government has a large input against terrorism, such as Israel. Many special event managers are bewildered about what they can do to ensure the safety and security of their event. The two models presented represent issues from the venue level and from the personal level. Some of these issues are of immediate/short-term concern, and some are more of a long-term educational approach. The primary issue on a short-term basis for special events is to fit into the framework of societal culture and implement short-term measures to ensure the safety and security of the participants. It must be noted that at the present time, there is not a perfect solution to this dilemma. Tourism entities like cruise ships and airlines can control the environment and have had safety measures in place like screening the participants and emergency instructions. Their systems have been somewhat successful and do provide a pattern for the development of safety and security for passengers.

Identification of Skills

The first step in development of short and long-term safety and security programs is to identify skills that are needed to participate in the program. It must be recognized that the skills must be segmented by age, such as shown in the following model website: (<https://www.kidpower.org/who-we-serve/young-children>). This website is a start in the identification of immediate and life long skills for security and safety. The skills contained in the website may or may not be appropriate applied into an event management, but it provides a model or format for thinking through of such skills. It must also be noted that these skills must be implemented to a society wide and there must be educational institutions that are responsible for developing such skills. The institution must standardize the educational process so that the end product is a set of standard skills for the audience identified. Another important point to the development of such a program is the continuity among the different audiences. One skill set must be built on the other. Standardization of training is essential to produce consistent results. This training must have instructors that are dedicated to the development of life skills that involve security and safety. The primary institution for these educational programs will directly depend upon the culture. These skills once developed must be reinforced by the home, as well as a society. Many individuals who seek to cause chaos often look for soft targets and a society that has effective training will never stop all attacks, but it will be minimized. The skills contained and identified in Table 1 were the core ones that the authors identified from literature. The website identified above was the starting point and the model for the issues presented in the Table. The skills identified are only an example and need to be reviewed and added to develop a comprehensive list for future research.

Training

Once the skills have been established, the next step is the development of an effective training program. The key element in this program is the establishment of effective pedagogical skills that relate to the audience where the program is directed. Content is important but the ability to relate to the audience is essential. It must be taught in such a manner that the client sees the importance of the subject matter and is meaningful. Clients must have a desire to develop lifelong skills. The basic notion that content is the most important aspect is a false assumption. The content, teaching methods, and the effectiveness of the teacher being able to relate to the audience are all of equal importance. The content must be presented in a way that is practical and has a direct relevance to the audience.

The content must be engaging and presented in an interesting but serious manner, where the client understands the ramifications of the skills and their importance to their safety and security. Different methods work with different audiences. Each audience has to be approached in an effective manner. It is essential to understand the audience and how to directly relate to them. If not approached using the appropriate methods, the audience will be turned off and the lessons learned will be lost. The third component is the instructor and the instructor's ability to relate to the audience. It is the instructors' job to mix the content and methods in such an approach to make the topic interesting and effective. Many times this is directly related to the personality of the individual. The effectiveness of the instructor is often related to their innate abilities to individualize programs based upon the needs of the individual. It is sensitivity that gives the instructor their effectiveness. The one element in training is to ensure the quality of the instruction and that the same content is being transmitted by each instructor to establish the standardized message. The training in this context is a continuous process and the instructors have to engage in continuing education with content, methods, and instructor skill.

Application

Content is very important, but if it cannot be applied if it is not effective. The content must be practiced and incorporated into the lifestyle. The content must become second nature and can be used in times of emergencies without much thought. This is the implementation phase, and this is where effectiveness is very important as an outcome. There are very few tourism agencies that have any type of practice in their emergency procedures. Cruise lines often have an emergency practice session at the beginning of a cruise. Many times this is just a requirement and is not effectively implemented. It is essential to have a mode of application as an initial element of this implementation phase. This is different than the practice in the training phase because it involves real world applications and contingencies that involve various scenarios. Some agencies use simulation. Pilot training is a good example of this type of practice for emergencies.

The other aspect of the implementation phase is leadership. Individuals, in addition to having the content and knowing what to do, must be able to react and step in and provide leadership to take over a situation. Not everyone will have a capacity for effective leadership, but in any group leaders will emerge as a result of their previous experience to organize and motivate others into action. An important part of the educational process is that all individuals must learn leadership skills, and if this is a weakness, they must work on these skills through time. Many consider leadership an innate talent, and to a certain extent this is true. These are also learned behaviors that can be worked on through time. It must also be recognized that everyone cannot be a leader in all situations. Sometimes there are too many chiefs and no Indians. An important part of these leadership skills is knowing and being able to use group dynamics to solve problems in an emergency situation. Leadership in this context is the development of a plan of action and the ability to implement this plan with a group. Often these skills are learned through teambuilding, collaboration, and cooperation. It is a very delicate balance because in most cases crisis breeds panic, and if there is not an effective plan and someone who has confidence as a leader, disaster will ensue. This may be the most important element because without effective leadership content, it's application is not effectively promoted. Leadership has to be learned from a young age through the senior years. In most instances where major disasters have been averted, there have been individuals who have assumed a leadership role and have propagated effective action to combat emergencies. This story can be seen over and over again in cases where major disasters have been averted because an individual or a group of individual's actions. Many times these individuals are called heroes, but in essence when you look at the basis of their behavior it is effective leadership and a desire to help other individuals.

Special Event Venues

It must be noted, all of the statements have been primarily focused upon the development of safety and security programs that are long-term. Most event managers are not in the position to have individuals who are the product of long-term programs. Many times those who have had training are from the military, police, fire, etc. They are individuals who have received extensive training in their professions and know how to handle emergencies. An event manager in most cases has to devise their own program to educate the public on how to react in case of emergencies, to maintain security and safety.

(Pantera, *et al.*, 2003) It must also be noted that the cycle for a short-term event manager is the same as for a long-term manager. There are skills that are essential to the venue, there are training programs, and there are implementation procedures. The event manager has to simplify the cycle to one or two important skills.

(Hall, 2006) The training has to be extremely simple to help the participant be able to participate in safety and security. The implementation skills are not directly related to the participant, but to volunteers or professionals that event managers hire that can serve as leaders. It is essential that this cycle be completed not a lifetime, but in a visit. The more visits a participant has, the easier it may be if it is emphasized, or the more difficult it may be because it is the same old information again. The venue manager has to make it motivational and has to package the information so that it is new each event cycle. The material has to be in hard format as this is the permanent record. This can be supplemented with video and other media. The skills and the training must be compressed and repeated several times to make an impression upon the participant.

Conclusion

In summary, it is important to recognize that there are cultural differences in the implementation of safety and security programs. The long-term program is a responsibility of the government or societal organizations and has to be segmented by audience. The short-term program is the direct responsibility of the event manager because there are not any effective societal safety and security programs at this time. It is the same cycle as the long-term program, but it has to be shortened, made effective, and boiled down to its base framework. The focus of a long-term program is participant responsibility, but the focus of the short-term program is often a task for the event managers, volunteers, and employees.

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Table 1**Skills****Young children's skills regarding safety and security**

In order to promote a safe and secure environment, young children:

- Need to have an intense awareness and understanding that events are potentially dangerous places.
- Know where the danger may come from, how to avoid dangerous situations, and how to react when danger occurs.
- Learn to stay with adults and other children and away from unfamiliar people and objects.
- Need to know where to find adults immediately when danger occurs.
- Know how to refuse enticements, such as candy, and false statements about parents giving permission to go places.
- Learn how to make adults aware of any situations that are unfamiliar, especially in regard to touching or bullying.

Parents

Parents must:

- Instruct young children in all the skills that are needed, this should be supported by an educational program by community institutions.
- Establish relationships with the child before going to an event and explaining the rules of event participation.
- Impress upon the children that they are the authority; no one can give them permission except parents to deviate from any of the rules.
- Not leave the children unattended for any reason.

Events

Event organizers should:

- Have special areas for children and families and have special supervision for these areas.
- Offer special activities for children to keep them entertained.
- Create a positive environment for children to understand and enjoy the event.
- Reduce excess irritations such as noise, weather, temperature, etc.
- Ensure that there is no alcohol in the immediate vicinity of children.
- If possible, organizers should provide a wristband for both parents and children so that the identification process is easy. Electronic chips can be incorporated in the wristband to monitor location of both parents and children.

Older children's skills regarding safety and security

A more developed set of skills should be implemented for older children.

Older children should:

- Develop self-confidence for positive action.
- Should begin to develop leadership skills.
- Learn how to take controlled risk.
- Know how to protect them from physical and psychological abuse.
- Learn how to engage adults outside the family to solicit help.
- Develop social skills.

Parents

Parents must:

- Develop a relationship with the children so they know that they are safe and secure in their presence and be able to share any safety and security issues.
- Begin to allow the children to become involved in activities of controlled risk and encourage them to develop appropriate procedures to ensure their safety.
- Use light supervision, giving the child enough confidence to engage the external environment.

Events

Event organizers should:

- Secure background checks for any employees interfacing with children and parents.
- Make sure that children are supervised closely by staff. The children should be introduced to the staff so they can develop a high degree of confidence in them.
- Involve children in activities that will lead to the development of an interest in events.
- Provide T-shirts for children so they can be easily recognized. If possible, an electronic chip can also be put in the shirts to monitor location of both parents and children.
- Develop safety stations so that children know where to go in case of emergencies.

Teen's skills regarding safety and security

An advanced set of skills for teens should include:

Teens should:

- Develop strong self-confidence so that they can react quickly in an emergency situation.
- Acquire strong leadership skills to motivate others to follow them and their instructions.
- Possess the capacity to recognize dangerous situations, how to avoid them, and how to react when danger occurs.
- Develop physical self-defense skills.
- Develop strong moral ethics.
- Possess strong emotional intelligence to learn how to defuse situations.
- Know how to solicit help from other teens and adults.
- Know how to refuse enticements that may lead to illegal activities such as drugs and alcohol.

Parents

Parents must:

- Develop a strong relational bond with their teens.
- Develop a strong family presence as an atmosphere of support.
- Immediately be available when teens need help.
- Realize the role of bad peer influences and how to counteract it.
- Let teens have autonomy to allow them to develop a strong sense of independence.

Events

Event organizers should:

- Provide activities that are appropriate for the age so as to further develop interest in the event.
- Should provide opportunities for the teens to work with children and younger children in some capacity, especially as it relates to event activities.
- Support volunteer opportunities for teens to become directly involved in the event.
- Ensure event safety training for teens as part of their volunteer opportunity.
- Selectively screen teens and do background checks to ensure their intentions in regard to contact with younger children and children.
- Develop a continued training program that involves entertainment to connect with the teens year-round. For example, this connection may be some type of video or computer game.

Adult skills regarding safety and security

Adults also need to acquire advanced skills:

Adults need:

- To have developed mature confidence in themselves.
- To have developed mature leadership skills that can be used in a variety of situations.
- To possess skills to work with a diversity of populations to solve problems.
- An ability to work with a team or other individuals to solve problems.
- Develop strong physical defense skills.

- Strong emotional intelligence to learn how to defuse situations.
- Control/limit their alcohol consumption.
- To park in a safe designated area.

Events

Organizers must take initiative on safety issues.

Organizers should:

- Provide a secure environment for the event. This includes a well educated staff of security officers that can handle a diversity of emergency situations.
- Have background checks for all security and support staff.
- Provide a physical presence in regard to security officers. This presence should not be enough to limit the enjoyment of the participant at the event.
- Have developed an effective first aid station with doctors and nurses who are trained in emergency medicine.
- Do their best to eliminate dangerous situations and have a contingency plan if an emergency occurs.
- Provide effective modes of transportation to get injured victims to medical care.
- Have an evacuation plan for the events in place in case of emergencies.
- Have effective crowd control procedures.
- Inform participants of emergency procedures.
- Supervise alcohol consumption, especially through vendors.
- Provide effective flow of traffic from parking areas.

Senior skills regarding safety and security

In addition, senior citizens should practice good safety measures.

Seniors need to:

- Develop a sense of confidence, especially in an unfamiliar environment.
- Establish relationships with people around them to allow any problems to be solved by the group.
- Know how to avoid being a victim.
- Know how to get immediate help when danger occurs.
- Have emergency medicine with them.
- Develop emotional intelligence skills to protect themselves.
- Learn simple physical defense mechanisms.
- Park in a safe designated area.

Event

Organizers should:

- Provide special assistance for seniors, especially in regard to recognized health issues.
- Ensure easy access for seniors.
- Provide special security where seniors are concentrated.
- Provide Water, Cooling Stations, Etc. to ensure no medical conditions occur because of the event environment.
- Encourage seniors to develop interest among younger populations in the event from a historical perspective.
- Recognize seniors who have been a supporter of the event in the past.