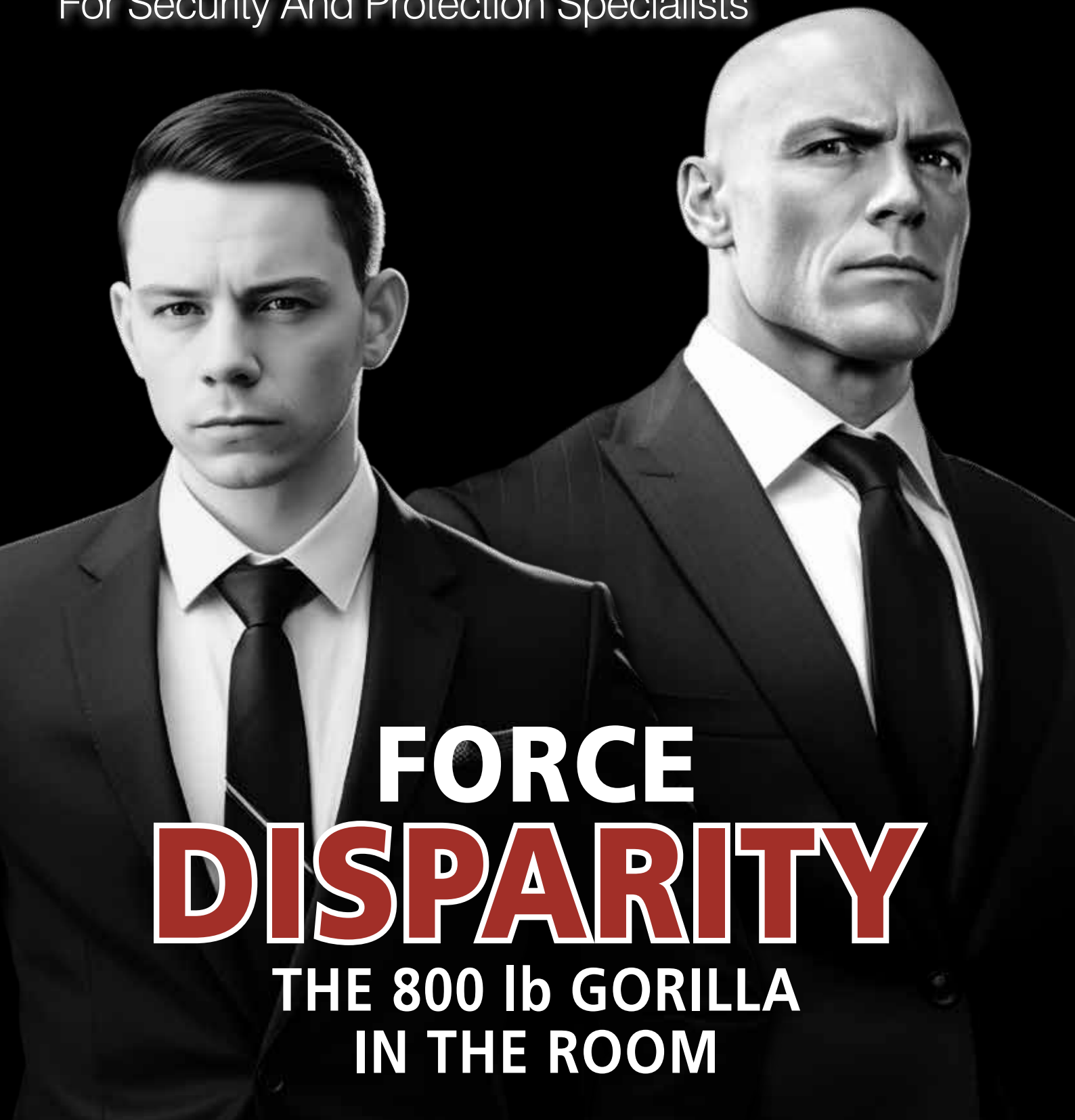


The Circuit

ISSUE
65

For Security And Protection Specialists



FORCE **DISPARITY**

THE 800 lb GORILLA
IN THE ROOM

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By Frank Cannon

CREATING A PROTECTIVE ENTOURAGE

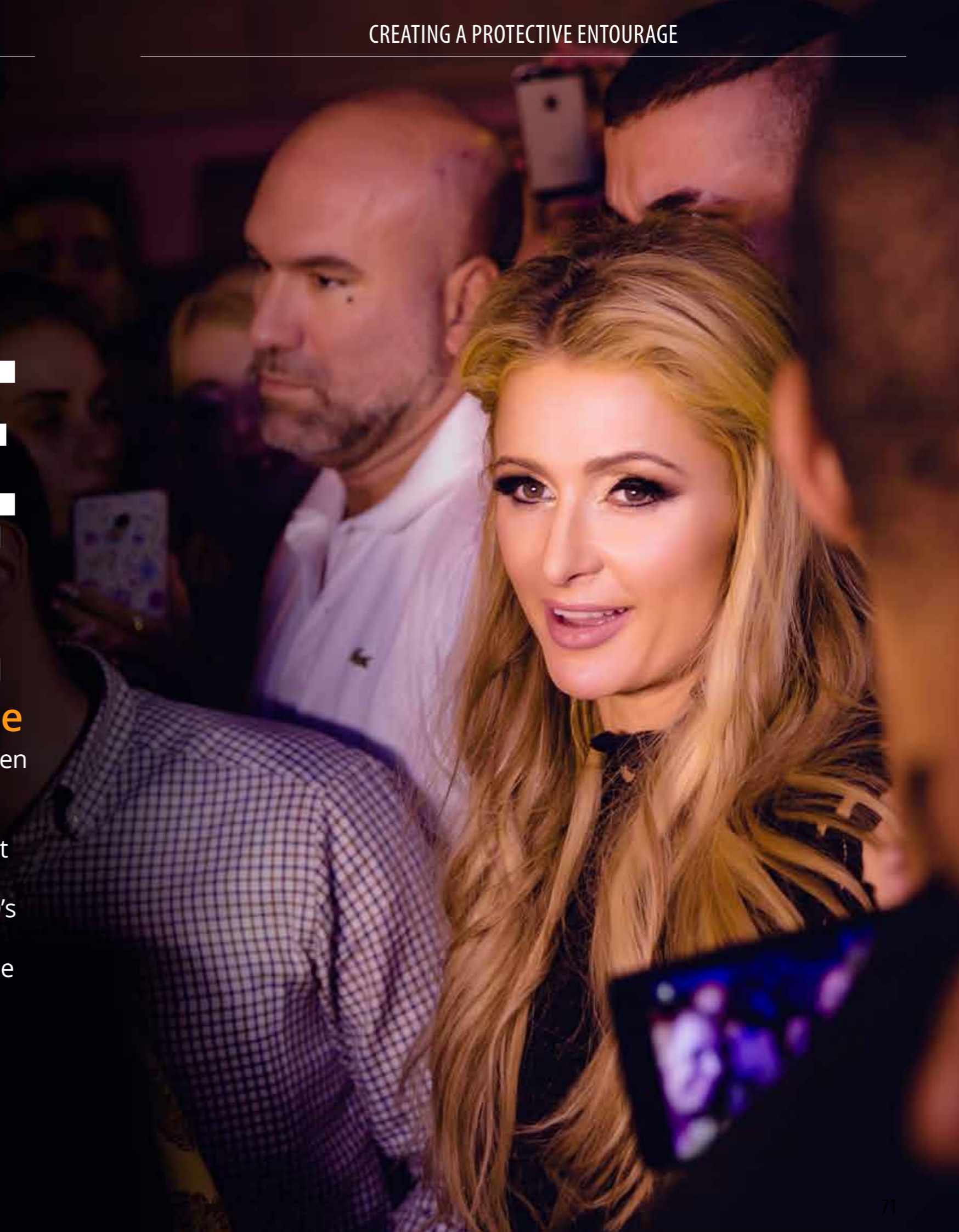
Surround Yourself with Educated People

Most people who employ the services of an Executive Protection Operative (EPOs) also surround themselves with support staff, employees, or business acquaintances. Many of them will live with their family, or loved ones, and enjoy the company of a wide friendship group. Wouldn't it be great if those that orbit the Principal—or protected person—worked with the EPO to create and maintain a safe and secure environment? If

everyone behaves properly when in the Principal's vicinity, they can help reduce the likelihood of an adversarial attack and, if it were to occur, they could react appropriately, support the EPO's response, and possibly learn how to report suspicious people or conditions to the EPO at the earliest opportunity.

Well, they can!

If they are engaged at the right time, have their 'protective- ➤



role' explained in a way they understand, are provided with impactful educational opportunities, and sufficiently influenced to behave in a way that helps protect the at-risk person[s]. I would advocate that this is down to the EPO to orchestrate; this is a way of expanding the EPO's ability to deliver their protective services without employing a small army of protectors. I would like to share how I have created behavioural-based security (BBS) programmes during my forty-year career protecting people, property, information, and my employer's reputation.

I have created a seven-stage process to establish a Protective Entourage and by sharing this methodology it might help others do the same. The success of this behavioural-based security programme will depend on numerous factors not least of which will be the Principal's overt support, the willingness of the target audience to participate, and the skill of the EPO to communicate in an empathetic and impactful way.

Stage 1.

Identify Repeat Activities: what does the Principal do each day? There is a need for the EPO to understand the Principal's daily routine, their way of life, their hobbies, and how they spend their time at work, at home, and when socialising. Example activities could be living at home, travelling to work, attending the workplace, using a computer or internet connected digital memory device, using social media, playing golf, attending the gym, walking the dog, etc. etc.

It's also beneficial to know the Principal's personal values and the qualities that they like to see in those they surround themselves with.

Now the EPO needs to list those people who are involved with each activity and sort them into 'stakeholder groups', i.e., direct support staff, close and extended family members, employees, travel companions, or social acquaintances. Then it is necessary to establish if there are any laws, social customs, or other idiosyncrasies that the Principal prefers when conducting these activities? The EPO would not

want to encourage a stakeholder behaviour that serves to frustrate the Principal.

Stage 2.

Re-Occurring Non-Compliance: what do members of the entourage do wrong each day? The EPO should think about how people behave when they are around the Principal, are they making it harder to protect the boss? Does their behaviour frustrate the EPO or increase the adversarial risk? The EPO should think about if they could change how people behave, what would they change? Does the entourage

member know that this behaviour frustrates the EPO or are they ignorant to the fact that they make the EPO's job harder? Have they previously been asked to behave in a certain way but slipped into old habits, have they become complacent, or do they intentionally do something knowing that it places their boss in harm's way?

Both ignorance and complacency can be reduced through education and timely reminders. Acting with malice requires a completely different approach but if other members of the



entourage detect malicious behaviours, they can be taught how to bring this to the EPO's attention as soon as possible. Therefore, an impactful BBS programme helps reduce the impact of ignorant, complacent, and malicious behaviours across the Principal's entourage, helps create a healthy security culture, and serves to create a Protective Entourage that improves the layered security programme.

Stage 3.

Review Adversarial Risk

Register: identify behaviours that increase known risks. The next step is to review the adversarial risk register to identify risks that could be reduced if members of the entourage behave in a desirable way. An example would be, if a family member needed to adapt how they use their social media and refrained from posting about the Principal's schedule or future travel plans. Remember, the risks are ranked by the likelihood and consequence of a successful attack by a motivated and capable adversary, so if the behaviour of someone in the entourage increases the



If the behaviour of someone in the entourage increases the likelihood or consequence of an attack then it needs to be addressed.

likelihood or consequence of an attack then it needs to be addressed.

The discussions about the desired behaviour during or immediately after a successful attack are particularly delicate and should only be held with those that can influence a successful defence or help improve the situation after the attack is over. Examples of how the entourage can help may include administering lifesaving first aid, know how to call for help, where to go if separated, and what to do if the EPO is injured. When members of the entourage adopt informed behaviours, maximise their emergency response training, and make high quality decisions in the face of danger, they can significantly improve the EPO's ability to protect their Principal before, during, and after an attack.

Stage 4.

Identify Desired Behaviours:

how should the entourage behave? It's important to know what would make the EPO's role easier if the entourage behaved differently and recognise the behaviours that need to change. An example of a behavioural

change would be for everyone to understand the need to leave one of the vehicle doors open until the Principal has safely entered the building, thus retaining two escape options — one into the building and the other back into the vehicle. Those leaving the vehicle and the driver would need to understand why and act accordingly. Consideration should be given to establish some rules to curb 'at-risk' behaviours for each activity such as optimising the smartphone settings to prevent unwanted people tracking or malicious remote access. Having previously identified the repeat activities at Stage 1, it is now time to list the behaviours that would help reduce the likelihood or impact of an attack during each activity. This would produce a matrix of behaviours that could be arranged by activity or stakeholder group.

Stage 5.

Campaign Development: the path to excellence. This is the most complex stage that requires careful consideration. Using the behaviours matrix mentioned above, it's now time to create a strategic approach for each >

activity by sketching out what good looks like. The EPO should document how they would like members of the entourage to behave during each of the routine activities, how they should identify and report suspicious or unusual behaviour, how they should react if a risk were to occur (i.e., if someone attacked the Principal), and how to respond or help once the attack is over — especially if the EPO sustained an injury or was killed. It is possible for the EPO to group

behaviours by the stakeholder groups or by the activity and then create an awareness campaign for the chosen delivery method. For example, if the EPO decided to speak to the family together, they might discuss a whole raft of behaviours that transcend numerous activities, i.e., living at home and walking the dog; departing and arriving at places in the family vehicles; attending social events such as football matches or music concerts; or even going on family holidays.



Alternatively, the EPO might gather all those involved in a planned activity and cover a narrow selection of behaviours specific to that activity, i.e., speaking to the house staff about the requirement for when the Principal hosts members of the local community at their country estate for an afternoon fête and evening open-air concert.

The EPO should select half a dozen behaviours for each activity whilst remembering to keep them strategic, simple, and achievable. Different members of the entourage might need to behave differently; you wouldn't expect a child to respond the same way as an executive assistant, chef, or golf partner. By collating the behaviours by the activity or each stakeholder group, it is possible to create a mini-training plan or educational syllabus. Collectively, these training plans or educational syllabuses should be considered as an EP behavioural-based security (BBS) awareness programme that can be delivered at an appropriate time. For example, when inducting a new person into the entourage, just prior to an at-risk activity,

following an increase in the adversarial risk, or periodically to avoid complacency.

The EPO should run their BBS delivery approach past the Principal before they start to chat to their family members, support team, employees, or friends. The EPO's best intentions might unsettle the team, or alarm stakeholders, which cause them to complain to the Principal. If it is necessary to train or educate the house staff, office employees, or the 'inner-circle', then this might require overtime or incur additional cost that will require prior approval. An example of basic behavioural training would be to ask all domestic support staff, office front-of-house receptionists, or in-house security staff to complete the online Action Counters Terrorism (ACT) training. Another typical approach is to ask one or more of the house staff to attend an enhanced first aid course or send the driver on a defensive driving course.

More simple behavioural changes could be to ask an executive assistant to walk on the left side of the Principal, encourage

members of the entourage not to occupy the front passenger seat of the Principal's vehicles, advice the use of a briefcase when carrying sensitive documents, insist on a policy to prohibit the use of recreational drugs or excessive alcohol consumption when accompanying the Principal, or refrain from gossiping about the Principal's private or professional life.

6. Communicate to Stakeholders:

Tell the story. Now the EPO has the training and educational material ready to go, they must find the right time, nuanced approach, and suitable tone to influence their stakeholders. This requires tact, especially when speaking with members of the immediate family, loyal advisers, close friends, or longstanding members of the trusted domestic staff. The messages must be relevant, important, and personal to the person being spoken to and delivered in a manner that is understood by the recipient. The EPO should seek the support of close allies and influencers within the entourage to help convince the sceptics or mavericks within the group to

accept their guidance and advice — cultivate security champions to help influence others. A mother, father, or elder sibling might better communicate with a young child or a moody teenager, and it is good practice not to make an unauthorised approach to a minor without prior parental consent. It's important to tell people why they should behave in a certain way and not just how to behave; it's crucial that they 'buy-in' to the protective security culture and understand the collective benefit of them changing their behaviour.

It may be necessary to find different communication methods to convey the same message to different people, such as using face-to-face conversations, using simple graphics or pictures, whilst always trying to use situations, locations, or examples relevant to the activity during which you want them to adopt a desired behaviour. Avoid using protective or technical jargon and —when speaking about how they should react during, or respond after, and attack— be honest, use tact, but avoid alarming anyone to the point that they become fearful



It's important to tell people why they should behave in a certain way and not just how to behave.

and detract from them being able to complete or enjoy the activity. This is a careful balance and best achieved once the EPO has a relationship with, and consent from, the Principal or their trusted advisers. The EPO does not want to be tagged as an alarmist nor talk themselves out of a job. The adversarial risk will dictate the level in which the EPO needs to discuss the post-attack behaviours.

It is good practice for the EPO to document what they advised, to whom, and when, as this will help schedule periodic reminders and help the EPO communicate the latest information or adapted behaviours when they become aware of new threat actors or different attack methodologies – i.e., when the adversarial risk level changes. This is particularly relevant to the cyber world where the method of attack changes at a rapid rate.

7. Measure Impact of your Engagements:

Have you got it right? It is difficult to predict how people will react during and after a conversation with the EPO, therefore, it is important to check back in with ➤

them after a couple of days or the next time the EPO sees them. This is best done in a casual way, but it is vital for the EPO to note the responses to help adapt future approaches. During the initial engagement, people will smile, nod, and maybe overtly confirm that they understand what the EPO is asking them to do, but, after they have time to reflect, they might become anxious, confused, or even frightened. The best measure of success is that the behaviours change in a positive way, but the EPO needs to continually review these behaviours to avoid complacency creeping in across the entourage. These behavioural assurance checks may also help the EPO from becoming complacent themselves when performing routine journeys or activities in lower risk environments. Having reviewed their previous briefing notes to a stakeholder group for an activity, they can schedule an 'on-the-job' assurance check to monitor the behaviours of those involved the next time this specific activity is performed. For example, prior to the family setting off from their town house to walk the dog across the local public park, the EPO would revise



the previous advice they have given for this activity. Then, during the walk, they would confirm that the appropriate behaviours were being followed. This is an effective way for the EPO to assure the efficacy of their advice

and confirm that it remains risk-proportionate.

When the EPO observes that people have changed their behaviours it is always good to say thank you and let them

know that they have noticed the change. Giving praise, and the sense of helping others, always helps build trusting relationships. The EPO may need to use this unquestioning trust later! ➤

In summary, if the Executive Protection Officer wants to increase the value they add to the safety and security of those they protect, they should consider developing a behavioural-based security programme to harness the protective qualities of those that routinely interact with their Principal. Through targeted education, selective skills development, and subtle influencing, how the entourage behaves can exponentially increase the protective envelope around the at-risk person far beyond that which any one person can deliver.

This is not a day-1 activity. This is a strategic process that takes time to plan, approval to deliver, and requires a foundation of

trust, built through empathetic relationships. The Principal wants to enjoy their life and the EPO wants to protect them whilst they do. Therefore, the protective approach must always remain proportionate, discrete, and free from unnecessary constraints. Informed behaviours by those closest to the Principal are always less intrusive than heavily armed bodyguards, 12-foot-high walls, multiple surveillance cameras, or expensive armoured cars. Each of these protective-security layers have their place, but the EPO should not discount the discretionary value that educating and training those people that regularly interact with their Principal has on the EPO's ability to discharge their protective duties.

A Chartered Security Professional with 37 years' experience in the British Army and corporate security, Frank excels as a proactive leader in diverse environments. Skilled in communication and fostering cohesive teams, he holds certifications in various security disciplines including physical, information, personnel, critical national infrastructure protection, and more. Frank specialises in creating security cultures and offering board-level advice to reduce risk, enhance performance, and save costs.

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