# Training to Meet Guidelines vs. Training to Exceed Expectations

Training is an essential part of any security program. From the management level to your officers, your security team should be well-equipped with the training basics and opportunities for continuous security education. When an incident happens at your location, be it small or large, how certain are you that your security officers will respond appropriately?

The way your team responds, and the security services you receive are reflective of the quality of training your officers are provided. In most states, little or no training is required before being hired as a security officer, leaving the bulk of training standards to be determined by the security services provider.

How do you know if your security program is meeting, and more importantly exceeding, what is required to properly prepare your officers? Security officer training is not something to be taken lightly and is ever-evolving. These individuals are the first line of defense for your site and are a representation of your organization. Having a well-trained security staff will define the role of your security officers and help guide your program.

Each security services company has minimum training standards, and the amount of training that security officers are required to receive varies from state to state. Aligning yourself with a security provider that is compliant with the regulations for each state is essential and it can decrease your administrative duties. Your service provider can take on the task of tracking all compliance, training and licensing for each officer.

It is more than just the classroom basics when it comes to security officer training. Consider your facility. It is different than any other facility in your industry, and as such, your security team should be specifically trained to handle the needs of your site, not just one similar to it. Site-specific and industry training can be a differentiator when an incident occurs. Your security team should be trained on-site and work closely with local emergency response teams and law enforcement. If this is not currently part of your training process, consider making a change. Incidents will decrease and response will improve when you implement site-specific training. Well-trained and experienced managers can lead the way and are an instrumental part of training your security officers.

Continual and refresher training for your security staff is also imperative. As state and industry standards change, your team needs to be compliant. And as your business grows and changes, so will the needs of your security program. Officers should be knowledgeable about your site and prepared to participate in revised on-the-job training at any time. Additionally, your security provider should offer multiple training methods and outlets to your officers. It is important to recognize that individuals learn and retain information differently, and training courses should be available in various platforms. Allowing officers to learn hands-on, online and in person will move any security program to the next level.

Annual recertification, licensing and training should become a best practice and standard at your facility. By aligning with a security services provider who makes annual refresher courses part of their quality standards will help increase the safety and security at your site. You will see results. Take time to evaluate your current security program. If your staff hasn't recently received refresher training, or if our incident reports are becoming too frequent, it may be time for a change. A security presence is not effective without proper and ongoing preparation, purpose and goals.