

The Circuit

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For Security And Protection Specialists

MANNERS & ETIQUETTE

For a Post-Covid World

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By Orlando Wilson

PROTECTIVE TACTICS FOR ATTENDING HIGH-RISK MEETINGS

Arranging and attending high-risk meetings is an easy way to set someone up for kidnapping, assassination, sexual assault or robbery.

Because of this, meetings in high-risk situations can be extremely dangerous and should always be treated with caution whether you are attending for personal business reasons or with a client.

First, high-risk meetings should be kept as secret as possible and planned well in advance. When under a high-level threat, you want to exchange the maximum amount of information with those you are meeting within the shortest possible time.

Second, you will need to select a suitable meeting location, be it a coffee shop or a hotel suite. This

will depend on how many people you'll be meeting with, what's to be discussed, and the threat level. It would help if you always had a reason and cover story for being in that area in case the meeting is compromised.

Next, make sure that everyone involved in the meeting has a covert way of alerting the others that they have been followed or are under active surveillance. You can do this by using codes or signs en-route to the meeting location or quickly posted comments on online chat boards or social media sites. This way, if one person is compromised, they should not



compromise or endanger the rest of the participants. Cell phones should not be used or taken to sensitive meetings as they can be tracked and used as listening devices. They should also not be used to warn others that you are under surveillance. Calls and text messages would lead straight to those you were meeting with. You should designate a low-tech

method, such as drinking soda instead of coffee or putting the "Do Not Disturb" sign on the hotel suite door, which could signal the others that things have gone bad.

Whenever you meet people for the first time, you should always use pre-arranged signs and countersigns to confirm their identity. The simplest thing is a ►

pre-arranged question and answer. This works better than checking ID cards as the person you're meeting with might be the right person, but you may only know them by a pseudonym. In a basic context, you want to make sure that the limo driver meeting you at the airport is your real driver and will take you to your hotel, not into months of captivity or to a garbage dump!

Considerations for Attending Meetings

- Do you know in detail the meeting location? If not, then check it or get someone trusted to check it.
- Things to take into consideration include the facilities (bathrooms, cafés, taxis, payphones, etc.), potential surveillance positions, location of surveillance cameras, escape routes.
- Will it be daylight or dark?
- What is the condition of pedestrian and vehicle traffic, what are people wearing, age and type of people in the area?
- Make plans and procedures for all possible emergencies identified in your threat assessment.
- Consider where along your route to the meeting location you would put surveillance personnel to watch you if you were the opposition and identify where on your approach to the meeting location you would be channeled.
- How will you get to the meeting location: walking, using public transport or driving?
- If driving, where will you park your car, will it be secure or hidden, how long would it take you to get back to it in an emergency and what are you going to do if it's compromised?
- What will you wear for the meeting and will you need a change of clothes; remember it's always easier to dress down than up. You can always take off a sports coat and shirt and put them in a plastic bag.
- Will you be carrying any weapons and is there any risk of being searched?
- Always be aware of what's going on in the environment around you; watch for warning signs posted by the those you're meeting with that could indicate they have been compromised, any unusual activity, people waiting in cars or vans with blacked out windows, fit young men with short hair hanging around for no reason, read the body language of those waiting in possible surveillance positions, etc.
- When you reach the meeting location, sweep the area for anything suspicious, you might not be under surveillance but

“ Make plans and procedures for all possible emergencies identified in your threat assessment.

- the person you're meeting with could be.
- If you can, select a good position at the meeting location from where you can view as many entrances as possible, be close to escape routes and view what's going on the street outside without being in clear view from outside.
- Locate those you are meeting with and exchange passwords, consider walking them to another location to identify if they are under surveillance.
- If you are going to eat and drink, consider the method of payment; credit cards leave a paper trail.
- Also, do not leave your food or drink unattended or let anyone fetch you a drink from the bar, etc. as this is an opportunity to drug it.
- Under a high threat make sure you do not leave anything behind from which fingerprints or DNA samples could be taken.
- During the meeting constantly watch for physical, video and audio surveillance, if you have the manpower get a trusted associate to do this for you and to watch your back.
- Keep the meeting as short as possible and when it's over, leave the area as quickly as possible and conduct several counter-surveillance drills, consider changing your appearance if necessary.
- If further meetings are required, they would have to be varied for different times of day and days of the week.

Orlando Wilson has worked in the security industry internationally for over 25 years. He has become accustomed to the types of complications that can occur, when dealing with international law enforcement agencies, organized criminal and Mafia groups. He is the chief consultant for Risks Inc. and based in Miami but spends much of his time traveling and providing a wide range of kidnapping prevention and tactical training services to private and government clients.