

## SECTION 2: SAFETY ON THE JOB

# FIGHT OR FLIGHT? ESCAPE IS THE BEST SELF-DEFENSE

- Yell "fire" to get attention.
- Run and call 9-1-1 when you can.
- Take a self-defense training course/class.
- If you strike, mean it.

When faced with danger, trust yourself and stay as calm as possible. Think rationally and evaluate your options. There is no one right way to respond to a confrontation, because each is different. The response depends on the circumstances: location of the attack, your personal resources, the characteristics of the assailant and the presence of weapons.

There are many strategies that are effective, but you must rely on your own judgment to choose the best one:

**No resistance** - Not resisting may be the proper choice in a situation. An attacker with a gun or a knife may put you in a situation where you think it is safer to do what he/she says. If someone tries to rob you —give up your property; don't give up your life.

**Stalling for time** - Appear to go along with the attacker. This may give you time to assess the situation. When his/her guard is down, try to escape.

**Distraction and then flight** - Obviously you should try to get away—but whether you can get away depends on your shoes, your clothing, your physical stamina, the terrain and how close your predator is.

**Verbal assertiveness** - If someone is coming toward you, hold out your hands in front of you and yell, "Stop" or "Stay Back!" When interviewed, rapists said they'd leave a woman alone if she yelled or showed that she was not afraid to fight back.

**Physical resistance** - If you decide to respond physically, remember that your first priority is to get away. Act quickly and decisively to throw the attacker off guard while you escape.

Make a conscious effort to get an accurate description of your attacker(s). Even the smallest details may give authorities a clue to finding the suspect. Janee Harteau and Holly Keegel, the authors of "A Woman's Guide to Personal Safety" say that you should tell authorities everything that occurred and what was said during the incident, including the things that may seem unimportant.

*(Sources: Washington Real Estate Safety Council; A Woman's Guide to Personal Safety)*

## SECTION 2 HANDOUT

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