

Preventing Office Creepers

Many people who wouldn't dream of leaving their computer or phone sitting in their unlocked car think nothing of leaving those items in an unattended cubicle at work. If you think your belongings are safe in your office, think again... technological advances have bred a whole new generation of criminals called "office creepers."

These individuals are dressed like your coworkers or building service personnel and rely on the anonymity of busy office buildings to cover them during their crime. However, you CAN prevent an "office creeper" from becoming successful if you use the following tips as a guide:

Recognizing an Officer Creeper

- Try to become familiar with most of the coworkers in your immediate area. That way, you can easily identify an individual who may be out of place.
- If you see someone wandering the halls or casually roaming about, ask if you can help her/him. Ask questions like, "May I help you find someone?"
- If your building has an access control policy where visitors must wear a badge, you should notify security immediately if someone is walking around without proper identification.
- If you believe an individual seems suspicious, notify security. Be sure to note details about the person's appearance so that you can thoroughly describe her/him.

Tips To Protect Your Office

- Never share keys or access codes with ANYONE.
- Likewise, don't leave your office keys unattended.
- Keep personal keys and office keys on separate rings.
- Don't "hide" your wallets or purses in unlocked cabinet drawers or under your desk. This is the first place an "office creeper" may look!
- Position coat racks and hangers away from doorways so that a thief can't easily snatch items from the outside.
- When leaving your office, make sure to lock the door and mute the telephone ringer. An unanswered phone is a clue to a thief that your office is empty.
- Talk to management about purchasing a security cable for your laptop. This is an inexpensive locking device that secures your computer to the desk so it can't be removed.
- Keep an accurate inventory of all office equipment, furniture and devices in a locked, fireproof cabinet or in another location completely (like home).
- Clearly mark all of your personal electronics, like PDAs and cell phones with identification. You can use non-removable tags or an inexpensive engraving pen.



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