

# Employee Vigilance through the Power of Hello

*Alert employees can spot suspicious activity and report it*



Used effectively, the right words can be a powerful tool. Simply saying “Hello” can prompt a casual conversation with unknown individuals and help you determine why they are there. **The OHNO approach – Observe, Initiate a Hello, Navigate the Risk, and Obtain Help** – helps employees observe and evaluate suspicious behaviors, empowers them to mitigate potential risk, and obtain help when necessary.

The **OHNO** approach to risk prevention relies on reasonable persons to make these observations to properly detect and report terrorism/criminal-related suspicious behavior.



**For additional Power of Hello resources** please visit [cisa.gov/employee-vigilance-power-hello](https://cisa.gov/employee-vigilance-power-hello).

DHS’ “If You See Something, Say Something®” campaign provides additional information on how to recognize and report the indicators of terrorism-related suspicious activity.

# 1 OBSERVE



## Stay vigilant of your surroundings.

Alert employees can identify suspicious behavior, such as:

- Placing an object or package and abandoning it or leaving the area.
- A prolonged interest in or taking pictures/videos of personnel, facilities, security features, or infrastructure in an unusual or covert manner.
- Unauthorized people trying to enter a restricted area or impersonating authorized personnel.
- Loitering at a location without a reasonable explanation.
- Avoiding security personnel or systems.
- Expressed or implied threats of violence.

# 2 INITIATE A HELLO



## Acknowledging a risk can deter a potential threat.

Use the Power of Hello to engage with individuals in your space by doing or saying the following (tip: active listening is key.):

- Smile, make eye contact, and introduce yourself.
- “Hello, how are you?”
- “How can I assist you?”
- “Are you looking for something or someone in particular?”
- “I will be here in case you need help.”
- Approaching a person viewed as suspicious has potential risks. In some situations it may be more advisable to report the activity to those with the authority and training to intervene.

# 3 NAVIGATE THE RISK



## Navigate the risk by asking yourself if the behavior you observed is threatening or suspicious.

When observing activity or behavior that would arouse reasonable suspicion of terrorism or other criminal activity, employees should consider these questions:

- Do they appear to be legitimately patronizing the business or service?
- Is their clothing consistent with the weather or for the gathering of the day?
- Are they avoiding security?
- Are they asking questions about business functions or employee information? (e.g., “Who is closing?” or “How many people work here?”, etc.)
- Causing you to feel threatened? (If you feel threatened, calmly walk away and call 9-1-1.)

# 4 OBTAIN HELP



## After navigating the risk, obtain help from management or authorities.

Using OHNO, provide the best information to first responders and security personnel.

- Call 9-1-1 for emergencies or if you feel in danger.
- To organize your thoughts to management or the police ask yourself 5W's:
  - What is happening?
  - Who is doing it?
  - Where is it taking place?
  - When did you observe it?
  - Why are they here?
- You may submit suspicious activity reports to your local law enforcement or call the non-emergency number.

The OHNO approach describes activities and behaviors that may be suspicious or indicative of criminal activity. These activities may be constitutionally protected and should be reported only when there are articulable facts to support a rational conclusion that the behavior is suspicious. Do not report based solely on protected activities, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or a combination of only such factors.