

# Security Products

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## Body for Hire

*A personal protection primer*

*By Harold F. Coyne, Jr., PPS*

**For centuries, personal protection has played a**

vital role in security. In the past, only royalty or the rich and famous required protection agents. In today's business-driven world, however, corporations have increasingly required personal protection for company executives, especially for those executives with a high-level of authority and influence.

As the use of personal protection agents has increased in the corporate world, so have the requirements for those serving as protection agents. No longer are protection agents bodyguards standing in front of doors. Agents must have business etiquette and manners, dress appropriately, be able to work with computers and technology and, above all, understand that being a protection professional goes far beyond the willingness to take a bullet.

Protection professionals will save the day more often by knowing the locations of the client's (often referred to as the principle) glasses, the closest bathroom and the nearest fax machine, than by rescuing an executive from a personal attack. How does a protection agent achieve all of this? The answer is advance work.

### **In the Details**

Advance work can make the difference between life and death. Planning of the protection detail requires every detail to be examined, scrutinized and re-examined. Every activity should be planned to the second. Without advance work there is no need for a protection detail. Effective protection is proactive, not simply reactive. Protection professionals are always behind the eight ball when it comes to seeing what may occur. Advance work allows an agent to effectively react to unpredictable occurrences. Even hundreds of agents, equipped with the most sophisticated tools, would be worthless without a thorough understanding of all the details of an assignment.

Advance work allows an agent to familiarize him or herself with the likes, dislikes, needs and annoyances of the client, as well as determine the number of agents needed; transportation requirements, options and availability; and places to stay, eat, shop, etc.

Every detail must be documented, from finding multiple driving routes from the airport to the hotel, the floor plan of the hotel, emergency contact numbers, the nearest hospitals to every location where the client will be. This often also means knowing different routes

to different hospitals.

### Prioritizing Protection

Executive protection is, first and foremost, the protection of the client. To accomplish this, agents will jump through hoops that people in other professions often view as crazy. Recently, an individual told me agents are basically butlers with guns, and in a sense, that is true. A good protection agent must take care of everything the client needs. If the agent is positioned to know everything, he or she can best help the client and ensure their safety in every situation.

The concept of an agent taking a bullet for the client has received a lot of melodramatic attention from Hollywood. And, while every agent swears an oath to perform that very duty, if an assignment gets to a point where physical violence is eminent, a protection agent will have already failed his or her primary duties.

When people ask what I do for a living and I tell them I am a protection agent, invariably, the first thing they will say is, "That's exciting." I usually reply, "Only if I do my job badly." Advance work is crucial and can save a life in a split second.

Agents are responsible for protecting a client, his or her family, the home or estate where they reside, and the client's office. The agent must know every facet of information about the client: daily, weekly and monthly schedule, preferences, personal history and any special client needs.

### Communicating with the Client

When hiring a protection agent, it is critical to understand exactly the purpose of the assignment. Often, an agent will be hired to provide protection and due to poor planning or lack of thought by the client, the details of the job will change dramatically, altering the protection priorities and rendering any advance work useless. In addition, failure to understand the exact details of the job can lead to an improper agent-hire if the agent's abilities are not suitable for the revised duties. This happens often when there is poor or no direct communication between the client and agent.

To ensure there is no communication error, the client and the protection agent should sit down and discuss the exact duties of the agent or team. Guidelines must be developed and strictly adhered to. Constant communication must be kept to ensure the duties are being performed to the satisfaction of both parties.

### Final Caveats

Clients will often forget what the agent's role is, particularly if the assignment grows long and complacency sets in--something that can have tragic consequences. Becoming overly friendly with the client can also create problems. An agent must keep in mind that he or she is an employee with a critical job to perform. Friendships can bring about emotions that cloud an agent's ability to perform the job objectively and effectively. Emotions can lead to errors, and errors can cost lives.

Select a protection agent wisely. Though not always available due to the confidentiality of many agents' client bases, ask for references. When not available from previous clients, look to get references from other agents or protection companies.

## History Lessons: The Assassination of Franz Ferdinand

*The importance of advance work and effective personal protection*

History has shown how some protection agents have failed their duties due to improper or poor advance work and planning. One such case is the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand--heir to the imperial throne of the Austro-Hungarian empire--in 1914. The assassination of Ferdinand triggered events that culminated in the start of World War I.

### The Assassination

As Inspector General of the Army, Ferdinand accepted an invitation to visit Sarajevo, the provincial capital of Bosnia, to inspect army maneuvers. The provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina had been under Austro-Hungarian administration and protection by international agreement since 1878. In 1908, Austria annexed the provinces outright. Some European governments were upset at the annexation, but Greater-Serbia proponents were outraged. They wanted the provinces to be part of a Serbian led pan-slav state, not part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. A Serbian secret terrorist group, the Black Hand, decided to assassinate somebody in protest. Ferdinand was eventually selected when his trip to Sarajevo was made public. By killing him, the threat of his reforms would be removed.

Borijove Jevtic, one of the conspirators gave this eyewitness account: *When Ferdinand and his retinue drove from the station, they were allowed to pass the first two conspirators. The motor cars were driving too fast to make an attempt feasible and in the crowd were many Serbians; throwing a grenade would have killed many innocent people.*

*When the car passed Gabrinovic, the composer, he threw his grenade. It hit the side of the car, but Ferdinand, with presence of mind, threw himself back and was uninjured. Several officers riding in his attendance were injured.*

*The cars sped to the Town Hall, and the rest of the conspirators did not interfere with them. After the reception in the Town Hall, General Potiorek, the Austrian Commander, pleaded with Ferdinand to leave the city, as it was seething with rebellion. The Archduke was persuaded to drive the shortest way out of the city and to go quickly. The road to the maneuvers was shaped like the letter V, making a sharp turn at the bridge over the River Nilgacka. Ferdinand's car could go fast enough until it reached this spot but here it was forced to slow down for the turn. Here [Gavrilo] Princip had taken his stand.*

*As the car came abreast [Princip] stepped forward from the curb, drew his automatic pistol from his coat and fired two shots. The first struck the wife of the Archduke, the Archduchess Sofia, in the abdomen. She was an expectant mother. She died instantly.*

*The second bullet struck the Archduke close to the heart.*

### The Seven Deadly Sins

Following the initial attempt on his life, the Archduke was taken to his scheduled meeting. This was mistake number one. The Archduke should have been taken to a completely different location other than what his schedule had already dictated. Possibly, it would have been better to return to the train immediately and leave the area completely.

Instead, the Archduke decided to keep to his schedule and attend the reception at the City Hall. Once the Archduke was notified of the condition of the members of his party that were injured during the assassination attempt, he insisted on going to the hospital to visit with them (mistake number two).

One member of his staff, Baron Morsey, did not think this a good idea but, his staff was persuaded otherwise and the visit to the hospital was decided.

There was no advance work done on this route, no planning, and no considerations for security or safety (mistake number three).

General Oskar Potiorek decided on the quickest route to the hospital. The problem was that Potiorek forgot to tell the driver, Franz Urban, which way to go and Urban did not to ask where he was going (mistake number four).

While traveling to the hospital, Urban took a wrong turn. When notified of this mistake, Urban stopped the vehicle (mistake number five) and backed up at a slow rate (mistake number six). By happenstance, Gavrilo Princip--one of the conspirators--exited from a sandwich shop where he had taken refuge following the initial failed attempt at that same moment. He stepped forward as the car was backing up and shot twice into the vehicle, hitting the Archduke and his wife.

General Potiorek, thinking perhaps that the shots had missed or underestimating the severity of the injuries, ordered the car to return to the governor's mansion rather than the nearest hospital (mistake number seven). This would prove fatal, as both Ferdinand and his wife would die from their wounds.

## What Should Have Been Done

The Archduke should have exited the area completely after the first assassination attempt.

The Archduke should not have been allowed to visit the hospital.

Advance work should have been done on the hospital route.

Communication between General Potiorek and Urban, the driver, should have been better.

Urban should have kept moving forward to find a place to turn around, instead of stopping the vehicle in the middle of a street and reversing slowly.

Following the shooting, Ferdinand and his wife should have been taken immediately to the nearest hospital.

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**Harry F. Coyne, Jr., PPS**, is president and director of operations for Coyne Consulting Group.