

Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness

SUCCESS STORY

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Securing the Safety of Residents & Businesses through a Cross-Sector Committee

Contributor: Bob Smith

"...relationships, trust, and the establishment of agreements and contracts between private sector and government prior to an incident are critical to the effectiveness of response."

Bob Smith is a veteran in community preparedness efforts in Louisville, KY. Since 2000, he has been the voice of the corporate private sector in the Louisville Crisis Group (The Group), a team dedicated to preparedness planning and disaster support for the city.

The Meta-Leadership Summit sparked an idea

In 2008, after attending the Louisville Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness and being encouraged by the attendance and enthusiasm of other private sector security executives like himself, Smith decided to pitch an idea to The Group. The idea justified the need for a corporate security sub-committee dedicated to joining private sector leadership with government officials to encourage networking and collaboration of ideas and resources prior to disaster.

Growing a highly organized preparedness sub-committee

Smith was successful in his pitch. For close to four years, the Corporate Security Executive Sub-Committee has been consistently meeting every other month. The group has grown from a dozen to more than 30 organizations representing private sector security executives as well as government officials including city, county, state and federal law enforcement, and public health officials. Decision-makers from Yum Brands Inc., Orr Safety, Kroger, GE, Target, Brown-Forman, the FBI, Sheriff's Office, Secret Service, DEA, LMPD, the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health, and others discuss topics ranging from the potential hazards of social media, to violence in the workplace and active shooter scenarios. Given the secure nature of the content discussed, all members sign confidentiality agreements and must go through an application process to join the group. Smith credits the strategic focus, consistency of meetings, and the dedication and commitment of group members for the committee's long-term success.

The Sub-Committee is expanding

Effects of the sub-committee are reaching beyond the city limits of Louisville. The sub-committee has shared information such as distribution lists with the Kentucky Department of Emergency Management to help boost state-level collaboration with the private sector. Additionally, Smith has been working with Brigadier General John Heltzel, Deputy Commander of the Kentucky National Guard, to discuss the importance of and lessons learned from the Corporate Security Executive Sub-Committee to audiences from Texas to Illinois.

The Meta-Leadership legacy continues in Louisville

Smith maintains that "relationships, trust, and the establishment of agreements and contracts between private sector and government prior to an incident are critical to the effectiveness of response." He is excited about the work of the sub-committee thus far, and is currently in talks with members of the overarching crisis group to identify mechanisms by which the sub-committee can continue to sustain and grow. Smith credits UPS for his involvement with these security teams, pointing to the company's tradition and encouragement of supporting the community.

The Meta-Leadership Summit for Preparedness empowered business, government and nonprofit leaders to act together in times of crisis. The five-year initiative connected 5,000 business, government and nonprofit leaders in 36 communities. For resources and more information about Meta-Leadership visit the [CDC Foundation Meta-Leadership Website](#).



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention