



SECURITY OFFICER NETWORK

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How to Pass Time as a Security Guard



Night-time Security Guard: It's one of the best jobs that you can have.

At first glance you are probably tempted to aggressively push back on this statement.

"Are you serious?"

"It barely pays more than minimum wage and it's boring, boring work!"

And, **that's the benefit.**

Here's why:

In his post entitled "[Why You Should Aspire to be Security](#)," Captain Capitalism, aka Aaron Clary, poignantly opines that . . . "your security job is to merely be present. Not to track down the bad guys. Not to do detective work. Not to be a wanna be cop. You merely sit at your station or desk, make an hourly patrol, and then return to your desk. The reason why is the big secret in the security industry. You really aren't paid to protect; you're paid because having a uniformed person on the premises gets that company or client a decrease in their insurance costs.

"Second, since you aren't supposed to be doing anything other than merely existing, most security companies allow you to do some other work. In other words, there is no expectation you need to be constantly occupied all the time. Matter of fact, it's expected you'll bring a book, study, bring a laptop or whatever."

You can go two different ways with this benefit:

1. You can do what many security guards do: watch movies on your computer; text or chat with friends on your phone; get into long, pointless, time-wasting conversations with any co-workers that might be on late night duty or even try to sneak in a nap or two. These officers have ideologized a time-wasting culture at their post and it's a culture that entices you into an ethic of life-wasting laziness; or
2. You can use this time to **your** benefit.

How many other "*real*" jobs pay you to do little to nothing?

Or, as Captain Capitalism describes them, "Understand that the vast majority (if not all) corporate wage slave jobs require your time to be completely consumed and preoccupied. And more often than not that time is consumed with a mentally boring and mundane task. And even if it isn't, the culture is such that you still have to 'act busy,' which is even more mind-numbing than actual work. In the end, yes you do have a job, but your brain is completely and 100% occupied doing boring work that advances some other person or company."

So, how should you "*pass time as a security guard*?" How should you take advantage of the unique benefit of having a job that pays you to sit around for most of the night?

Contrary to the actions of most of your co-workers, avoid the temptation to waste your time watching movies or playing video games. Even if you are all alone on the shift, it will likely shake the confidence of your supervisor or your agency's client if they arrive on site to find their security officer fully engrossed in a movie.

And, even if no one else is around, why throw away the great opportunity of this job?

You should use this time to lay the foundation for the future. You will develop your skill set and ensure that you will not always need to work a near-minimum wage, night-time security job.

Use this opportunity to launch your future career as a security professional, private security and self-defense instructor, security consultant or security entrepreneur.

Here's how to do it:

1. Learn From Others

Purchase a pair of discreet bluetooth headphones such as [the](#) affordable but well-reviewed GoNovate headphones from Amazon. Listen and re-listen to audio from security industry and entrepreneurial professionals.

Check out podcasts such as [ASIS Security Management](#) or [The Security Guy](#). These are the podcasts listened to by leading private security industry officials. As you aspire to make money in the security industry, you need to know what they are talking about.

And, subscribe to Audible.com. Audible provides access to numerous audio books; the first of which is totally free with the Audible thirty-day trial. You can choose from many of the books in The Security Officer Network's library including [How to Start a Security Guard Company](#), [How to Manage a Security Agency](#), [How to Get Clients for Your Private Security Agency](#) and more.

These books will fill your mind with ideas on how to develop your strategy for weaning away from the big corporate security company and implementing your future strategy to become a security professional.

Don't limit your listening to just security; keep your Audible subscription and continually download and listen to the latest in entrepreneurial and skill development books such as [How to Build Your Business to Sell](#) and the popular [Facing Violence: Preparing for the Unexpected](#).

These audio books will prepare you for a career as a security entrepreneur and potentially provide a valuable asset to you: your own private security agency or consultancy.

Here's a tip: *Only use one of the discreet bluetooth headphones. Keep one ear free. This helps you remain aware of your surroundings. It might be night time, and you may be guarding an unoccupied building but situational awareness must remain your first priority.*

2. Become an Expert in Your Site's Niche

Use the night-time hours to conduct in-depth foot and vehicle patrols and become familiar with every facet of the site. Get to know the site both in and out.

If you do have Internet access, and it's acceptable to do so, research the various security strategies and plans for the type of facility that you are guarding, e.g., "mall evacuation plan," or "office fire suppression strategy."

Role play the various security scenarios. What would happen if . . . ?

Is this facility prepared for every eventuality?

What are they doing right and what could they be doing better?

Keep careful notes with all of your observations. Use a service such as Evernote or Google Docs to enter and preserve your notes.

Make observations and add to your notes each time an incident occurs. Read over the incident reports from the previous day.

What circumstances led to the incident?

How was it handled?

Was the site and security staff prepared?

What could have been done to prevent the incident from occurring in the first place?

After some time, compile your notes into your own white paper of recommendations that you could make to the owner of the site. This white paper will become your intellectual property that you can market to your own clients in the future.

Ask yourself: *"If I were the owner of this property, what would I really want to know about the security and preparedness of my site?"*

This research and your thoughtful analysis builds your resume. In the future, perhaps you decide to work as a freelance security consultant. Even though it was near-minimum wage, your time spent on those long nights becoming familiar with your facility will make a difference, e.g., the 16 months you survived as a night-time mall security officer can position you to provide valuable security consulting to the entire retail niche and tout your experience as a reason for why you are qualified to be a consultant. After all, you have your white paper to prove your verisimilitude!

Would you like to see a sample white paper that you can use as a template? Just drop an email to security.consultant@securityofficerhq.com with the subject "**Send Me the White Paper,**" and you will receive The Security Officer Network's most recent sample security consultancy white paper.

Watching movies, texting friends, or reading the newspaper will do nothing to build your resume as a future security consultant. You can't market to a future consulting client by stating: *"I once watched the entire 2nd season of Seinfeld while on shift and in just one week's time."*

Keeping notes, learning the ins and outs of your security at your site and thoughtfully constructing a security plan white paper will prepare you for a future as a security professional, specifically as a security consultant or security agency owner.

3. Develop Your Public Security Persona

As an upcoming security professional, whether a consultant or a business owner, this is the best time to become known for being a public security professional.

Bring a handheld police scanner to work with you. Use radioreference.com to find public safety agencies in your city. Keep an ear out for the latest happenings with a special focus on the area close to your site.

If appropriate, bring a small laptop and navigate to news.google.com. Use Google Alerts to notify you whenever news stories are posted in your area. Set your alerts with terms such as "*Portland robbery*," or "*Portland police*." Of course, substitute "Portland" with the name of your city.

Build a social media presence with a special focus on the use of Twitter.

Follow accounts such as [@officerhq](https://twitter.com/officerhq) for an example of broadcasting security industry news via Twitter; [@HWDSscanner](https://twitter.com/HWDSscanner) to get a sense of how to tweet scanner traffic; or [@lascanner](https://twitter.com/lascanner) for ideas on how to add entertaining, public-safety-themed commentary to scanner traffic and public safety news.

Also follow various community leaders, media personalities and business owners from your city. When appropriate, engage them in Twitter conversations regarding public safety news.

This will build your name recognition.

Local business leaders are more likely to pay for your services if your name seems familiar to them—even if they can't quite place where it is that they have heard it before.

It may be a good idea to schedule your tweets to go out at a time when you are not on duty and when your followers are awake. Use a free service such as buffer.com for scheduling each tweet.

** As a note of caution: Only execute this last strategy if it's appropriate to do so. If you are working a night-time shift all by yourself, with no one else around, then it may be acceptable to spend time on your laptop or phone; however, if you are exposed to the public, then you may run the risk of appearing unprofessional as they won't know that you are doing security work online. They may incorrectly assume that you are texting friends or just surfing the net; neither of which are good for your image as a professional security officer.*

By this point you should be excited by all of these opportunities; but, you may ask, "*Won't my employer mind if I spend so much mental energy building for the future while on the job?*"

Speaking as a former security employer, I would much rather my officer show such ambition than to sit around watching movies, playing games or wasting time each night. His pride in his work tells me that he is going to do things right. I realize that I am going to lose him to his own business or a higher-paying security job in the future. And, that's acceptable, because I know

that his attention to both the security industry and his own self-improvement will serve my agency well for as long as the officer is with my company.

I would much rather employ an officer who wants to be a professional, even a future competitor, than someone who is trying to sneak off and take a nap (or worse) during his night shift.

It's your goal to evolve each night time away from just another "night at work" and into an opportunity for learning and advancement.

So, how do you know if you have been successful?

Each morning, as you drive home, **is your mind racing with ideas for the future?** Are you thinking over the strategies for evolving into a highly paid security professional?

If not, you are likely simply marking time and squandering a great resource: a job that pays you—to sit around.