

Martial Arts and Executive Protection!

For many there is the thought that a Black Belt is suited to be a Bodyguard or Executive Protection agent. That would like being a great artist and driving a jet into combat. First if you run into someone that calls them a "Bodyguard", then either they have not worked in 30 years or they have not kept up in the industry.

Martial arts can be a spring boards into the industry, but not the end all learning for an agent. I will use myself as an example. I was in the wrong place at the right time. In a club working as a doorman when a fight breaks out in the VIP section, I used verbal skills to defuse the altercation and the VIPS wanted me to come to FT. Lauderdale to be a "bodyguard" That was in 1981 and the world was different for security personnel. Back then you may get a job just because you could fight or at least look like you could! Now in the Executive Protection industry you have to be valet, chauffeur, personal aid, and conceriege.

Martial arts will show you have dedication to a purpose and follow through, but after that there is nothing to come close to EP work. At the age of 19, I was a Shodan in Shotokan Karate (I had made rank at 16). At that time the company owners were just looking for fighters and people that were loyal to them. Well I had those qualities and then some.

This company was a music company based out of Ft. Lauderdale, Fl., and which were several security personnel. I was the only martial artist at that time and by the time I left everyone in the company wanted martial artist for their security personnel. Now looking back I would be a middle school student trying to

compete with those that masters degrees.

Executive Protection is as wide as it is deep. Yes you need to be physically fit, must look the part, but you also need customer service skills! When moving a client at the last minute into a new hotel room and they are not expecting you, there has to be diplomacy for this to happen. You need rooms located on a certain floor and close to emergency exits, well if you are rude this will not happen on the last minute notice. You might have a client that will only drink a certain coffee (I did and it was only **ST**B**k*** and we had to find it in every city we were in) so you become a valet in that case.

I always tell people to watch two movies to learn about Executive Protection. The first is "The Bodyguard" with Kevin Costner and the other is "Guarding Tess" with Nic Cage. The first is nothing like EP work and the second is very close. You have to worry about the everyday things that a client may want and then be ready to save their life in a moments notice.

Firearms in the industry? To be completely honest in my early days I carried a firearm and learned that a firearm does not keep a client safe, only planning and being prepared does this and not in all things. Look at the history of assassination of just our presidents only. All the presidents have armed men to protect them, some more than others. We will look at the best known John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. Secret Service was there fully armed and one president killed and the other wounded. President Reagan is an example of Secret Service pulling out Uzi's and colt 45's ready to defend the president, but it was way too late for President Reagan, but thank God he lived!

The Secret Service could have had nuclear arms and President Reagan would still have been shot, after the fact does not keep a client safe. Just like being the martial arts killer does not keep your client safe... You have to multi-task in many fields, but never think that breaking 20 breaks qualifies you to protect someone or their families.

Do you need to go to an Executive Protection school? There are two ways to answer that question! Yes and no, wow I was not helped at all, if you want a piece of paper that says you have the skills, then the answer is yes and the paper can open doors for you that may be shut. On the other hand networking with professionals in the industry can lead to great jobs. You have to have a resume that shows your possibilities, I have to give the glory to Christ; I have been blessed to protect Christians for the past several years in my life. From politicians to pastors and Christ opened those doors for me!

I guess to finish, if you are a martial artist and are looking to get into the EP world that can be your base camp, but it will not get you the job of choice, unless you are like me and are in the wrong place at the right time!

Yours in Christ,

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