

# Security Guards: A quick guide to make you better at your job, earn more money and dominate your competition

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The security industry is plagued with untrained, uninterested and poorly prepared security guards. One of the reasons this happens is despite the size of the security industry of nearly £4bn per year, most security guards are on minimum wages, work long hours, and have a disastrous work/life balance.

Security guards provide an effective deterrent for criminals and are an excellent first point of contact between organizations and their clients. Their mere presence prevents shoplifters, vandals, arsonist etc. from even showing up at their workplace or, in the worst-case scenario being a lot more careful to not get caught.

## **The question is why would anyone take this job?**

Let's look at the facts first: the average security guard earns between £8.50 to 11.50 per hour and works around 60 hours per week. That's roughly about £1,500 take home after tax for working most of the time.

It's a very poor payment considering you have to work 12 hours shifts almost every day whilst being away from your family, friends with almost no spare time.

The fact is that the industry especially security companies are in a race to the bottom. Quoting the lowest rates per hour to get contracts and eventually the security guards that are actually doing the work are suffering.

## **How can you move from being underpaid to get more money, a better work life balance and generally work less hours for more money as a security guard?**

First of all most security guards are underpaid because they are undertrained, inexperienced and generally lack the professionalism that differentiate them from a high paid close protection officer for example.

Think about it. What is the difference between someone that earns £9 per hour to someone that earns £25 per hour or more? It's all coming back to what you know, your skills, competences and how you present yourself.

Let's start breaking it down so you can understand how to move up on the pay grade.

*This article will help you learn how to become a better security guard, be more competent at your job and the steps you need to take to earn more money whilst working less. Do I have your attention? Good.*

## **Who works as a security guard?**

I've started working as a security guard when I was just before the legal age at 17. One night I was walking home when I've seen two big security guards in uniforms kicking out a homeless man from a store. Sounds bad I know but that guy was making trouble. I stood there and watched the whole thing and then I said to myself. THIS IS WHAT I WANT TO DO. Maybe because I was young and full of testosterone. Who know why I thought that. But that's how long it took to make that decision.

At the time I was between jobs working part time waiting tables for a firm called Tip-Top in Bucharest. I was training in boxing, had a funny walk and most of the time had bruises over my face. When I was serving clients and they saw how I walked and my bruises from boxing they usually asked if I'm going to serve them or beat them. So, security was the right choice for me. It just felt right.

After I've seen the incident I decided that night that I'm going to work for that company as a security guard.

The next day I woke up early, went to the bus station and bought a news paper with jobs ads. There was no or little internet back then. So, I found an ad for that same company stating they hire security guards. I noted their address, wrote down on a piece of paper my C.V which was basically 3 lines containing my name, address, date of birth and hobbies and took off to their office.

I didn't know how much the pay rate was or even if they will hire me. All I knew is that I wanted to work there. I entered their office and stated that I want a security job and I will not leave until I get hired.

They tried to tell me that I'm not legal age, don't have qualifications, experience etc. I persisted. Eventually they hired me on the spot to work in a telecommunications store in the town centre. Boom. Result.

### **Who becomes a security guard?**

My opinion is that every person has a calling. If you are in this line of work, then you probably have a calling for it. I don't know what it is but it's something.

### **You have the calling, what's next?**

Over the years I moved from security guard roles, to fast response units catching burglars, to working with the gendarmerie on public order events, to actually replacing the gendarmerie at football matches guarding the ultras. I then moved to close protection, supervisory roles, worked in the prison service as a prison officer and on Tornado teams and eventually started my own company. All this happened over the course of nearly 15 years.

I will say that after the calling you must put the work in to understand the ins and outs of the job in order to get better at it. The better you are the more you will earn.

This means that after you learned everything about a certain position let's say working in a store, you learned how to spot shoplifters, how to stop them, how to complete the paperwork and deal with the police etc, you should move to another position. And continue this cycle over the course of the years in order to have a greater understanding of as many duties as possible.

I don't believe in managers that never step foot in the front line working as a security guard. It's the same with a governor in the jail that's never been a prison officer. They will be good at doing the paperwork but then will not know how to deal with prisoners. Same rules apply here.

### **Be good at your job before moving up towards management positions.**

#### How do you get good at your job and start earning more now and not in 10 years?

Look, I know what the managers look for and I can tell you that if you want to earn more then you must be better than everyone else competing for the same position. This means you have to *stand out*.

### **How do you stand out from the crowd?**

Even if you don't have the experience you can take some little steps that in the end will accumulate and make a big difference. Below, I will describe some steps you can take right now to set you apart from the crowd.

### **What are the steps to stand out?**

#### **Appearance**

Have you ever walked into a place and seen a security guard with the hands in their pockets, looking scruffy and uninterested? Don't be that person.

Your appearance it's the first thing people notice about you. If you want to earn more money you must look like you deserve more money. Trust me, if you look apart you will be paid apart. Don't kid yourself. An employer will pay

more money to get an A-player security guard that looks apart then getting some scruffy looking “shirt filler” for minimum wage.

The first step it’s your appearance. Basic stuff like having a shower before your shifts, having your hair, moustache, and beard trimmed, your nails cut neatly and your uniform or suit nicely ironed and clean.

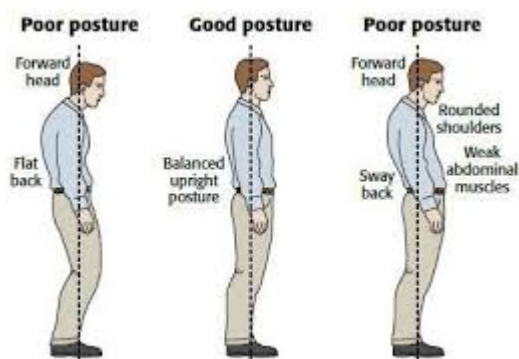
Your shoes or boots polished and clean. Don’t walk with stains on you, or holes in your clothing. Invest money in your appearance if necessary to present yourself at a higher level. Don’t expect this from your employer, it’s your image your responsibility.

Also, you don’t need to wear colon but don’t smell like a rubbish bag either. Remember, if you want to be paid more you must be looking apart at all times day and night.

If you got a long shift ahead take a bag with you and have some deodorant and extra shirt with you. It never hurts you to smell good and look sharp.

If you are a security guard then dress up whenever you can. Your aim should be to look like a manager or someone above your pay grade.

## Body Language



Once you sorted your look then you need to start looking at your body language. Remember most communication is non-verbal, and criminals will notice when you are not confident or simply not paying attention.

Look at any person in authority and you will notice that they keep their back, shoulders and head in a straight line. They will be looking forward and not

have their back hunched or head tilted looking up. Don't keep your hands in your pockets and avoid using your phone whilst working.

When you are working as a security guard you are in a position of authority. So, look and behave like an authority. Even if you are dissatisfied with your lower pay or position at the moment.

Now that you've sorted your look and your body language, how can you get better at your job, so you can start earning more money?

To earn more money, you must get better first.

### **ALWAYS Pay attention on the job. Be alert and vigilant**

It doesn't matter where you work, or the specifics of the position, just remember you have only one customer: **human nature**.

As such, human nature gives some tell-tale signs when the person is up to no good. Your job is to look in control and be alert for these signs.

I'm not going to get into too much details in this article about these signs, but I will say that if you are paying attention you will instinctively notice when someone is about to steal or do something illegal. It's in your nature to spot these signs.

For example, some of the signs are: fidgeting, looking around nervously, moving up and down an aisle with no real purpose, wearing clothes that don't match the season, baseball caps, hoodies overhead, looking to see where the CCTV cameras are positioned etc.

***If you pay attention you will know when someone is up to no good. You have already been gifted by mother nature with this instinct. You just have to be vigilant and spot the cues.***

*Only by taking care of your look and body language, whilst knowing this "tale tale" signs you will stand out of the crowd hugely.*

I remember when I was working in the prison service, we were in the office in one of the wings and one of my colleagues told me I can relax now. It's nothing going on.

I smiled and replied to her: *There it's always something going on. You just have to pay attention to it.*

That's a fact.

I have caught more crime happening in prison in 2-years period than all the officers working on my wing combined. I was just paying attention. This led to me being recognized by the governing governor and made a name for myself in the prison service. You can also do this. It's something in your control every time you are working.

### ***The more you learn the more you earn***

Perhaps another thing holding you back right now is the lack of qualifications. In order to get better pay and improve your situation, you should constantly look to improve yourself. This means saving some of your hard-earned money to go on courses, trainings and qualifications that could potentially bring you more work at better rates. *Your mission is to get better.*

Look for any opportunity to attend a course, seminar or get a new qualification. If you are working for a big company asked them if they will pay for your training. Tell your manager that you want to get better and ask for their help. This will never hurt you. Even if they say no, you will still stand out as the person looking to improve.

Furthermore, ask them if they have other jobs or opportunities available. You want to look for anything that can increase your income. Doing this will leave the management thinking you are serious about your development and probably even consider you for future promotions.

Think about this scenario for one moment:

A job has been advertised for a security position at a store. There are 50 applicants and majority of them have the same qualifications. SIA licence, maybe first aid and a couple of years of experience.

### **What will make you stand out for the job?**

If 90% of people have one SIA licence than you should aim to have 2 or more. For a security position I suggest you also have CCTV public space surveillance licence. Then invest in first aid training and anything else that is out there suitable for the opportunities in your line of work.

This will make you stand out. You are more likely to be hired or promoted when you have more qualification than everyone else.

### **What if you only have the minimum of qualifications but you really want this job?**

The person that gets hired it's not always the best applicant. Keep this in mind.

*The person that gets hired it's the person that is known and made the best impression with the decision maker.*

Remember, you are dealing with human nature even before you got a job. Do you want to stand out?

Call the company right now. Find out who the decision maker is. Be professional but persistent. Be honest. If you are lacking some of the qualifications tell them.

"Sir, I don't have this qualification, but I make a commitment to you right now here on the phone, if you hire me then I will get all the qualifications you require me to have within 1 month or you can fire me. I know I'm the right person for this job. When can I start?"

Do you think this will get their attention? I promise you, it will. It doesn't mean you will necessarily get the job, but your chances will increase dramatically.



You must find courage to go for what you want unapologetically. Otherwise, life will just beat you up if you stay passive waiting for things to happen.

### **Take the opportunity not the money**

This one is a tough one to work your head around. Everyone needs the money but there are times when the opportunity appears, and you must keep your eyes open for it. This usually manifests in a situation, job, proposal, idea etc. that on paper doesn't really make sense. 99% of the people will say no because it's not enough money, hours are too short, it's too far etc. When you are faced with a situation like this always say yes even when it doesn't really make sense. This may sound spiritual, but I believe that the universe will manifest your desires either as a problem or as an opportunity that at first glance doesn't look like much. Always say YES to new opportunities. That's my philosophy.

### **Make a commitment to be a great security guard**

Look, no one likes the guy that complains, whines and is always negative. Don't be that guy. You choose this line of work, or in my case this line of work chose me, so stick with it.

You must make a decision to become great at your job and I promise you that alone will take care of yourself. You will never be out of work if you are good at what you do.

However, becoming great is where you want to be. Be great so that people in your company actually talk about you, your professionalism, your great attitude, your punctuality, your reliability, your great personality, your work ethic, your results etc.

Do this and you will not just be with a job for as long as you want, you will dominate your position, you will be better paid than everyone else and you will have open unexpected opportunities for the future.

The ability to see past your current situation and work like you are already there is what will set you apart from everyone else. Make a commitment right here and right now to become great at your job and I promise your life will change for the better. It doesn't matter how old you are, if you are disabled, foreign etc. Anyone can do it with the right mindset. Don't make excuses.

### **Get a mentor**

Everything that you are trying to achieve today chances are someone else has already achieved. If you want more money, then you should study and surround yourself with people that have more money than you. If you want to become better at your job, then you should look for people that are better than you and learn from them.

If you want to be a manager then look at who you think it's a good manager and understand what make him or her good at their job, and then reproduce the same behaviours yourself. It's that simple.

You don't have to reinvent the wheel here. Just learn what others have done to get where they are and reproduce the same actions and behaviours. This will guarantee your instant success without any major investments other than time and energy. There is a lot of information out there on how to get a mentor, how to earn more money etc. You don't have to invest any money at this moment, but you do have to make a decision to get better.

### **Putting it all together**

Look, you can waste your life working 12 hours shifts as a security guard, hating your life and current situation and blame the economy, the industry and what not for your situation.

The truth is that only **you are responsible** for your situation.

So, take control of everything that is in your control. Your appearance, your attitude, your time keeping, your professionalism when dealing with people etc. and take the steps discussed above and you will stand out.

Stop whining about being underpaid and start working towards becoming something greater than your job title or your wage. The moment you realise this it will change your life.

Remember, there is no shortage of money on this planet. There is nowhere to say that if you earn £9 per hour today you couldn't earn £25 next month.

Become better and you will earn more money. You will enjoy your time serving your company and community, will have a better work/life balance and generally enjoy life more.

## **Conclusion**

There are hundreds of thousands of security guards across the UK but only a handful are great at their jobs. This people earn more money, have better jobs, better work life balance and more opportunities to grow and develop.

Companies are paying them more money because they are simply better than everyone else. This is achievable by anyone, you just have to be willing to put the work in and be persistent over time.

Take enough action, consistently over long periods of time and you will get the results.

To wrap it up I hope you enjoyed this article, and if you made a decision to be great then send me an email at [cezar@bravosecurity.co.uk](mailto:cezar@bravosecurity.co.uk) ; Subject "Becoming great". I would love to hear the story of your journey.

If you want more tips on how to be a better security guard then email me or subscribe to my channels.

## About the Author

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*Bravo Security Ltd specializes in supplying security guards to organizations across the United Kingdom.*

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