

AN INTRODUCTION TO

CELEBRITY PROTECTION AND TOURING

A GUIDE TO MASTERING THE BUSINESS OF
VIP SECURITY



ELIJAH SHAW | DALE JUNE

**AN INTRODUCTION TO CELEBRITY
PROTECTION AND TOURING**

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Elijah J. Shaw is the CEO of ICON Global, Inc. A consulting firm specializing in Executive and VIP Protection. With tours of duty that frequently take him across the globe, Mr. Shaw acts as a personal bodyguard to several highly recognizable public figures, providing security consultation and staffing worldwide. As an instructor, Elijah teaches an internationally recognized program on Celebrity & VIP Protection at the ICON academy, as well as in conjunction with Executive Security International (ESI), the nation's oldest bodyguard school, where he currently sits on the Board of Directors. Elijah also serves as the current National Director of the North American Bodyguard Association (NABA) and holds the position of

Managing Editor of the NABA-produced *Circuit Magazine* in which he writes an ongoing column entitled, *Keeping Your Edge*. A seasoned expert with dealing with the media on topics related to Executive Protection and the Bodyguard Industry, Elijah has been featured in prestigious publications such as *Portfol-io*, *Entrepreneur* and *Inc. Magazine*. In addition, he has been interviewed for his expert opinion on major broadcast such as *The Today Show*, *FOX* and *E! News*. On the philanthropic side, Mr. Shaw is the founder of *ISC Safety-Net*, a program that provides free security services to victims of domestic abuse and the shelters that support them.

Dale L. June (MA) former U.S. Secret Service Agent, Presidential Protective Division at the White House serving under three U.S. Presidents. With a distinguished career of service that has included City Police Officer, Military Policeman, U.S. Customs Intelligence Specialist, University Professor, and Author. An educator and teacher, Dale holds a M.A. Degree in Criminal Justice from George Washington University as well as a B.A. Degree in Public Administration, from Sacramento State University. Dale was inducted in the U.S. Martial Artist's Hall of Fame - Martial Artist of the Year (2005). Other books by Dale June: *Introduction to Executive Protection: Protection, Security and Safeguards: Practical Approaches and Perspectives*; *Terrorism and Homeland Security: Perspectives, Thoughts, and Opinions*; *The ReEvolution of American Street Gangs*; *What They Didn't Teach at The Academy: Topics, Stories and Reality Beyond the Classroom*.



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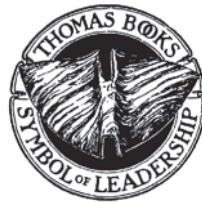
A Guide to Mastering the Business of VIP Security

By

ELIJAH SHAW

and

DALE JUNE



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This book is dedicated to the next generation of protectors who have a desire to break the stereotypes of the past and advance the profession onward and upward.

—EJS

My efforts in this book are dedicated to all the fine men and women who have dedicated their lives to helping those who, for reasons beyond their control, have a need to be protected and secure in their pursuit of fame, celebrity, and riches.

—DLJ

FOREWORD

Elijah Shaw is one of the best in the business of executive protection. Throughout the years, I have had the pleasure of watching him grow his skills, his business, and his brand. He has also offered excerpts of his expertise to others by sharing his knowledge of the field through his training courses. His resume and clientele read like a who's who of your favorite A-list celebrities, so it's no surprise why he is so highly sought after.

As a 27-year music industry veteran on the business side, one constant thought resonates strongly with me every time I meet a new up-and-coming star for the first time: "I wonder if this novice entertainer will confuse employing hired muscle versus great executive protection." There is a difference. Any big man or woman with muscles can play the role of security; however, it takes a great skill set to understand human behaviors, particularly in the entertainment industry.

I first met Elijah many years ago when we represented the same client in separate capacities. I was responsible for the promotional appearances, and Elijah was responsible for the logistical elements of moving and securing the VIP. To date, Elijah's approach to safety and his attention to detail is my gold standard. By the time anyone arrives at a venue, Elijah already knows the event space layout better than anyone. He adapts quickly to any given scenario, whether working in an isolated capacity or liaising with the on-site venue staff to ensure that his standards are met. Working with him, I witnessed firsthand what professionalism and diligence to the protocol of safety and security look like.

The entertainment industry is overwhelmed with high-profile clients encountering high-risk situations. Where in the past, most of those unfortunate encounters could be kept relatively quiet, these days, many play out publicly for the amusement or derision of others via social media. Whether it is a red-carpet appearance, or merely walking out of a hotel room, the public never sees the intricacies of having to navigate some of the more nightmarish logistics. It takes a well-seasoned professional to know how to move a client through a 20,000-seat concert venue filled with screaming fans, to a 20-person intimate dinner with make-or-break executives in attendance, all

under a time constraint. Yet I've seen him do both, making each transition flow seamlessly, while making himself virtually invisible—an unsung hero of sorts.

In my business, as much as you want to plan and keep everything on a schedule, the fact is, spontaneity is the variable that always plays a role, and last-minute changes continuously occur. You have to be fluid and quick-thinking to adjust to the unexpected movements of the client. As such, we are the behind-the-scenes players who have to balance meeting the needs and expectations of everyone around us. A fan wants a memorable experience, an event planner wants their event to run smoothly, a representative wants to be effective, tastemakers want access, the star wants to shine, and someone like Elijah and his team want to ensure that the trust put in them is not in vain.

I often equate the actions of professional security to a chess game with a bit more physicality; yet both are extremely cerebral, so the rules of engagement are still applicable. The goal is to protect the VIP (the King or Queen), survey the possible moves on the board, and always stay a few steps ahead of the opposition. This book is an insight into a world that the public rarely thinks of but, when executed correctly, we don't have to. Let this book serve as your guide to having discovered the world's first Bobby Fischer/Jason Bourne hybrid.

Consider yourself warned: Elijah Shaw is badass—and if your paths cross in person, I hope you are on the side of the angels, as I've seen that stark disapproving glare of his in action!

Enjoy.

Samantha “Baby Sam” Selolwane
Senior Vice President, Urban Promotion
RCA Records

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks to my wonderful family, who have been a huge support system throughout, not just during the process of writing a book, but through my entire career. As you'll find in the subsequent pages, this industry can take its toll on family, so to my mother Hadiyah, my sons Jyhad, Eric, and Alex, thank you for continuing to motivate me to get up every morning. I would like to thank the people who gave me words of inspiration and encouragement: KEH, Shawna, Baby Sam, Adam, Gabs, Mez, JC, and M. I would like to thank my mentor, Bob Duggan, for giving me a positive blueprint to pattern myself after in this business, as well as thank my peers, Mark James, Raffaele Di Giorigio, Sam Alicea, Eric K, and Benjamin Alozie. Finally, I would like to thank my writing partner Dale June, one of my earliest inspirations, for getting involved in the industry. It was reading one of his earlier books, *Introduction to Executive Protection*, that cemented the fact that I wanted to make a career out of helping others.

—EJS

First and foremost, I want to thank Elijah Shaw for asking me to participate in writing this book. It is a great honor and compliment that I hold dear. Secondly, I want to thank my wife, Muslima and our son, Mohammed, for their encouragement and patience in allowing me the time I need to focus on something I strongly believe in. I write for the challenge, enjoyment, and to pass the lamp to another generation of protectors.

—DLJ

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**AN INTRODUCTION TO CELEBRITY
PROTECTION AND TOURING**

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Elijah J. Shaw, July 2018

Dale L. June, July 2018

For close to three decades now, I've been working with celebrities, high net-worth individuals, and VIPs to protect them from both harm and embarrassment. In this book, I want to give readers a sense of what this profession is really all about, separating fact from fantasy, and emphasizing the real world over the textbook. As an instructor, these philosophies are incorporated into the lessons that I teach, when my schedule permits, at the ICON Training Academy. The courses, like the business itself, are rewarding on multiple levels, and the challenge is how to fit all my passions and pursuits into an extremely hectic operational schedule. This dilemma has plagued me over the years: how do I create the time to educate individuals in the industry and on the industry, when time is the one thing I have so very little of? The solution to this problem you now hold in your hands in the form of this book.

The book is designed for a wide readership, from those brand-new to the profession, who are in the process of deciding if this is the career for them, to individuals with various degrees of experience in the business, who stay sharp by continuously adding updated tools to their toolkit.

As I see it, no matter the specific area an individual is working in (or plans to work in), be it with corporations, celebrities, the clergy, or politicians, the basic building blocks are the same: we provide personal (close) protection to our clients, with them becoming our protectees. However, this is much more than just physical protection—pro-

viding a body to guard a body. We are more than that, and as such, must reevaluate regularly, for just as the threats have evolved, so must we.

That means giving increased attention to critical thinking, logistical planning, and sound problem-solving, and when applied correctly, we find that this has the amazing benefit of reducing or eliminating the need to ever get physical in the first place. The ability to do all of that, as well as to be ready to respond effectively if the need does arise, is what separates the trained from the untrained.

However, just as there are similarities, there are also differences inherent with the specific type of protectee you're working with. Celebrities often have a need for our services, not just because of the bad guys, but also because of their fans, ranging from the well-intentioned to the obsessive. This type of protective posture and response is different from other categories of high net-worth individuals, who while wealthy, don't have the spotlight on them in terms of public adoration and the dark side that potentially comes with it. Consider a corporate executive who, while facing a degree of potential risk, has different challenges. The routine of protecting him from his home to his office and back is a very different story from being stage-left with an entertainer who's performing in front of 20,000 screaming fans.

Even the pace of celebrity protection is unique, due to the ebb and flow of the assignments and situations you can be in. These can range from being so active that you feel you need to clone yourself just to get everything done, to waiting for hours on end for the client to come out of his or her dressing room. Adjusting to this dynamic is difficult for some and impossible for others. Many get into celebrity protection not realizing the scope of their duties or the totality of the client's dependence on the service, and they can feel like they are adrift at sea.

However, I don't want to paint the impression that you will always be going it alone. There are times when you will be working with a team of individuals, like-minded or otherwise, and even as a solo operator your thought process and outlook must still reflect a team mentality as you interact with the protectee, with their staff, with law enforcement, with the press, and with the fans. These are all members of the team, and it will be up to you to make sure they play ball like national champions instead of butting heads and imploding like children on the playground.

It's still weird for me to think that, since college, this has been the only industry I've ever worked in (minus that one-year stint selling cars, but that's a story for another book). I'll humbly go on record to state that I've found this career to be a blessing for me on multiple levels and for a variety of reasons. For example, due to the nature of my profession, a kid who grew up in a housing project on the south side of Chicago well under the poverty line has been able to see the world, literally, a few times over. Those work trips have ignited a personal passion for international travel (and a collection of frequent flyer miles). So far, I've travelled to 73 countries and six of the seven continents. The profession gives me not just a living, but long-term financial independence.

However, most importantly, it has given me a chance to grow as a human being, learning about myself as I've learned about the people I've worked with. I've also been able to pay it forward by being in a position to be able to give back to the community. I've done this by offering *pro bono* protection for women who have been victims of domestic abuse and for the shelters that support them. Additionally, for several years now, I've offered merit-based scholarships to the ICON Training Academy directed at individuals who want the training, but much like me at the beginning of my career, financially might not have the means. Now with this latest endeavor at finally tackling authorship (thanks, Mark!), I hope that pulling these concepts, philosophies, and tactics out of my head and putting them on paper will be helpful as our industry, like the rest of the world, evolves.

The great successful men of the world have used their imagination; they think ahead and create their mental picture in all its details, filling in here, adding a little there, altering this a bit and that a bit, but steadily building—steadily building.

—Robert Collier¹

To be rich and famous is the dream of young artists, musicians and actors, despite the fact that it's a long hard road and only a chosen few finally make it to the top where they can say they have arrived. One famous comedian of the 1990s said he knew he was successful when he could write a check for a million dollars. That was his personal measurement of success, while others invest in art or large homes in

1. Retrieved 11/12/17 from motivatingquotes.com/achievement.htm.

Malibu near the ocean. They have large social media followings and adoring fans, and everywhere they go they are given the royal treatment benefitting their star celebrity status.

Yet, as celebrity grows, so grows the amount of trials and complications. What started as a single companion now balloons to an entourage that contains advisors, handlers, promoters, fixers and hangers-on. Then there are the ever-present *paparazzi*² pushing and shoving, vying for the best position to gain the most advantageous spot to document every movement of the celebrity. The overly enthusiastic photographer will even stake out and stalk the object of his professional attention, popping up here, appearing there, springing out of nowhere, causing surprise and even fear in the celebrity.

Adding to the complexity of the celebrity's life are the ever-present and all-seeing eyes and presence of the protectors who become a necessary, perhaps stabilizing element between the celebrity and the chaos of their life. Yet as necessary as they are, the protectors may not always be appreciated.

I couldn't go anywhere unless there was a security guard with me. That spoiled my life. It was like being in captivity. Those days are gone, and I don't ever want to see that happen to me again. Now I can wander around the streets of Los Angeles on my own. I like it that way.

—Christine McVie, Member of Fleetwood Mac³

Fame equals fans: fans by the thousands, adoring, admiring, affectionate. They form a type of symbiotic relationship with the entertainer; they buy the music, appreciate the art, and attend the concerts. All they want is to be a part of the artist's world, even if only for a short time. They are the ordinary fans who like what they see and hear and, though enthusiastic, will remain relatively considerate of the performer and their personal life.

2. Paparazzi are independent photographers who take pictures of high-profile people such as athletes, entertainers, politicians, and other celebrities, typically while the subjects go about their usual life routines. Paparazzi tend to make a living by selling their photographs to media outlets focusing on tabloid journalism and sensationalism. In his book, *Word and Phrase Origins*, author Robert Hendrickson writes that Federico Fellini's 1959 film, *La Dolce Vita*, took the name *paparazzi* from an Italian dialect word for a particularly noisy, buzzing mosquito. Retrieved 12/18/17 from paparazzecelebrity.blogspot.com/2007/03/history-of-paparazzi.html

3. Quoted in June, Dale L. (2016). *Introduction to Executive Protection* (3rd ed.). Boca Raton: CRC Press.