

Ensuring a Safe and Secure Cyber Environment

Add these elements for a robust cybersecurity awareness plan/program:

1. Assign a senior staff member to be in charge. This person might be the Chief Information Officer, the Chief Information Security Officer, or other designee who is both technical and people-oriented. A high-level administrator or HR professional can also fill this role.
2. The best plans are on-going and not just an annual event of a few hours of training.
3. Practice the elements of the plan and conduct drills to make sure everyone understands and complies.
4. Make sure there are stated consequences for careless behavior, depending on the levels of any violation.
5. While making sure you hold to your stated policies and procedures, you also want to make sure that you create a positive environment that encourages staff to report things at once if they believe they may have come across something wrong.
6. Conduct regular, focused sessions aimed at exploring various types of cyberattacks. This will help demonstrate your organization's commitment to keeping systems safe as well as to keep the topic front and center with employees.
7. Consider role playing to help demonstrate how criminal elements use the phone, or social media to manipulate staff into providing valuable data that get into the wrong hands.
8. Employees should be trained to recognize an attack; to know not only what it looks like, but who to call and when to report the attack.
9. Always encourage employees to come forward with anything that they feel does not look or feel right. There have been many cases where an alert employee reported something as it was unfolding and as a result was able to minimize damage and loss.
10. Overall, training must be relevant and should be fun – like playing detective or guarding the “palace” as in a video game.

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