LA-UR-14-23163

Title: What is Security

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Intended for: Human Reliability Workshop, 2014-05-19/2014-05-22 (Tel Aviv, Israel)

Issued: 2014-05-05

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What is Security?

A perspective on achieving security

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Many definitions

- **A title**
- **A program**
- **A company**
- **A feeling**
- **An excuse**
- **An mindset**

Security as a mindset

- **When you treat security as a mindset, you are relinquishing your conduct to a systematic method for conducting your everyday affairs.**

- **This method influences everything you do in one way or another.**

- **Some individuals are raised with this mindset.**

- **Some individuals are able to adapt to it or some portion of it.**

- **Some individuals will never be able to adapt to a security mindset.**

Ability to adhere to rules

- **Rules can be burdensome and we are often asked to manipulate our behavior when we don't always understand the reason.**

- **A security mindset demands a willingness to follow the rules and to some degree, appreciate the reason for their origin.**

- **Rule makers should do their best to make common sense of the process.**

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Awareness

- **We can't expect workers to condition or sharpen their security mindset if we don't make them aware (to some degree) of the reason.**

- **It is illogical to expect someone to follow my advice while simultaneously ignoring my example.**

Quality of Security Program

- **White coat mentality**
- **Can do no wrong**
- **Because I said so…**
- **Security Programs often enjoy a "carte blanche" on implementing requirements. This practice may change as younger workers begin asking "why?"**
- **Invalid requirements are one click away from being discovered from the youth of today. They know where to find the answers.**

Willingness to admit fault or acknowledge failure

- **Does your program admit failure?**

- **Does your program place too much emphasis on blame instead of identifying the point of failure and fixing it (the who instead of the what)?**

- **How does the security program respond to criticism?**

Peer Review in Security

- **How often are decisions reviewed and critiqued?**

- **Is the security environment conducive to criticism and process improvement?**

- **Are layers of approvals for legitimate peer review or merely for blame assignment if something goes wrong?**

Science as a model

- **One of the strengths of science is that the scientist is so critical of his/her own hypothesis. Scientist are constantly challenging themselves on data integrity and conclusions. Even after the scientist accepts their conclusion, they then publish their conclusions and invite their peers to uncover any faults.**

- **The Security profession can learn from this model. Although many security professionals claim to have this mindset, most are tied to a system which pays for performance. In the end, the association with money is what negatively impacts the security mindset.**

Security Vision

- **Does your system promote ideas which are not the current mainstream?**

- **New and innovative ideas are going to come from the periphery, not the center.**

- **Are you talking to the people who know where your vulnerabilities are?**

- **Do your policies match your practices?**
  - **An argument for a gap**

Security Partnering

- **We can pretend Security has the same level of importance to everyone; it doesn't**

- **Consensus is often difficult to obtain**

- **Expanding self-interest, resulting in mutual interest is where successes can be realized**

- **When you are arguing with an idiot, make sure the other guy is not doing the same thing.**

Stale Security

- **Does your program allow you to "let go" of old processes in favor of new methods?**

- **Does your program simply add requirements without eliminating outdated policy which results in desensitization of requirements due to burden?**

- **Is there management turnover in your system which facilitates new and innovative ideas?**

Security Responsibility

- **HRP Management Officials impact lives. This level of responsibility requires appropriate checks and balances to ensure good decisions are being made**

- **Human Resources**

- **Legal Consultation**

- **Medical and Psychological**

- **Management**

- **Evaluation of feedback**

Is Perfection Possible?

- **No but we can smooth areas of intersecting interests by stepping back and looking at the big picture**
- **Crisis should be expected and planned for in any program**
- **Conflict is not always a bad thing**
- **Never let the same dog bite you twice**
- **Continuous monitoring of systems and personnel in HRP is key to realizing success over time**