Top 3 Cyber Security Basics

You might think that safeguarding corporate information is a job for the IT department. But it also falls to employees to do their part. According to a 2019 IBM report, 25% of data breaches are due to human error. Follow these tips to keep data safe:

1. Think before you plug it in or connect it. Flash drives, external data storage drives and mobile devices are vulnerable to malicious software or viruses. Avoid connecting outside devices to network machines or using them to transfer files.

2. Give email messages a second look. Social engineering and phishing are targeted attacks that often arrive via email. Ignore and delete emails that are strangely worded, urge you to click on a link, ask you to transmit private information or make you uneasy. Always check or call the source of the email to confirm it's a legitimate request.

3. Use strong passwords. Cybercriminals use sophisticated programs that search for passwords and then plug them into every available site and account until they get a match. Using easy-to-decipher passwords or using the same password for everything is risky. Avoid recognizable words or dates in passwords; instead, create random assortments of letters, numbers and symbols. Change passwords often, and use a unique password for every account or site.

Perfecting Your Elevator Pitch

Do you ever feel lost for words when someone asks you, "What do you do?", "Tell me about yourself," or "What's your job about?" This is the time to pull out your **elevator pitch.**

What is an elevator pitch?
An elevator pitch is a 1-minute spoken description of you and/or your job.

Why should I have one?
Salespeople use instant elevator pitches to grab the attention of potential investors or clients. However, anyone can use them. An elevator pitch comes in handy at conferences, networking events, client meetings, training or any professional venue where you need to introduce yourself and help people remember you.

How do I create one?
Follow these strategies to create a 60-second description that captures you perfectly:

➔ **Start with a strong, memorable statement that summarizes you and your skills** – something more descriptive than your job title.

➔ **Don't sound phony or sales-oriented in your elevator pitch.** Talk about what you do and what makes you good at your job in the way you'd describe it to a good friend or family member.

➔ **Stick to 1 topic.** If you wear lots of hats or have a particularly complex job, use simple words to highlight the key aspects of who you are and what you do, without cramming in too much.

➔ **Practice.** Say your elevator pitch out loud, so you can adjust it and make sure it isn't too long.

Secrets to Email Productivity

According to a survey by AtTask, employees at large companies (1,000-plus employees) spent about 14% of their time each week on email. While email is an essential communications tool, it can often become a burden or distraction and waste time. To ensure email helps you work smarter, follow these simple procedures:

Create email folders and archives, where you can send messages as they arrive and easily find them later.

Answer emails that require a quick response; then delete or file them.

Keep your responses short and to the point. If a message requires a lengthy answer or you find yourself rewriting and reworking it, use another, more personal method such as the telephone or talking face-to-face.

Check and read email during less productive periods, such as the end of the day, after lunch or while you're waiting for a call or meeting to start (whenever feasible).

Avoid checking your email every time a new message arrives. Doing so removes a huge distraction and improves productivity.

Survey:
Tech At Work

A 2018 PwC survey of 12,287 adults working full-time in Canada, China and Hong Kong, Germany, India, Mexico, the UK and the U.S. revealed that 40% to 45% of them prefer to interact in person for tasks such as performance reviews, getting help with difficult problems, and getting information from HR. However, employees also liked digital help, such as comments and likes on social media, benefits enrolling and vacation scheduling. As individuals, we can make some of these decisions ourselves: when, how and where to use technology that most benefits our personal lives and work productivity.

Maximize Training

At some time in your career, you may have the opportunity to take either voluntary or mandatory training to enhance your skills. Use these tips to get the most from your experience.

☑ Before the training consider why you need it and how you hope to benefit from it.

☑ Arrive early for the training, whether on-site or online, to prepare.

☑ If your attention tends to wander, situate yourself with a good view of your instructor or screen and any visuals. Taking notes can also help you stay on task.

☑ Ask questions and participate in activities and exercises fully and enthusiastically. You'll stay energized and learn more.
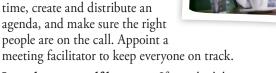
☑ Find ways to apply your training to your job. Consider talking with coworkers or a manager about your learning experience. Sharing this helps you retain the new information and techniques.

Conference Call Etiquette

With many people working remotely and collaborating across long distances today, conference calls are increasingly useful. Make these remote meetings a productive part of your day with these tips:

Treat it like any other meeting. Schedule a firm start and end time, create and distribute an agenda, and make sure the right people are on the call. Appoint a meeting facilitator to keep everyone on track.

Introduce yourself by name. If you don't know everyone, you might also say a few lines about what you do. When you speak, remind people who you are, especially if there are lots of attendees.

Don't wait until the last minute. Leave ample time to dial in, enter any security codes and read the agenda or materials.

Listen actively. Don't give in to the temptation to check your email, have side conversations or do other work while on the call. Give it your full attention, or you risk missing information and wasting time.

Mute your phone or microphone to cut down on background noise when you aren't speaking.

Do standing desks help?

Some research suggests when people use sit-stand workstations on the job, they do indeed stand up more and feel more energetic and productive. However, British and Australian researchers found that people may compensate for this increased activity by sitting more during their off hours, canceling out the good effects. Sitting for prolonged periods has been linked to obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and early death. Whether you stand or sit at work, try to move more and sit less overall.