

ax·i·om */'aksēəm/*

a statement or proposition which is regarded as being established, accepted, or self-evidently true.

Social Engineering Axioms

- 1 Social engineering is the act of manipulating humans into providing confidential information or performing harmful actions.
- 2 Humans are the most target-rich environment for attackers, because all humans are vulnerable to deception, influence, and disinformation.
- 3 Attackers rely on social engineering because it is often the fastest way to further their goals.
- 4 An attacker only has to be successful once to compromise their target while the target needs to be successful 100% of the time to avoid compromise.
- 5 Attackers are innovative and will utilize new methods to deceive and manipulate their unprepared victims.
- 6 Motivated attackers or errant humans often bypass very expensive technical controls.
- 7 The human mind tends to take shortcuts in the absence of full understanding.
- 8 A distracted mind is a vulnerable mind.
- 9 Effective education is the only means to arm humans against deception and disinformation.
- 10 Security education is not done enough and not often enough to prevent social engineering.

Security Awareness Axioms

- 1 Security is an activity to safeguard the future of an individual or an organization.
- 2 Security Awareness is a state of understanding regarding certain threats against survival.
- 3 Understanding any threat requires effective communication about that particular threat.
- 4 Good cybersecurity relies on good human security.
- 5 At all times you are either building security strength or allowing atrophy.
- 6 Security Awareness based on only knowledge is not sufficient: just because someone is aware doesn't mean they care.
- 7 Security knowledge that doesn't feel relevant or personal is quickly forgotten.
- 8 Being alert to potential threats and a healthy sense of skepticism are keys to effective defense.
- 9 Healthy security habits provide protection at times when the mind is distracted. Only through frequent, updated reinforcement will security risks be significantly mitigated.
- 10 Your security awareness program is the face and voice of your security team across the organization.
- 11 Effective security awareness fortifies mindfulness, behaviors, security culture and strengthens an organization's last line of defense: humans.
- 12 The ultimate goal of security awareness is an individual that is able to make smarter security decisions.