

Managing Hackers: Eight Rules for Creating Productive Security Teams

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EXPERIENCE. RESULTS.



Abstract

- While commonly entrenched within bleeding-edge technology, most forget the importance and art of management and getting the very best out of your personnel investment – a.k.a. your largest and most valuable corporate asset. This talk aims to address the eight critical focal points that all information security managers must recognize and take action upon to ensure the ongoing success for their team. Building from the lessons learned and implemented while at Harvard, Wharton, Guardent, Foundstone, and now CSC, Foster will overview the “Top 8” principles for building and managing world-class information security and technology teams.



The Greatest Expense....

- Salary and benefits are the single greatest expense to any company
- A lost or unproductive employee can cost an organization **SEVEN** times the cost of an average employee's salary



Management Trends

- Whilst a poor practice, solid management techniques are often treated like your next fad diet
- The only thing more important than the program is the mindset and determination to follow-through



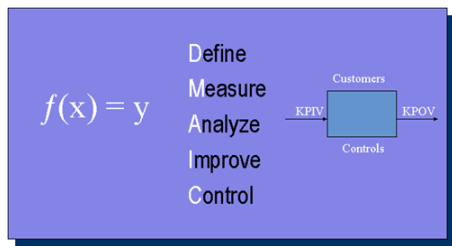
M . A . P .

Action Items:

- Create a 3 and 6 month operating plan

Elements of Failure:

- Unpredictable results for any project
- More than 1 format for status updates





Floating Management

- A new phrase for a new idea....

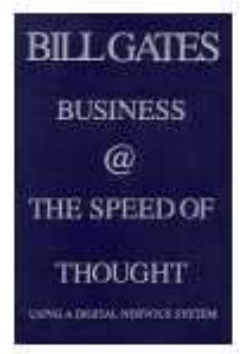
Remote, productive, enthusiastic, creative workforces



I. COMMUNICATION

- “A robust communication program is the secret key to increasing productivity”
- Foster
- Process with tools, not tools with process
- Consistency is vital

- Action Items:
 - Weekly team conference calls. Monday morning @8am – let everyone join from home
 - Mandate secure instant messaging
 - E-mails instead of meetings – “Bill Gates”
- Elements of Failure:
 - Meetings with less than 3 people
 - Meetings that are under 1 hour in duration





II. Academic M.O.

- Proven academic-based research methodologies help focus and quantify research into new technologies
- Caveat – basic research should have no boundaries; however, research methodologies are applied to research initiatives not development
- Action Items:
 - Become familiar with and teach the basics of MIT research abstract creation to all of your team (30 min lunch is sufficient)
 - Use abstracts as concept of operations for research project overviews
- Elements of Failure:
 - Team members don't feel their abstracts provide value and since discard your efforts as pure management garbage



MIT Artificial Intelligence Laboratory

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III. Instill Individual Ownership

- Personal ownership
- Team projects are nice but people must have personal value in their day-to-day job

Action Items:

- Ensure that every employee has at least one widget that is completely their responsibility

Elements of Failure:

- You can't create a spreadsheet with employee-assignment ownership





IV. Accountability Models

- Real-time
- No micromanagement
- Live and die by the deadline
- All deadlines are mutually agreed upon upfront



Action Items:

- Create weekly, monthly, and quarterly production schedules
- Create process that states it's staff job to forward communicate schedule deviations
- Instill importance of deadlines for managing upwards

Elements of Failure:

- You ask "how's the project coming?"
- Requiring communication with staff to understand met project checkpoints



V. Measurable Productivity

- Real-time tools to help measure and quantify widgets should be required
- Measurable and easily understood productivity gains or losses enable you to grow your team
 - With X more people you can expect Y more results

Action Items:

- Graph success rates on achieved deadlines
- Identify and work with problem children

Elements of Failure:

- At any given point, you can not answer the question “how often does your staff meet small and large, team and individual milestones?”

VI. Hybrid Goal Setting



- Team goals create unity and allow socialization practice that comes in handy when large projects are required



- Individual goals are vital for establishing ownership success rates – excellent morale boosters

Action Items:

- As a sub-action for creating schedules of work activities
- All tasks should have deadlines and staff congratulated when milestones are met

Elements of Failure:

- Ratio of goals are more than 1-4 in either direction
- More than 5% of goals are not achieved



VII. Enable Innovation



vs.



- Why do start-up companies *seem* to enable innovation? Is it merely perception or do only innovative people go to start-up companies?
- More importantly, how do I breed innovation internally?

Leaders of the pack!

- Google's 20% Free Reign Rule
- Microsoft's BASIC Research Initiative

Action Items:

- Create plan to rotate open
- Training and research time
 - (1 week per 3-4 months)

Elements of Failure:

- Report writing

VIII. Leading by Example

- First and foremost, a leader must be respected by his staff
- Peer-level respect will follow...
 - Order is important



Action Items:

- Work smarter – work harder
- Double-check emails for accuracy
- Champion ethics, strong value systems, family, and personnel development

Elements of Failure:

- Unexpected voluntary personnel resignations
- Staff unwillingness to go above and beyond
- Lack of realized initiatives



EXPERIENCE. RESULTS.

Wrap-Up

Remember

What's good for the company is good for the team not vice-versa...



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