

# BITS

FINANCIAL SERVICES  
R O U N D T A B L E

**CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS FOR SECURITY AWARENESS & TRAINING PROGRAMS  
ENDORSED AS VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES  
BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES ROUNDTABLE  
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Developing a comprehensive security awareness and training program is a regulatory requirement and an effective risk management practice. Here are a few critical factors for success.

### **Consider the Corporate Culture**

- Establish a program where security awareness and training are designed to maintain an appropriate balance between revenue, risk and reputation.

### **Engage Senior Management Support**

- Gain senior management approval and communicate the messages and policies to the entire company. Developing a culture of security awareness and individual responsibility is most effective when the messages are driven by senior management.

### **Enforce Policies**

- Develop well-written, understandable and current policies to reflect the corporate, threat and regulatory environment. Awareness and training programs should address the importance of adhering to policies, as well as the potential financial and reputational impact to the organization from security events.

### **Establish a Comprehensive Program**

- Whether run centrally or de-centrally, the program should be staffed with experienced individuals and properly funded to develop, maintain and track the program's effectiveness.
- Understand that awareness is not training. Awareness focuses attention. Training provides employees with appropriate skills and knowledge. Effective programs contain both.

### **Communicate, Communicate, Communicate – But Target!**

- Develop the required messages and create a strategy to communicate them through multiple channels targeted at different learning styles and levels.
- Utilize multiple touch points. From new hires to lines of business to corporate communications and the human resources department as well as senior management, everyone has an opportunity and a responsibility to stress the importance of security.
- Recognize that each employee has a role in protecting the organization's information assets. Segmenting employees based upon risk and responsibility for their roles provides an opportunity to focus on the policies, controls and consequences of poor information security behavior.
- Communicate the importance of controls and security to the individual's life outside of work. Today's risks and threats extend beyond the corporate environment.

### **Track Effectiveness and Update Your Program As Needed**

- Use both qualitative and quantitative metrics to obtain feedback, measure and benchmark the effectiveness of your security awareness and training program. Make change a part of your process because the risks are constantly changing. Security Awareness and Training is a long-term, ongoing process.

For additional information, contact Cheryl Charles, Senior Director, BITS, 202-589-2444; Cheryl@fsround.org