

INSIDER THREAT SCENARIOS

Use these insider threat scenarios to learn about possible suspicious, concerning, or risky behaviors. These scenario cards can serve as a discussion tool to determine when and how to report these behaviors, and what kind of details are important to note.



CDSE
Center for Development
of Security Excellence

NITOM
National Insider Threat Awareness Month

WHAT TO DO

Always report suspicious, risky, or concerning behavior. Use this set of scenarios

as a guide to assist you in determining which details to report. Remember who, what, where, when, and why, if possible. For an added challenge, identify which types of insider threats might manifest in each scenario: **Cyber Threat, Espionage, Fraud, Sabotage, Terrorism, Theft, Unauthorized Disclosure, or Violence.**

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SCENARIO

As the regional team lead you are responsible for conducting audits of payroll completed by bookkeepers.

When you review the number of work hours of each bookkeeper, you notice that one bookkeeper has worked extra hours every other Friday. This is not unusual.

However, you notice the same bookkeeper has charged the company for “client lunches” every other week for a client that has paused contractual work for two months. They have also continued payments to an employee who was terminated three months ago and to an employee you're not familiar with.

When you look up this employee, you cannot find any project they are assigned to. The bookkeeper's salary does not appear to be erroneous.

NITAM

SCENARIO

A coworker instant messages you asking for assistance with reviewing material for a presentation later.

You tell the coworker you will be over as soon as you grab a few things off the printer. You printed these documents five minutes ago. You walk around the corner to the printer shared by half the suite. There is one person in front of you sifting through printouts. He takes a few and hands you the remainder. When you look through your printouts you realize a few pages are missing. These pages contain information for those who have a need-to-know only.

Back at your desk, you send a message to your coworker letting her know you're on your way to help, but she has changed her mind.

NITAM

SCENARIO

As you walk down the hallway of office suites on your floor you notice a group of men dressed in gray

jumpsuits with no visible company logo. They have visitor badges, but no escort.

When you ask them how they got up here, they tell you that they are just there to check the server rooms and that a woman at the front desk let them in.

NITAM

SCENARIO

A colleague comes over to your desk to congratulate you. You're confused and ask what he's talking

about. He tells you that after a system update last night he now has access to management's shared drive.

After some snooping, he learned that you will receive high commendation and a raise. He also says that one of your other colleagues is certainly going to be let go. He thinks everyone's personal information and performance reviews should be available for everyone to read. He asks you to attempt to access the drive before IT realizes permissions are set wrong.

NITAM

SCENARIO

A coworker was recently overlooked for a promotion. When you last spoke to her, she said she had

no choice but to deal with the decision because she needed her job.

Lately, you've noticed her shredding a lot of paper. When you walk over to her cubicle, she jumps up and tells you she's going out to lunch with friends. When you ask how she's doing, she curtly replies that she couldn't be better and states she'll be back in an hour. As she leaves, she asks you to seal her burn bag and drop it off. As you go to seal the bag, you notice a signed offer letter from an industry competitor. Your coworker does not return to work that day.

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SCENARIO

Coworkers are in the break room discussing their holiday vacations. One coworker expresses regret

over spending too much money, as he seems to do every year.

A second coworker describes a last minute trip abroad to Lebanon to visit family.

A third coworker inquires which part of the country, as they also have family in Lebanon. The second coworker says he meant to say Lisbon, Portugal — not Lebanon. He has never mentioned having family in either country.

Before leaving for the day, you see the second coworker and say, "Boa noite." He looks puzzled and turns away abruptly.

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SCENARIO

While waiting in the bank lobby to speak to a financial planner you notice a female employee speaking

with another patron at the service counter. The employee asks the patron if they are setting up a new account. The patron says they need assistance with an existing account. The employee then asks the patron to write down their name, address, checking account number, and any credit card accounts they may have.

The patron complies and the employee places the patron's information in a nearby folder. Your name is called to meet with the financial planner. When you sit down you ask if you need to provide your personally identifiable information on paper. The financial planner tells you that is unnecessary, as they don't use paper copies of personal banking information in the building.

NITAM

SCENARIO

You and your family meet up with a coworker's family on a Saturday to go bowling. In between turns, your coworker starts discussing work. You remind your coworker that this is not the place or time to discuss such matters.

As your coworker bowls, his spouse asks you about a project you are working on and proceeds to name it by its classified code-name. You say you're not familiar and go to bowl on your turn.

When you return to your seat, your coworker assures you that his spouse has no idea what goes on at work.

NITOM

SCENARIO

A good friend of yours has recently gotten divorced and has been stressed about not being able to see his kids. You notice he has started to isolate himself and has also lost a significant amount of weight.

You visit him one afternoon to find his house in complete disarray with beer bottles everywhere. Your friend looks unkempt and unhealthy. He tells you he has little motivation to come to work or even get out of bed.

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SCENARIO

You check emails and notice a forwarded email from a coworker. In the body of the email, your coworker says they clicked the link and it was easy. The original email appears to be from your supervisor, but her name is misspelled. The subject line reads: "URGENT. Send info too confirm."

The body of that email contains the following message: "Plz send your name, birthday and social security # to confirm registration for upcoming conference. Please send info to c0nferenceregistrati0n@infoshare.com or click this link."

You've never had to register through this contact or portal before.

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SCENARIO

One of your coworkers is extremely vocal about his political viewpoints in the workplace. This morning he seemed to argue with anyone who would listen. Another coworker reminded him that as a federal employee, he should be mindful of the Hatch Act, to which he responded, "Do you see me wearing a button or running for office?"

Around lunchtime you walk by his desk and notice it is filled with political paraphernalia and he is logged into a social media website.

A little later, you log into your social media and see the following message posted publicly by the overtly political coworker: "How about the act of a hatch in your back! Mind your business, partisan hacks."

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SCENARIO

You are part of a team comprising researchers and engineers tasked with developing a new technology for the warfighter. Your three colleagues, an Iranian-American, and several expat spouses from Russia are the only individuals who know about the new nanotechnology your group calls "Project Aegis."

While attending an international tech industry conference, you notice one of the product presentations by a foreign company shares striking similarities to Project Aegis. The presenter states the product was developed in collaboration with American experts in nanotechnology.

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SCENARIO

A coworker's sister was recently killed in a random act of violence. Since he returned to work from bereavement he has been understandably withdrawn – except on the occasion when he sees a random person that fits the general physical description of his sister's killer. When this happens, your coworker's animosity toward his target is intense enough to worry everyone around him. You have had to talk him out of his anger numerous times.

As you enter the building together, you pass a group of interns laughing and joking. You hear your coworker mutter something about the interns finally getting what they deserve.

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SCENARIO

You meet up with one of your friends you haven't seen since she retired from the military a few months ago. As you walk together, you ask what her plans are now that she has so much free time. She says she's been writing a book on the mistreatment of women in the military. She says women are excluded from planning, as if they aren't equal to their male counterparts. She also wants to start her own photography business. She stops to take a picture of the scenery and offers you the camera to scroll through. You swipe through the gallery and see pictures of what appears to be classified materials and maps in her vehicle. You exit the photo gallery and hand the camera back.

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