

HR and Insider Threat Short

Welcome

This short learning topic addresses Human Resources, also known as Human Capital Management, and the role it plays in a multidisciplinary insider threat team.

Take a moment to review the course learning objectives.

Course Objectives:

- Explain Human Resources and its role in deterring, detecting, and mitigating risk associated with the insider threat
- Describe the role of Human Resource professionals in a multidisciplinary insider threat team
- Recognize Human Resource efforts to counter insider threats

HR and Insider Threat

Human Resources, or HR, plays a critical role in countering insider threat. Despite this, its role is often under-utilized or misunderstood in the context of its application to insider threat programs. HR personnel assist an organization's Insider Threat Program and contribute to multidisciplinary efforts to deter, detect, and mitigate risks associated with employees who are trusted insiders.

Insider threats are a problem that originates with humans, and HR has the most contact with employees at every level of the organization throughout their career—more than any other discipline.

There are multiple touch points with employees that begin as early as recruiting and continues to onboarding and termination.

HR professionals, especially employee relations specialists, often bring a diversity of thought to the table—thought that focuses on human psychology in addition to their extensive experience working with employees in tough situations.

HR supports Employee Assistance Programs, performance management, disciplinary actions, and promotions.

HR provides comprehensive personnel data management and analysis for the organization. It manages enterprise-wide programs ranging from recruitment, retention, benefits programs, travel management, training, language, and culture.

Through these programs, HR establishes a diverse and sustainable workforce to ensure personnel readiness for organizations.

Each of these factors contributes to the Insider Threat Program's ability to proactively mitigate

risk.

Countering the Insider Threat

While the insider threat is not new, recent cases highlight the need for a more proactive approach to deter, detect, and mitigate the threat associated with trusted insiders.

Early identification of concerning behaviors of individuals at risk and the deployment of appropriate mitigation responses are best accomplished with a multidisciplinary approach that draws on the expertise and resources of each subject matter area. HR should be an active and involved part of that effort.

Christopher Hasson

Domestic terrorism - 2020

Harold Martin III

Willful retention of National Defense Information – 2019

Wen Chyu Liu

Conspiracy to Commit Trade Secret Theft - 2011

Executive Order 13587, DoD Directive 5205.16, and the NISPOM all require Insider Threat Programs to build a multidisciplinary insider threat analysis and management capability.

Insider Threat Team

An effective multidisciplinary insider threat team should include representatives from:

- Counterintelligence (CI)
- Cybersecurity
- Human Resources (HR)
- Law Enforcement (LE)
- Legal
- Mental Health and Behavioral Science
- Security

Team members from each discipline work together to monitor, analyze, report, and respond to insider threat matters.

The team proactively identifies anomalous behavior that may indicate insiders with elevated risk. The team deploys mitigation responses to reduce risk to the organization while protecting the privacy and civil liberties of the individual.

These response options may focus on rehabilitative options that address the at-risk individual's behavior and divert them to more positive outcomes.

When necessary, the team shares relevant information from each discipline with organizational leadership to facilitate timely, informed decision-making and reports information outside the organization, as policy or regulation requires.

Human Resources Intro

HR is involved in every step before, during, and after employment. Select each phase to learn about HR's impact on efforts to deter, detect, and mitigate risks from insider threats.

Before Hiring, During Employment, After Employment

HR Role Before Hiring

Before the hiring process, HR validates that appropriate vetting actions are complete prior to welcoming a new team member.

HR also provides training for hiring managers on how to check references. HR may also initiate requests for security clearances and work with managers to determine appropriate levels of access.

During orientation, HR provides access to Standard Operating Procedures, or SOPs, and other training on potential insider risk indicators and reporting requirements.

Employee training is critical to identifying and reporting potential risk indicators and can help reduce the instances of accidental and socially engineered data breaches.

HR is responsible for developing clear and coherent policies relating to personnel matters and ensuring the staff is aware of organizational goals and missions.

This transparency fosters organizational trust, which has a positive impact on morale and helps gain buy-in from employees.

HR can help leadership understand best practices for employee engagement; employees who are engaged are less likely to pose an insider threat.

Before Hiring, HR may:

- Ensure appropriate vetting actions are completed.
- Provide guidance and training for hiring managers.
- Initiate requests for security clearances.
- Provide access to and tracking of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and training.
- Develop and maintain policies and procedures.

HR Role During Employment

HR has access to a variety of personnel who have authorized access to your organization and may represent a witting or unwitting insider threat.

During employment, HR serves as an authority on personnel policy in the workplace, sets the tone and standards for the workplace, and serves as a less-intimidating resource with whom

many people are comfortable speaking.

HR personnel may be able to identify concerning behaviors and activities indicative of risk through their interaction with personnel and their employment records.

HR's access to records may include, knowledge of promotions and demotions; conflicts of interest; financial problems; disgruntlement; and issues with the employee's supervisor.

HR personnel are positioned to identify patterns of employee issues that are happening across the organization and may also spot trends to address in certain departments before a negative event occurs.

HR solicits feedback from employees and reviews their responses.

HR may share information with leadership and the Insider Threat Program to facilitate organizational trust and a positive work environment.

HR professionals have a unique perspective and viewpoint to identify employee stressors, whether personal, professional, financial, or otherwise.

If concerning behaviors arise, the HR department works with front-line managers and supervisors to provide an opportunity for employees to improve performance. HR will also refer any employee experiencing life issues to the Employee Assistance Program.

HR departments also recommend, develop, or implement organizational responses such as new policies and procedures to mitigate potential insider risk.

When developing any insider threat mitigation option, HR will work with the other Insider Threat team members, including legal, to ensure respect and safeguarding of employees' rights. This can include the drafting of policies and procedures for employee assistance referrals, increased monitoring, or other response options.

During Employment, HR may:

- Update and draft new policy as needed.
- Set the standards for the organization.
- Monitor employee engagement and satisfaction.
- Stay abreast of Privacy and Civil Liberties issues.
- Look for indicators.
- Spot trends across the workforce.

HR Role After Employment

In the event of voluntary departure or termination of an employee, HR handles the process in accordance with established SOPs. After employment, HR also conducts an outbrief to assess any concerns with regard to potential insider threats.

Remember, former employees may still pose a risk to your organization because of what and whom they know in the organization. HR conducts an assessment which includes the types of information the employee had access to and indicates any potential risk the employee could pose even after departure from the organization.

During the out briefing, HR will collect any organizational materials from the exiting employee, such as access keys, identification cards, manuals, and other intellectual property. Carefully managing the termination and voluntary departure process is a key part of protecting against insider threats, which relies on the HR discipline.

HR professionals can access employee files that provide important information regarding employees and their engagement with managers and fellow employees, particularly if the employee is departing under less than favorable circumstances.

Even after employees leave the organization, HR professionals often stay involved in actions that may be relevant to the organization's Insider Threat Program or overall risk mitigation plan for a period thereafter.

HR professionals may interact with its internal security and legal divisions, in addition to external agencies regarding claims brought against a company.

HR also may receive a request for information from the employee for organizational files and in cases where the employee may attempt to contact former coworkers.

After Employment, HR may:

- Employ standard termination procedures.
- Conduct outbriefing interviews and post-termination assessments.
- Retrieve organization materials.
- Maintain historical records.
- Communicate with current management and employees after termination.
- Engage with legal and internal security and external agencies.
- Engage with former employees on release of personnel records.

Available HR Mitigations

HR has numerous strategies at its disposal to support the mitigation of insider risk. These can include taking steps to increase employee satisfaction; implementing recognition programs; accessing records and files for inquiries, investigations, or prosecution; developing organizational responses to insider threat incidents; and referring employees to the EAP for resources in financial counseling, lending programs, mental health, and other well-being programs.

Other potential mitigation tools available through HR include medical referrals, mediation with supervisors, specialized training, and other career opportunities.

In the event of an insider threat incident, HR maintains documentation that may be crucial to any investigation or prosecution.

HR can verify employee training completion dates and the objectives. HR also maintains all performance and recognition records, as well as any disciplinary actions.

Should any negative act occur, HR will handle the termination process and will assist when the event impacts or involve the remaining employees.

HR Mitigation Strategies:

- Take steps to increase satisfaction.
- Implement recognition programs.
- Access records and files for inquiries, investigations, or prosecution.
- Develop organizational responses to insider threat incidents.
- Refer employees to the EAP.

Other Mitigation Tools:

- Medical referrals
- Mediation with supervisors
- Specialized training
- Career opportunities
- Maintains documents
- Verifies employee training
- Maintains employee records
- Manages termination process

Course Summary

HR's unique efforts in preventing, identifying, mitigating, and monitoring insider threat contributes greatly to the Insider Threat team.

HR has the most contact with employees at every level of the organization and the specific functions of HR such as, employee monitoring, Employee Assistance Program support, and personnel data management make Human Resources a critical pillar of an effective Insider Threat Program.

HR in an Insider Threat team

- Monitor employee engagement.
- Refer for resources in financial or mental health counseling.
- Provide comprehensive personnel data management and analysis for the organization.

Course Completion

You have completed the Human Resources and Insider Threat short learning topic. You should now be able to explain the role and responsibilities of Human Resources in an insider threat team.

Congratulations!

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