Writing a Strategic Training Plan

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Abstract

As part of an organization's IT Security Program, many educators are tasked with building, improving, and implementing a security training, education, and awareness (TEA) program. Before successful TEA program implementation, it is essential that the overall training strategy be defined, including a breakout of each component and a clear explanation of its criticality to the program's success.

Often, training professionals confuse a strategic training plan with an <u>implementation</u> plan. An implementation plan focuses on how and when TEA goals are going to accomplished in the year ahead. Conversely, the primary intent of a strategic training plan is to tie the mission, objectives, and direction of the agency to the mission, objectives, and direction of the TEA program. The process of developing an effective strategic training plan includes actually writing it as well as the challenge of completely understanding and integrating the agency's strategy with the TEA strategy. This relationship must be reflected in a well-written document.

A truly <u>strategic</u> training plan has three main benefits as follows: 1) it serves as a mechanism to expand the TEA program beyond that of an isolated function that provides logistical course delivery and an annual awareness day event 2) it clarifies and strengthens the relationship between the agency/organization mission and the program goals 3) it serves as a lever for increased funding by mapping out the resources required to bridge knowledge and skill gaps in the security workforce.

REFERENCES:
According to National Institute of Standards in Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-50, Building an Information Technology Security Awareness and Training Program, October 2003, the following twelve elements are suggested for inclusion and outlined in a sample template:

1. Existing national and local policy that requires the awareness and training to be accomplished
2. Scope of the awareness and training program
3. Roles and responsibilities of agency personnel who should design, develop, implement, and maintain the awareness and training material, and who should ensure that the appropriate users attend or view the applicable material
4. Goals to be accomplished for each aspect of the program
5. Target audiences for each aspect of the program
6. Mandatory courses or material for each target audience
7. Learning objectives for each aspect of the program
8. Topics to be addressed in each session or course

9. Deployment methods to be used for each aspect of the program
10. Documentation, feedback, and evidence of learning for each aspect of the program
11. Evaluation and update of material for each aspect of the program
12. Frequency that each target audience should be exposed to material

APPROACH:
This presentation can be conducted as a <u>tutorial session</u> with a focus on technical writing, including lessons on getting started, simple style, easy editing, quick proofreading, sample plans, and practice. Optionally, it can be presented in a <u>demonstration</u> format, which would focus more strongly on examples of sections of strategic training plans. There are no pre-requisites for this session.