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What Is Social Engineering?

Social engineering is a manipulation technique used to trick victims into following malicious instructions. Social engineering relies on the basic human instinct of trust and, because of this, can be hard to defend against. Cyber criminals hope to catch victims off-guard and gain access to systems or sensitive organizational data, such as login credentials and personal information.



PHISHING

Encompassing deceitful email, websites, text messages, and more, cyber criminals use phishing campaigns to steal confidential personal and organizational information. Often, hackers will hide behind email senders or websites that are Quid pro quo social

familiar to the intended victim.

reward or information that 01 05 **Examples of Common Social Engineering Tactics** 04

BAITING

Baiting is both an online and in-person social engineering tactic that relies on the human desire for reward. The attacker will promise the victim something tantalizing, like a prize, in exchange for their immediate action.

PRETEXTING

credentials.

QUID PRO QUO

engineering scams hin-

a criminal to contact an

employee, claiming to

be an IT support em-

ployee and urging them to confirm login

ge on an exchange of a

convinces a victim to act. A common technique is for

Pretexting leverages a false identity to trick the victim into giving up confidential information. A common example is when cyber criminals impersonate a customer service representative for a known company where a user recently made a purchase.

WATER-HOLING

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03 Water-holing targets a group of users and websites they normally visit. Security vulnerabilities are exploited to infect those websites with malware, which in turn will affect one or several members of the targeted group.

Who Could Be a Social Engineering Target?

Any type of business, government, organization, or individual could be a social engineering target. Cyber criminals look to victimize anyone who isn't alert to the presence of a cyber threat. It's not uncommon for people to become repeat victims of social engineering attacks due to busy schedules, complacency, or forgetfulness.



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