

Social Engineering Hooks

FROM

- I don't recognize the sender's email as someone I **ordinarily communicate with**.
- This email is from **someone inside my organization** or from a customer, vendor or partner and is **very unusual**.
- This email is from **someone outside my organization** and it's **not related to my job responsibilities**.
- Is the sender's email address from a **suspicious domain** (ex Microsoft-support)?
- I **don't know the sender** and they were **not vouched for** by someone I trust.
- I **don't have a business relationship** nor any past communications with the sender.

DATE

- Did I receive an email that I normally would get during regular business hours, but it was **sent at an unusual time**, like 3 AM?



SUBJECT

- Did I receive an email with a subject line that is **irrelevant** or **does not match** the message content?
- Is the email message a reply to something I **never sent or requested**?

ATTACHMENTS

- The sender included an email attachment that I **was not expecting** or that **makes no sense** in relation to the email message. (This sender doesn't ordinarily send me this type of attachment.)
- I see an attachment with a possibly **dangerous file type**. The only file type that is **always safe to click on** is a .txt file.

TO

- I was CC'd on an email sent to one or more people, but I **don't personally know** the other people it was sent to.
- I received an email that was also sent to an **unusual mix of people**. For instance, it might be sent to a random group of people at my organization whose last names start with the same letter.

HYPERLINKS

- I hover my mouse over a hyperlink that's in the email, but the **link-to-address is for a different website**.
- I received an email that only has **long hyperlinks with no further information**.
- I received an email with a **hyperlink that is a misspelling** of a known website. For instance, www.bankofarnerica.com - the "m" is really two characters - "r" and "n."

CONTENT

- Is the sender asking me to click on a link or open an attachment to **avoid a negative consequence** or to **gain something of value**?
- Is the email out of the ordinary, or does it have **bad grammar** or **spelling errors**?
- Is the sender asking me to click on something that **seems odd** or **illogical**?
- Do I have an **uncomfortable gut feeling** about the sender's request to open an attachment or click a link?
- Is the email asking me to look at a **compromising or embarrassing picture** of myself or someone I know?