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Student Chapter

Handbook v1 2020

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1. HANDBOOK OVERVIEW

- **About null**

null the open security community is starting with the new era by introducing the null 2.0.

null is the most active open security community. Registered as a non-profit society in 2010, we have been active since even before that. null is about spreading information security awareness. All our activities such as null Monthly Meets, null Humla, null Bachaav, null Puliya, null Job Portal are for the cause of that.

- **The Purpose of Student Chapter**

The primary objective of having a student chapter is to provide student's/Universities/Colleges with a platform to share knowledge and learn about Information Security.

- **The Purpose of Chapter Handbook**

The purpose of the Chapter Handbook is to provide student chapter leaders with a central place to find information about starting a chapter, organizing a chapter meeting, and many other topics that come up while running a chapter. While there are a few rules that chapter leaders must follow, this handbook is primarily composed of suggestions and best practices that have worked for other successful chapter leaders. That said, what works for some chapters may not work for others, and this handbook should not limit the scope of possibilities for running a strong and thriving student chapter.

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1. How to start a Chapter

1.1 New Chapter Approval Process

- Before planning to start chapter, read the student chapter Handbook
- Send proposal for new Student Chapter
- Organize Pre-null student chapter meetup
- Send Writeup and Photos of Pre-null student chapter meetup and wait for response
- On approval, start conducting meetups

1.2 Organizing a Pre-null Student Chapter Meetup
Objective

The primary objective of organizing a pre-null meet is to gauge interest in the people who would like to actively participate in a lively null chapter. We need to ensure that the chapter once started will keep growing even if the initial people who started move on to other things. With a pre-null meet, you will get a good idea of what it takes in organizing, running, and managing a full-fledged null chapter. The following is a checklist that should be followed to ensure a successful meeting

Note:

If it is a virtual-pre null meet, then skip Logistics and jump to Schedule or click here

Logistics

Venue
Having a good venue is very important. This could be in the campus premises like classroom, seminar hall.

How many people can it accommodate?
How many people can be accommodated at the venue? If more people turn up, they might need to stand. Similarly, a big hall with a handful of people will seem a bit odd.

Venue Requirements

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Compulsory
- Projector/Screen or Big screen TV to which a laptop can be attached.
- Access to drinking water.
- Access to clean restrooms.

Good to have
- Whiteboard.
- Pens and Paper

Permission letter for hosting event

Halls, conference rooms etc. can have multiple people in-charge. They might even have multiple events happening on the same day. Having a written permission clearly stating that you can host the pre-null student chapter meet will ensure that there are no last-minute hiccups at the venue.

Note - In case the university/college needs letter from null Community, feel free to request one.

Time and date

Once you have the venue, you should have clarity about the date of the meet and a clear time. In our experience a good meet can take anywhere between 90 minutes to 250 minutes (1.5 hours to more than 4 hours)

Schedule

Introductions

If the number of people is below 20-25 it is a good idea for everyone to do a short introduction about themselves. They can cover the following in the introduction (but not limited to).

- Name, College, Area of Interest, etc.
- How did they hear about **null**?
- What are they expecting to learn from attending the meet?
- What can they contribute in terms of knowledge?

Speakers and Talks

Select 2 or maximum 3 speakers and give them 30 to 60 minute talking slots. This will ensure a variety of content and more participation from everyone. The selection of speakers needs to be done at least 1 week before the pre-null meets.

Call each speaker personally to ensure they are aware of the following

- Starting time of the meet.
- Location of the meet.
- How much time will they have for their talk?

Discussions and Feedback session

Keep some time reserved for discussions and feedback. The discussions and feedback sessions should be about the following among other things.

- If people want a monthly null meeting.
- If the venue is in an accessible place.
- If the venue is good for conducting such meetings.
- Did people find the sessions useful.
- How did they get to hear about the meet?
- Are they planning to contribute?
- How are they planning to contribute?

Announcements

- It is a good idea to announce the date for the next meet (if planned) at the end of the meet.
- Also, any other announcements related to the community can be done here.
- Make sure that no company/person uses this platform to advertise their products/services without permission.

Keeping a record

You need to send the following to san@null.co.in, pankaj@null.co.in and CC void@null.co.in within 1 week of conducting the meet. This can be a simple MS Word/OpenOffice/markdown document

Photographs are mandatory

- Take photographs of all the speakers
- Take photographs of all meeting rooms full of people.
- Take 1-2 photographs of the venue itself.
- Upload these to social sites and send the link to us.

Note:

Take photographs with attendee's consent and ensure they are comfortable taking photograph**s.**

How to Spread the Word before the pre-null meet

Spreading words about pre-null meet can be done via social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn etc.

No Spamming

- We have a strict no-spamming policy. Make sure that you spread the word with permission and not spam anyone about the coming meet.

Posters

- If you are planning to attract a college crowd or company crowd see if you can create a poster and post it on notice boards with permission.

Mailing lists

- You can mention about the meet on the null mailing list and with permission in other local technical mailing lists as well.

1.3 Basic requirements to Start Chapter

Venue Requirements [Offline Events]

Compulsory
- Projector/Screen or Big screen TV to which a laptop can be attached.
- Access to drinking water.
- Access to clean restrooms.

Good to have
- Whiteboard
- Pens and Paper

Requirements [Virtual Events]

Compulsory

- Access to any video communication platforms like [Google Meet, Zoom, Stream yard, Restream, Discord]

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Good to have

- Platform which can sync with YouTube and do live streaming

2. Chapter Administration

2.1 Chapter Mailing List/Any other communication medium

The chapter mailing list can be used mostly to inform list members about local null activities. In addition to chapter meetings, which should all be posted to the list, many chapters use their list/medium to communicate information about upcoming events.

There will be no separate mailing list for student chapters. The mailing list used for null activities will be also used for student chapters.

In future, if any new technology/medium is created by the **null** and used, then that can also be used to communicate information about null activities both locally and across null.

2.2 Social Media Platforms

Social media under the "null" chapter name should be used to inform the community about null activities as well as communicate information about upcoming security events or other appsec-related issues. Additionally, social media activities under the null chapter name, should abide by the null Principles and Code of Ethics.

There should be no separate social media accounts specific for student chapters as it will create chaos. The student chapter should use social media accounts used by null chapters in the state or city.

If social media is one of the main forms of communication your chapter uses to spread the word about meetings and events, it is important that the page be maintained and updated with accurate information.

Every student chapter leader will have access to a state/city specific null Social media account.

● Facebook

● LinkedIn

● Reddit (If any)

● Twitter

● Instagram

3. Governance

On your chapter page, ensure you clearly identify who are the current leaders for the student chapter or on the board of the student chapter, including their phone numbers and/or email addresses. It is highly recommended to have at least (2) chapter leaders, but a group of leaders are even better.

Additionally, post information on how students can get involved with the chapter planning, leadership, or decisions. The best way to do so is to update the audience after every meetup in one or two slides.

3.1 Chapter Leadership

● Preferably as many organizers as possible

A single chapter leader has proven to be an antipattern for successful chapters. Running a successful chapter requires concerted effort all year long, and these duties should be split between whoever is willing to volunteer to take the load. High performing chapters often have three or more co-organizers that meet regularly to plan.

● Chapter Leader

The only organizational requirement for every chapter is to nominate a Chapter Leader, who is the central point of contact for the chapter and responsible for the chapter. In case of dispute over the leader role, we suggest rotation based on the leadership qualities, academic performance and contribution to the community.

● Board:

Chapters are free to decide on the number of role holders, their titles, how they are selected and for how long. **It is necessary to have at least two department faculties in order to monitor, orchestrate and help students in conducting the events**.

We also recommend involving the University/College/School higher authorities like Head of Department, Additional Director, Director of Education and Chancellor etc. Involvement or having approval of higher authorities will help to conduct events more efficiently and flawlessly.

3.2 Assigning/Transferring Leadership

In order to assign new leadership or transfer leadership roles, send an email to san@null.co.in and pankaj@null.co.in and CC void@null.co.in.

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4. Chapter Activity

4.1 Chapter Activity Requirements

- While it is recommended to hold at least 1 meeting (or chapter event) a month, it is recommended that chapters have a minimum of 6 meetings each year.
- During travel and mass gathering restrictions imposed by the government virtual meetings can be conducted via null Google meet account or another web conferencing platform as mentioned above under section **1.3 Basic requirements to Start Chapter**

4.2 Inactive Chapters/ Restarting an Inactive Chapter

A chapter will be tagged as inactive if they have not hosted a meeting or event in over a duration of 6 months. Additionally, any chapter leaders will be removed from their position.

If a leader has abandoned their chapter (left without finding a replacement leader) and no one has stepped up to take on the role, the chapter may also be tagged as inactive.

Reporting an inactive chapter

If you think a chapter is inactive and you are interested in helping, we recommend reaching out to the state/City null chapter leader or send an email to san@null.co.in, pankaj@null.co.in and CC void@null.co.in. They may welcome you to take over the reins or let you know the status of the chapter.

5. Dealing with challenging behavior during the events (For Assigned Faculties/ Chapter Leader)

5.1 What is challenging behavior?

- Behavior which presents a challenge to teaching and learning.
- Behavior which prevents or hinders facilitators (teachers) or other students from doing what they want or need to do

5.2 Common causes of challenging behavior:

- **Boredom** - student finds a session irrelevant or monotonous.
- **Poor relationships** - between students and teachers or groups of students.
- **Bad Behavior** – sometimes people do not intend to be rude or may not realize how their actions are being interpreted. This is not an excuse however for bad behavior.
- **Low self-esteem** - some students lack self-confidence in themselves as learners. As a result, they may be reluctant to take risks with something which may prove too difficult.

5.3 Solution to challenging behavior

- **Boredom** - If boredom occurs due to an ongoing session, it is the responsibility of speaker/moderator/chapter leader/assigned faculty to keep entertaining the audience either by small networking breaks, keeping two-way communication or via technical jokes etc.
- **Poor relationship** - Regular and open communication with each other can solve the problem
- **Bad Behavior** - It is the responsibility of the moderator/chapter leader/present faculty to avoid or prevent any arguing, misbehavior during the event.
- **Low Self-esteem** - Chapter leaders should motivate and help other students to step forward and give security talks or volunteer during the null events.

6. What is not accepted?

- No live hacking session or any activity can be performed beyond the law of the land.

- For events which require internet connection, we recommend using a personal hotspot. Campus internet should only be used after having written permission from the **higher authorities/E-Governance** department in the campus and the written permission should be shared with the null.

- Physical, verbal, sexual harassment or offensive behavior of any kind during the chapter events/meetups should not be tolerated and chapter leaders should take immediate action in such cases