What is Phishing?

In order to correctly identify phishing emails, you need to know exactly what phishing is. There are a number of different descriptions for phishing emails out there, so we have created our own that we believe is appropriate:

- **Phishing is the act of sending an email with malicious intent, to coerce recipients into disclosing information, downloading malicious files, or otherwise completing an action that they would not normally do, by exploiting a human using one or more social-engineering techniques.**

In short, phishing is a type of email-based attack, where malicious actors are actually attacking humans instead of computer systems, in order to get them to do something they normally wouldn't. Examples include giving out their account credentials, downloading malware, transferring money, disclosing information, and more.

While phishing is primarily email-based, there are other attacks that use voice calls (Vishing) and SMS or text messages (SMiShing). We will cover these in a future lesson.