

Building and Leading Advanced Red Teams

Challenges, Leadership, and Team Building

Red Teaming

Red teaming is the work performed by the red team in identifying and assessing, *inter alia*, assumptions, alternative options, vulnerabilities, limitations and risks for that organization. Red teaming is a tool set. Using it will provide the end user (commander, leader, or manager) with a more robust baseline for decision making.

- Red Teaming Guide 2nd Edition (January 2013)
United Kingdom Ministry of Defence

Joint Doctrine Note 1-16



Command Red Team



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Unclassified

Why Red Team Leadership?

- Red Teaming requires tactical, technical, and strategic acumen.
- Many Red Team leaders grow from technical roles, facing unique challenges.
- This talk will focus on:
 - **Leadership skills** for Red Team growth
 - **Building** up Red Teams
 - **Innovation** without sacrificing quality



Moving from Technical Expert to Leader

- The unexpected leap: Being "good" doesn't mean you're ready for leadership.
- Challenges of leadership roles:
 - More than just technical skills.
 - People management, strategy, and vision become key.
- Developing soft skills, like communication and empathy, is critical for leadership.

Knowledge and Skills of a Red Team Leader

- **Technical Expertise:** Offensive security, adversary emulation, and frameworks like MITRE ATT&CK.
- **Compliance Knowledge:** Familiarity with standards like NIST, ISO 27001, and GDPR.
- **Adaptability:** Keeping up with the evolving threat landscape and defensive technologies.

Shifting From Technical Focus to Strategic Thinking

- **As a Red Team Lead:**
 - You're now the bridge between upper management and the technical team.
 - You need to align team efforts with business objectives.
- **Common Pitfalls:**
 - Micromanaging technical work.
 - Over-reliance on personal expertise rather than delegation.



Delegation vs. Doing

Avoiding the Trap of Doing Everything Yourself

- Moving from “player” to “coach.”
- Focus on **mentoring** and **guiding** rather than taking on the technical work.
- **Trust in your team’s ability to deliver.**

Building Strong Red Teams

- Look for diverse skills:
 - Balancing technical brilliance with soft skills.
 - [Red Team Interview Questions](#)
- Focus on **team dynamics**:
 - Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing.



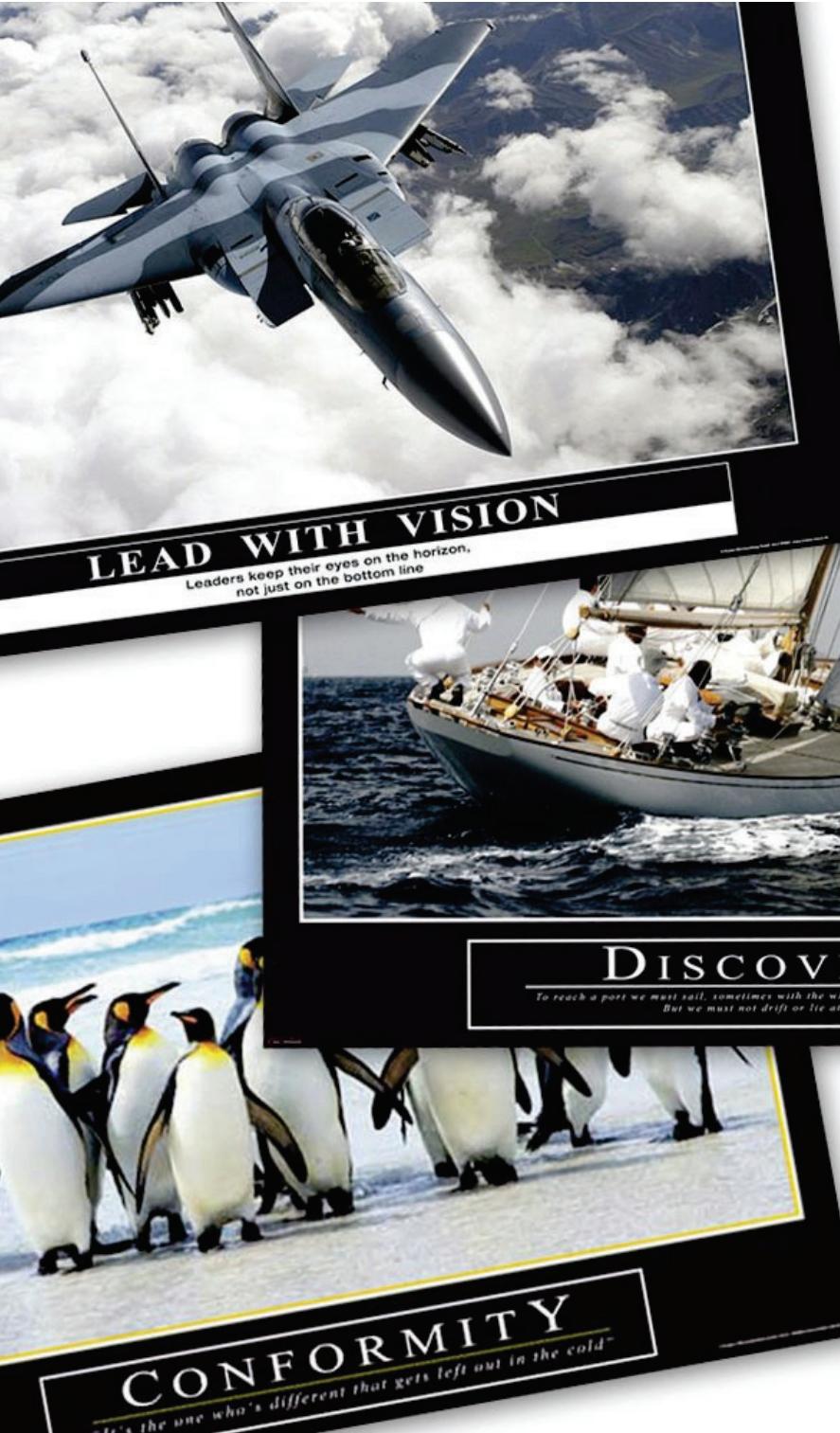
Building an Effective Red Team

- Ensure a mix of skills:
 - Offensive security experts, developers, analysts, and strategic thinkers.
 - Infrastructure experts.
- Foster collaboration:
 - Cross-discipline interaction can spark new ideas.

Creating the Next Generation of Red Teamers

- Create opportunities for growth and continuous learning.
- Provide regular feedback:
 - Be clear and constructive, offering mentorship and guidance.
- Lead by example:
 - Demonstrate continuous self-improvement and curiosity.





Keeping Your Team Motivated and Engaged

- Focus on intrinsic motivators:
 - Purpose, autonomy, and mastery.
- Remember you are in charge of their education.
- Avoid burnouts:
 - Watch for overwork, stress, and ensure work-life balance.

Innovation without Sacrificing Quality

- Encouraging creativity in Red Team operations:
 - Foster a culture where experimentation is allowed.
- Automation:
 - Identify repetitive tasks but avoid automating creativity.

When and Where to Automate

- Automate the routine, repetitive tasks to free up time for more complex work.
- Balance automation with hands-on, manual testing to ensure thoroughness.
- Ensure automation tools do not reduce the depth of analysis.

Balancing Innovation and Quality

- Regularly review processes to refine and improve them.
- **Prioritize quality:**
 - Innovation should never compromise thoroughness or accuracy.
- Keep an eye on new tools and techniques, but be mindful of their limitations.

Establishing Long-Term Goals

- Where do you see your team in the next 1-3 years?
- How can your team influence the organization's overall security posture?
- Focus on developing your team as a key driver for innovation in security.

Closing Thoughts

- Leadership in Red Teaming requires more than technical expertise — it demands strategy, empathy, and vision.
- By focusing on employee development, fostering innovation, and maintaining a high standard of quality, you will:
 - Build a strong, cohesive team.
 - Retain top talent.
 - Deliver impactful results to your organization.



Thank You!

Questions? Let's discuss!

