

### Final Project: The Employee Life Cycle

The Employee Life Cycle is a model used by human resources teams to identify the various stages of an employee's time working for an organization. According to Alexander S. Gillis and Shradda Kakade of TechTarget (2023), the model benefits both employees and HR personnel by providing opportunities for self-development and evaluation throughout employment, ensuring productivity and a positive work environment within the organization. Most especially, it enables HR leaders to retain and keep track of employees, as they can be considered to be an organization's most essential asset.

The exact stages in the Employee Life Cycle defined by each company or author vary in terms of number and activities performed. Omar Santos (2019), for instance, outlines six stages in his model: recruitment, onboarding, user provisioning, orientation, career development, termination, and offboarding. The first stage, recruitment, involves the many steps of hiring a new employee, including applications, interview, and security screenings. After being hired, the employee is added to the organization's benefits list and payroll in the onboarding phase. The employee then undergoes user provisioning, receiving access permissions, user accounts, and equipment. During orientation, the employee gets acquainted with the corporate culture, his co-workers, and management, and establishes his role within the organization. He also engages in continuous career development, which often involves a change in his role and duties. When it is time for termination, the employee is taken off the benefits list and payroll, and his user accounts and permissions are disabled. Finally, the employee is off-boarded, and the

management documents the details of his termination or separation and the tasks he had before departure (179).

Santos argues, however, that the importance of the employee life cycle is due to the exchange of a great deal of private and/or personal data among candidates, employees, and management that takes place during each stage. “Because we are exposing valuable assets,” he states, “we must know our employees’ backgrounds, education, and weaknesses” (178).

Employees and candidates need to be educated on how to keep the information that they view and exchange secure, using strategies tailored to the biases that come from their experiences. The bottom line of employee communication should be that the organization considers security a priority, and that employees are expected to comply with security policies (195).

Santos provides many examples of how the security of sensitive data can be threatened throughout the Employee Life Cycle. From the very first contact, job postings can reveal too much information about a company’s services, infrastructure, and points of contact, and in turn, candidates’ applications often contain nonpublic personal information (NPPI) such as date of birth, social security number, and financial information (180-181). Even during termination, when access to company applications is disabled, an employee might be able to take information with him (189). One security measure is to require employees and third parties to sign a confidentiality agreement, which defines which data cannot be disclosed publicly, and an acceptable use agreement, a policy between the company and a person who accesses its information systems focusing on the proper use and handling of the information in the systems (191). In brief, security should be at the center of each step in the Employee Life Cycle to maintain the protection of data that the company handles, and policies should be understood and followed by all parties involved.

## References

- Gillis, A., & Kakade, S. (2023). *Employee lifecycle*. TechTarget. Retrieved on 20 February 2024 from <https://www.techtarget.com/searchhrsoftware/definition/employee-life-cycle>
- Santos, O. (2019). *Developing cybersecurity programs and policies* (3rd ed.). Pearson Education.