SECURITY TIPS

One of the biggest challenges that companies face today is limited knowledge of the I.T. field, and how important it truly is. What a lot of people also don't realize is that you don't have to be an expert to be safe. Security starts with you. Here are just a few tips to help keep you and your work computer safe.

1. **Don't ignore a problem.** Half the time, some little error message will pop up, and we'll just disregard it because it seems meaningless and/or does not affect our production value. What we don't realize when this happens though is that time can get away from us, and so can whatever caused that error. Many viruses embed themselves deep into your PC, and the longer they're there, the more harm and damage they can do. It's always best to pull out the bug before it spreads.
2. **Listen to the I.T. department!** Chances are, 9 times out of 10 they'll know what they're talking about. They definitely can make mistakes, but they're human, just as you are. Odds are they have a vastly wider knowledge of all things tech, generally having either gone to school for it or practiced it for so long. They're just as eager to help as you are to *be* helped, but it gets repetitive if they feel like they're talking to a brick wall. It's important to take into consideration that they have experience in this field, and will do their best to assist you and your system.
3. **Don't go on weird sites.** Any kind of site that has you download or install something, gaming sites, untrusted sites, and often foreign sites, can lead to harmful things for your computer. Remember that it's a professional work PC - it does not truly belong to you; it belongs to the company. Always check with your supervisor (and, preferably, the I.T. department) before installing something. News site are also notorious for viruses, as one site leads you to another.
4. **Don't blame the computer.** The computer is an inanimate object, and unless otherwise specified, it is likely built just like the rest of them that everyone else uses. There are certainly going to be errors, but it's all the same hardware. 99% of the time, it will be software-related, but rarely ever hardware-related. The only true variable is the user.
5. **Don't give out personal information.** This includes your phone number, password, e-mail, street address, etc. Viruses can especially hide within e-mails, and they can also hide within pictures, which is why it's not always safe to save them.
6. **Clean out your Temp folder.** There is a hidden folder in your AppData that can be cleared, and likely this will need to be shown first, but it is entirely beneficial as it cleans out temporary files where many viruses live. Nothing important can be stored there. If there is, it will regenerate on its own.
7. **When in doubt, run a scan.** If you think your computer may be acting "wonky", it doesn't hurt it to run a virus scan, and is probably a good idea.
8. **Be patient.** It's fine to want help, but breathing over the shoulder of the person trying to help you isn't going to speed things up. Trust the I.T. department; trust what they're doing. All of it is for your benefit and therefore the company's benefit as well.