

## **Help Desk Simulation**

*Incorrect Password Attempts and Account Lockout Resolution*

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### **Objective**

The purpose of this simulation is to demonstrate how failed domain login attempts and account lockouts are identified, investigated, and resolved in an Active Directory environment.

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### **Environment**

- Domain Controller: Windows Server 2022
  - Client OS: Windows 10 (domain-joined)
  - Domain Services: Active Directory Domain Services (AD DS)
  - Tools Used:
    - Event Viewer
    - Active Directory Users and Computers
    - Group Policy Management
- 

### **Ticket Summary**

**Issue:** User unable to log in due to account lockout

**Category:** Access / Authentication

**Priority:** Medium

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### **Reported Issue**

- User reported being unable to log in to their domain account.
  - System displayed “Incorrect password” after multiple login attempts.
  - After repeated attempts, the system displayed:  
*“The referenced account is currently locked out and may not be logged on to.”*
-

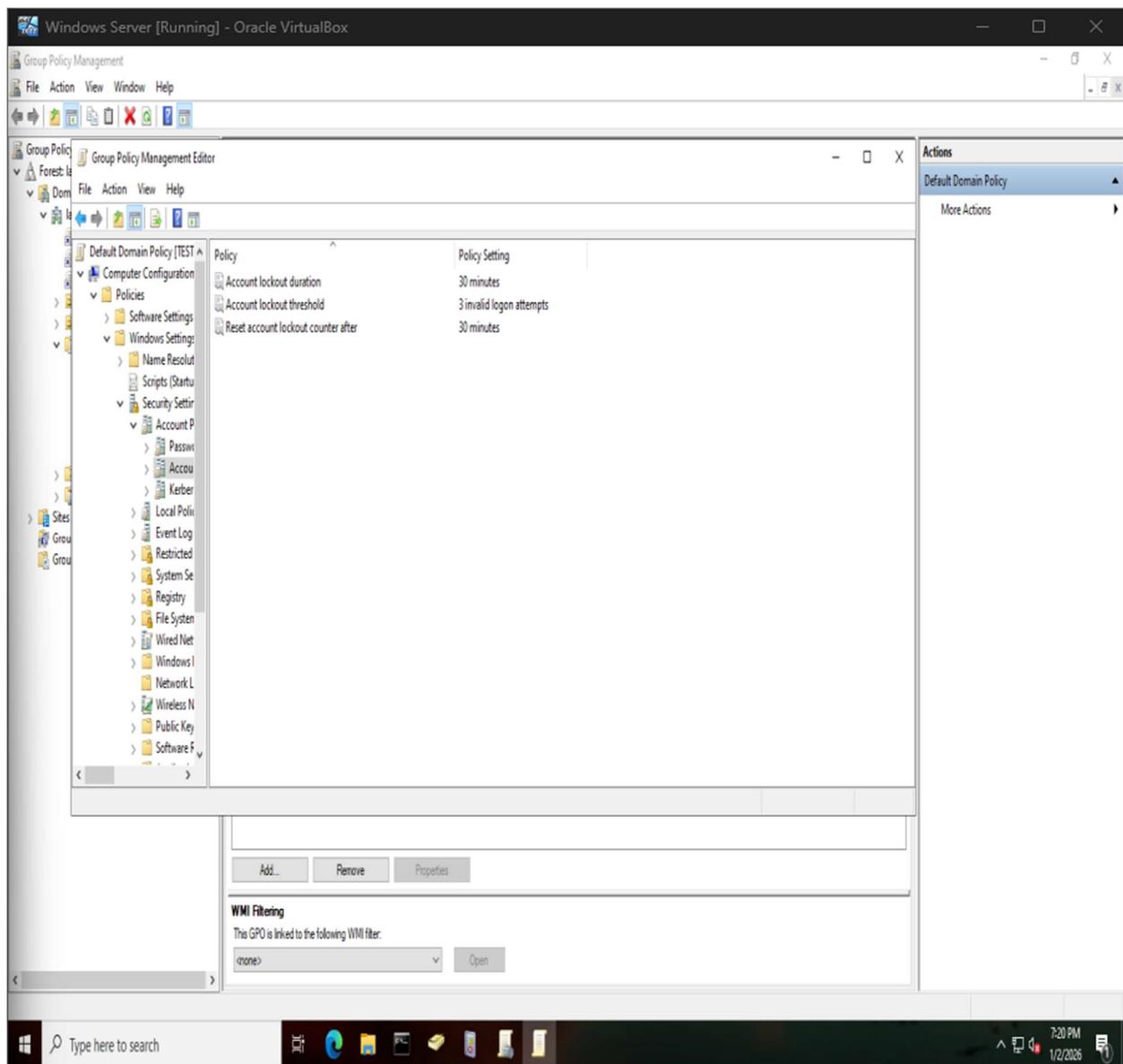
## **Troubleshooting & Investigation**

- Verified user identity according to support procedures.
  - Confirmed the correct username format with the user.
  - Checked account status in Active Directory.
  - Identified that the user account was locked due to multiple failed login attempts.
  - Unlocked the account in Active Directory Users and Computers.
  - Asked the user whether they preferred to reset the password independently or with assistance; the user chose to reset it themselves.
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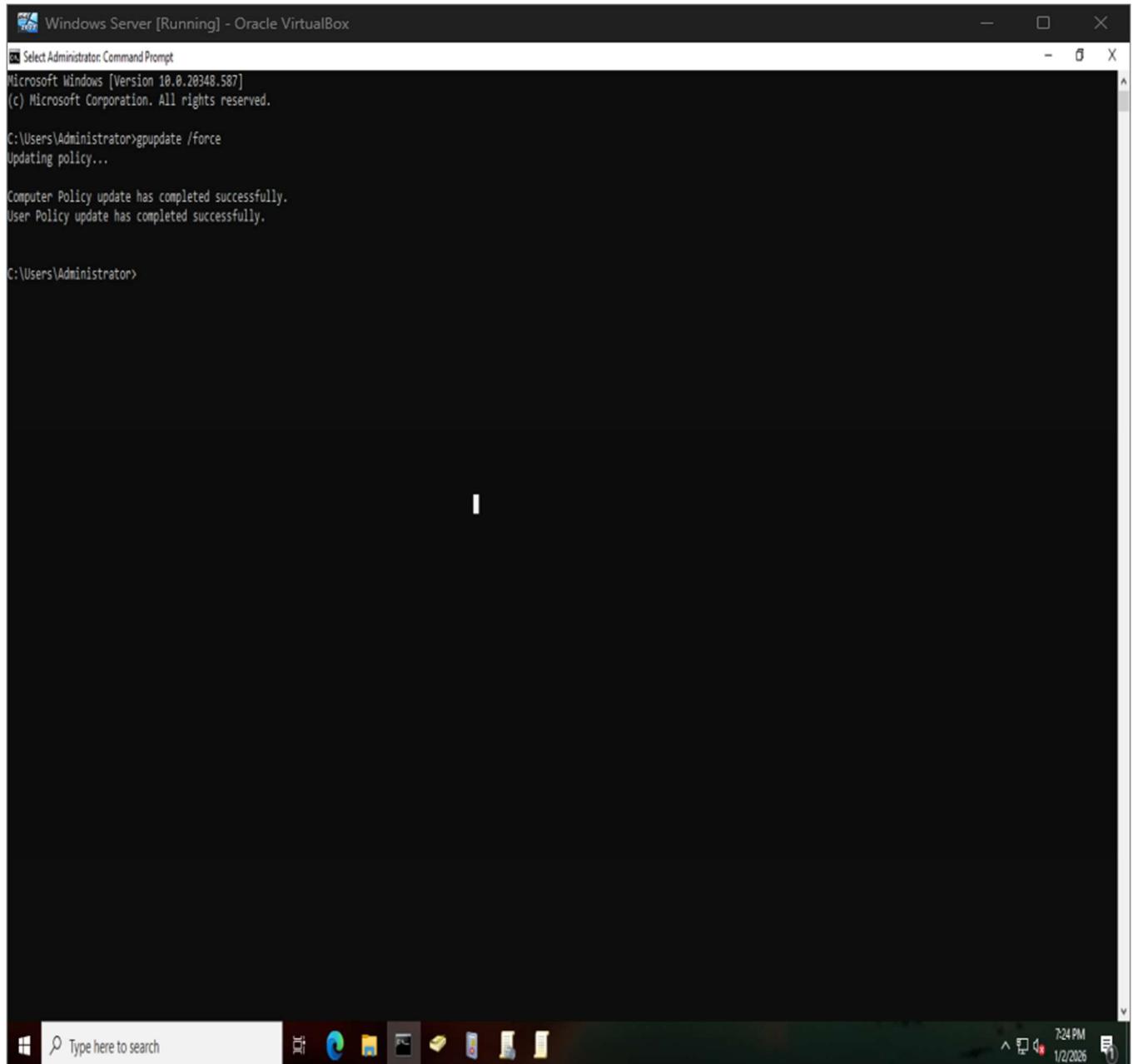
## **Resolution**

- Guided the user through the password reset process.
- Allowed the user to create a new secure password.
- Confirmed successful login after password reset.
- Educated the user on best practices to avoid future lockouts (e.g., verifying credentials before repeated attempts).

1. Created account lockout policies in Group Policy to set the threshold for invalid login attempts.



2. Group Policy was manually refreshed using the gpupdate /force command to ensure the latest domain security and lockout policies were applied and enforced.



Windows Server [Running] - Oracle VirtualBox  
Select Administrator: Command Prompt  
Microsoft Windows [Version 10.0.20348.587]  
(c) Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.  
  
C:\Users\Administrator>gpupdate /force  
Updating policy...  
  
Computer Policy update has completed successfully.  
User Policy update has completed successfully.  
  
C:\Users\Administrator>

The screenshot shows a Windows Server 2022 command prompt window titled "Windows Server [Running] - Oracle VirtualBox". The user is running the "gpupdate /force" command as an administrator. The output indicates that both Computer and User Policies have updated successfully. The taskbar at the bottom includes the Start button, a search bar, and several pinned icons for File Explorer, Edge, and other system tools. The system tray shows the date and time as 7:24 PM on 1/2/2026.

3. The applied Group Policy settings were verified using the gpresult command to confirm that account lockout policies were successfully applied to the system.

Windows Server [Running] - Oracle VirtualBox  
Administrator Command Prompt

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RSOP data for LAB\administrator on TEST-DC-01 : Logging Mode

OS Configuration: Primary Domain Controller
OS Version: 10.0.20348
Site Name: Default-First-Site-Name
Roaming Profile: N/A
Local Profile: C:\Users\Administrator
Connected over a slow link?: No

COMPUTER SETTINGS
-----
CN=TEST-DC-01,OU=Domain Controllers,DC=lab,DC=local
Last time Group Policy was applied: 1/2/2026 at 7:23:30 PM
Group Policy was applied from: TEST-DC-01.lab.local
Group Policy slow link threshold: 500 kbps
Domain Name: LAB
Domain Type: Windows 2008 or later

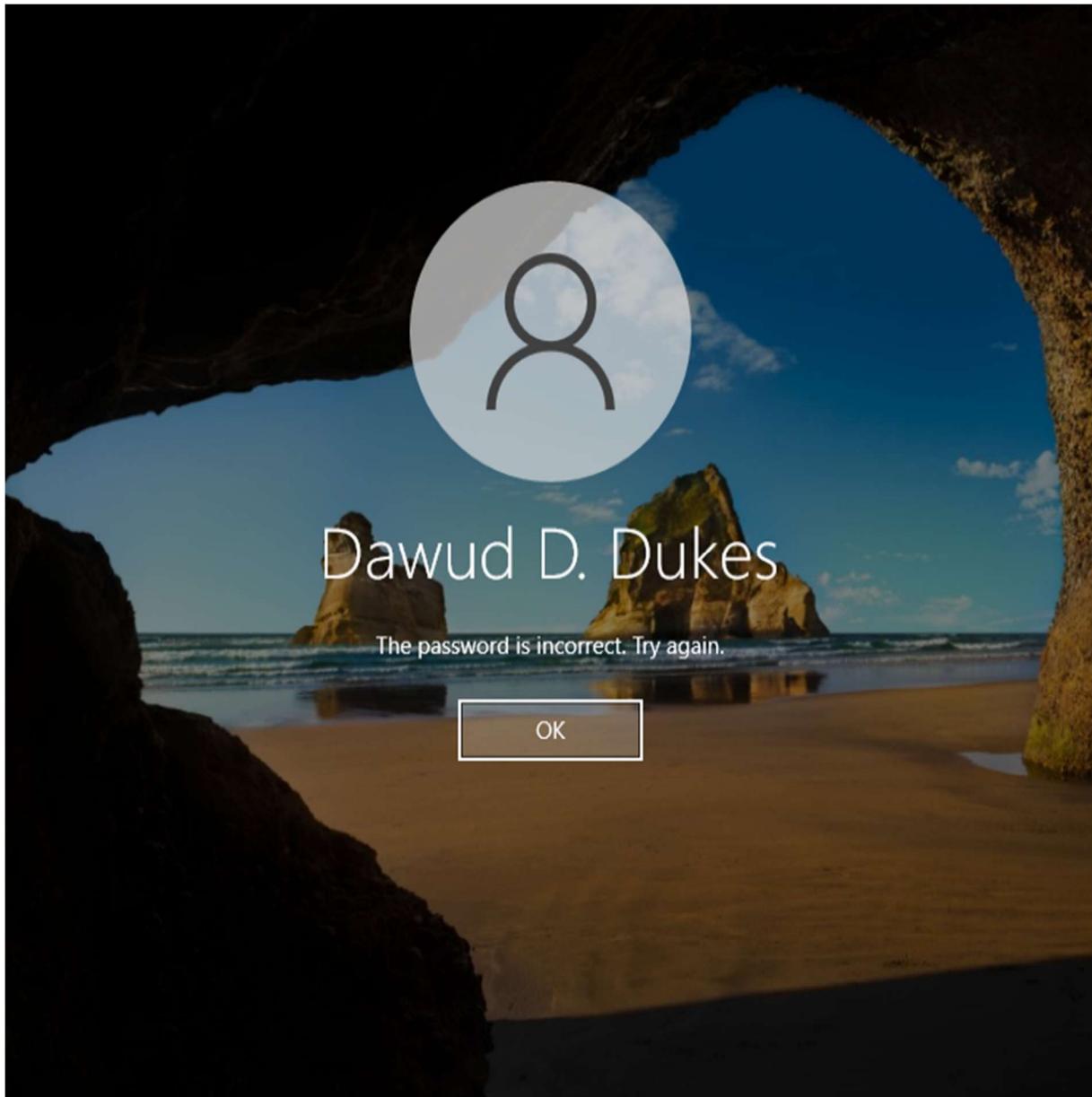
Applied Group Policy Objects
-----
Default Domain Controllers Policy
Default Domain Policy

The following GPOs were not applied because they were filtered out
-----
Local Group Policy
Filtering: Not Applied (Empty)

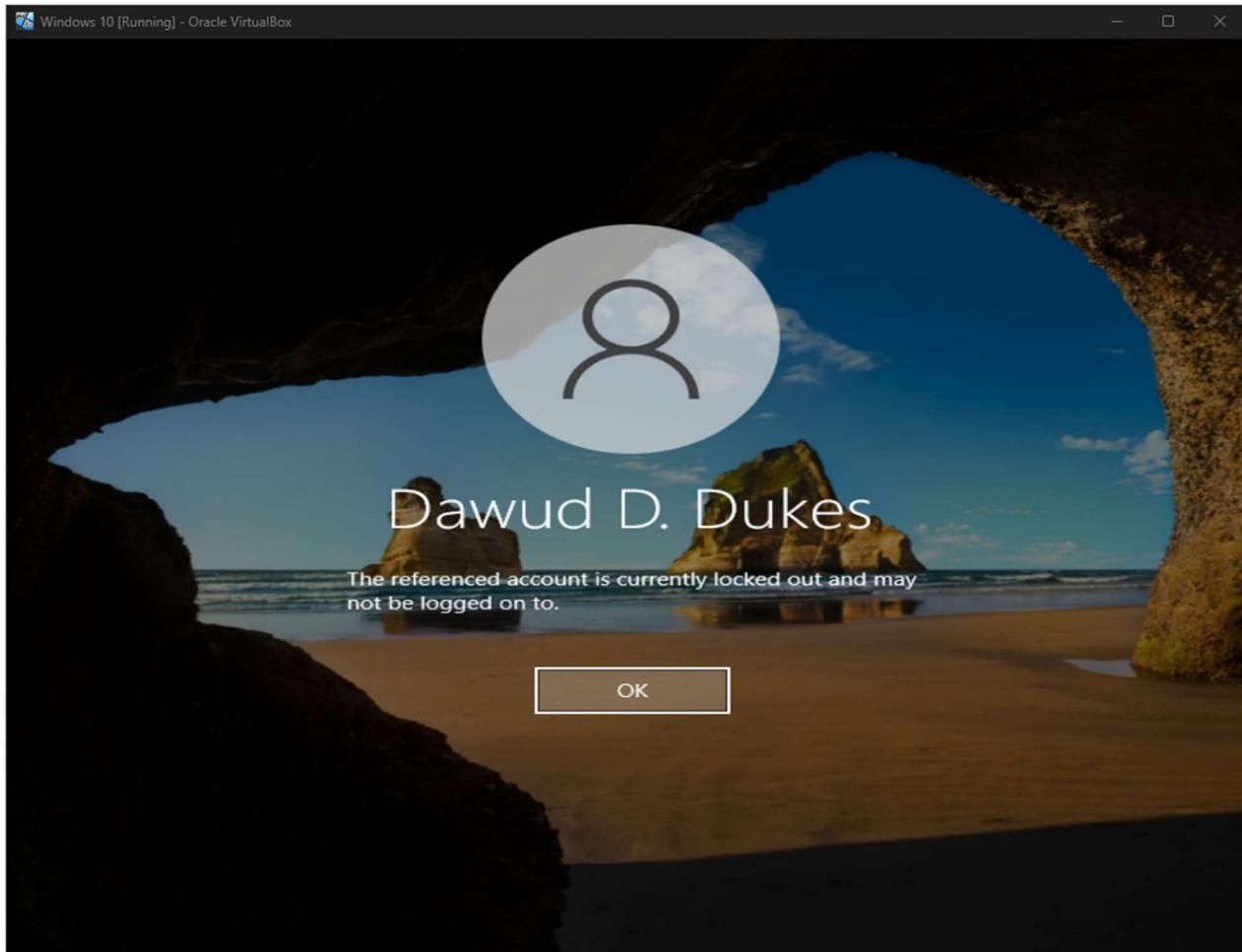
The computer is a part of the following security groups
-----
BUILTIN\Administrators
Everyone
BUILTIN\Pre-Windows 2000 Compatible Access
BUILTIN\Users
Windows Authorization Access Group
NT AUTHORITY\NETWORK
NT AUTHORITY\Authenticated Users
This Organization
TEST-DC-01$
Domain Controllers
NT AUTHORITY\ENTERPRISE DOMAIN CONTROLLERS
Authentication authority asserted identity
Denied RODC Password Replication Group
System Mandatory Level

Type here to search 7:25 PM 1/2/2026
```

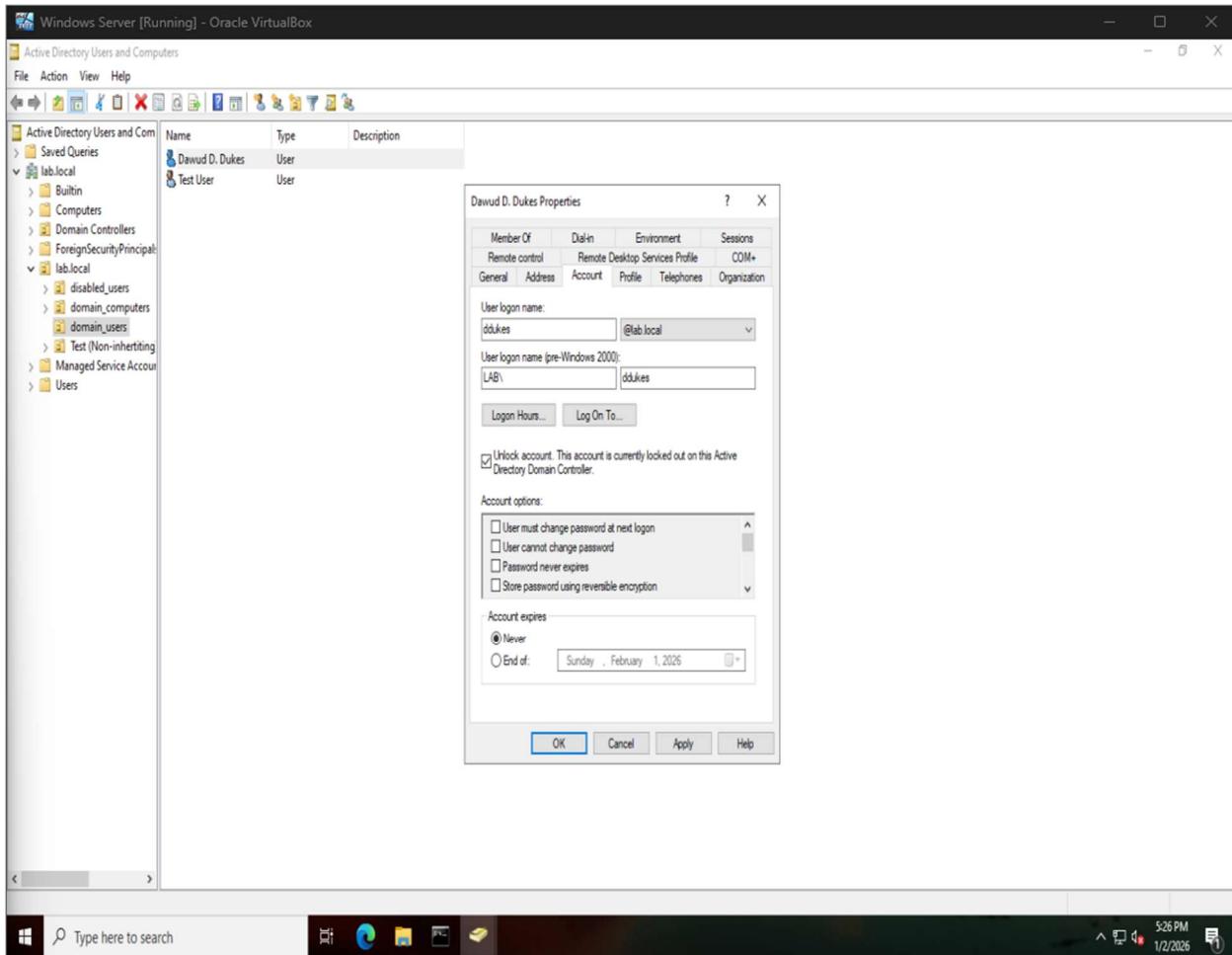
4. The user attempted to log in to their domain account using an incorrect password, resulting in a failed authentication attempt at the workstation.



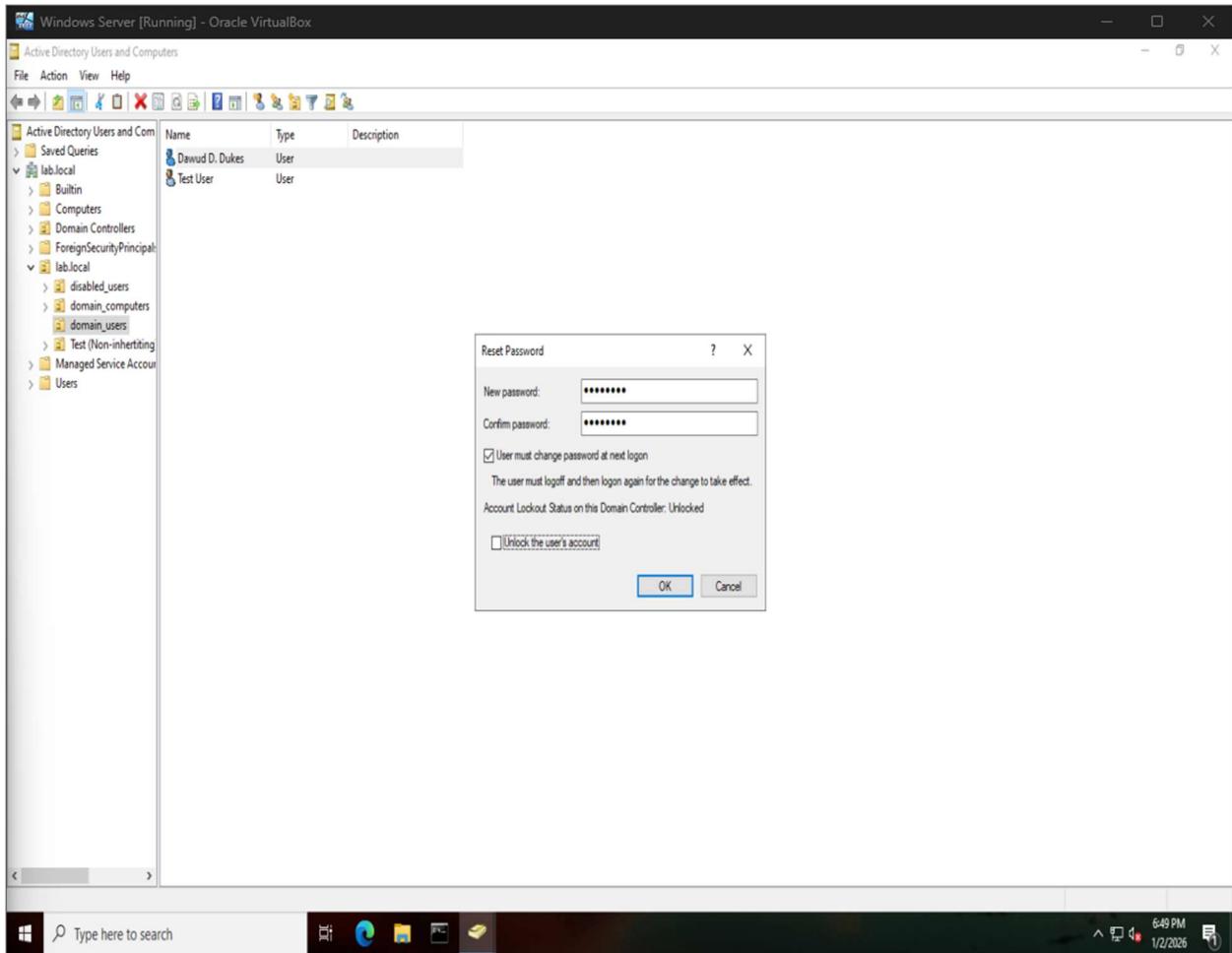
- After exceeding the configured account lockout threshold defined by domain policy, the user account was automatically locked to prevent further unauthorized access attempts.



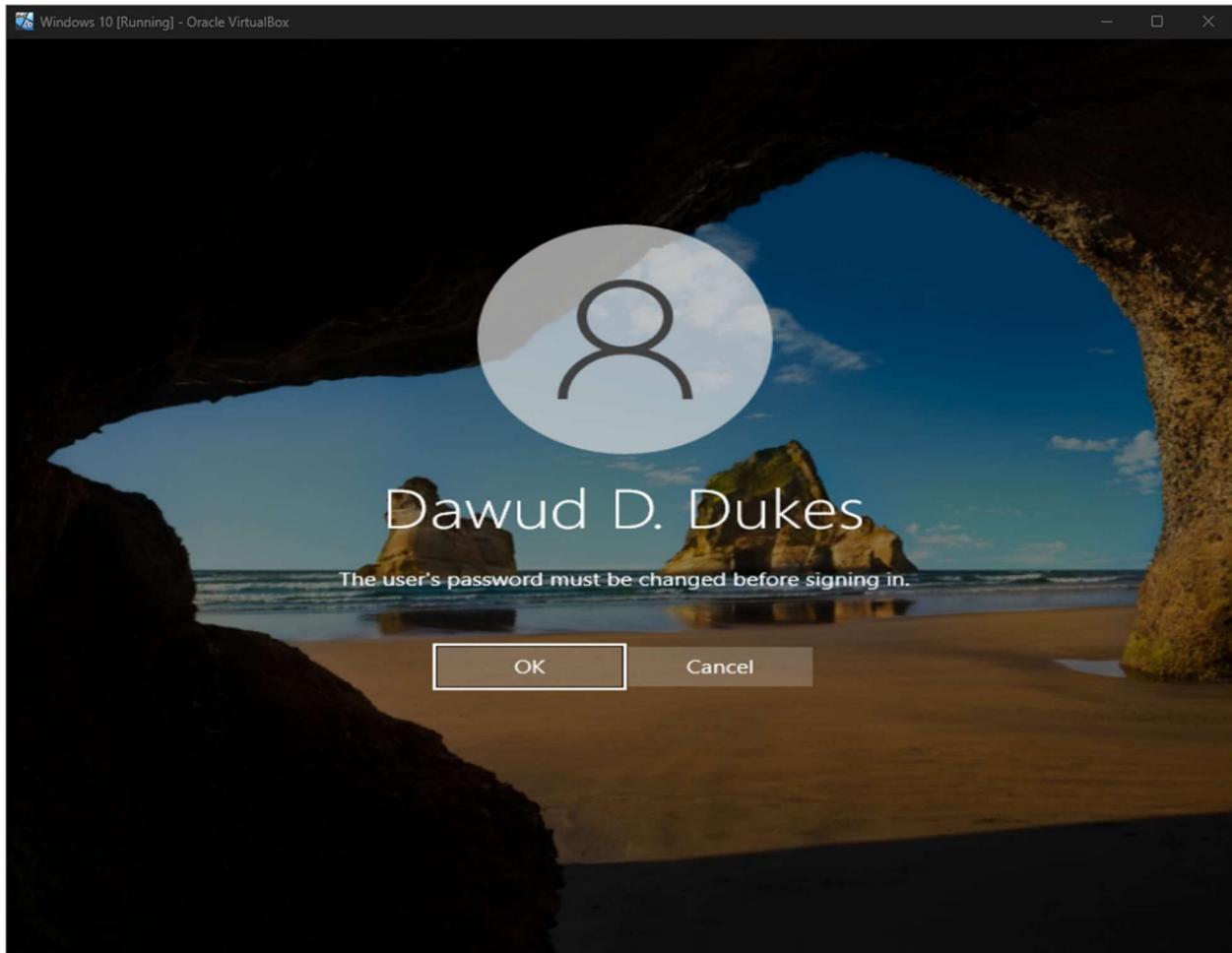
6. The locked user account was unlocked in Active Directory Users and Computers.



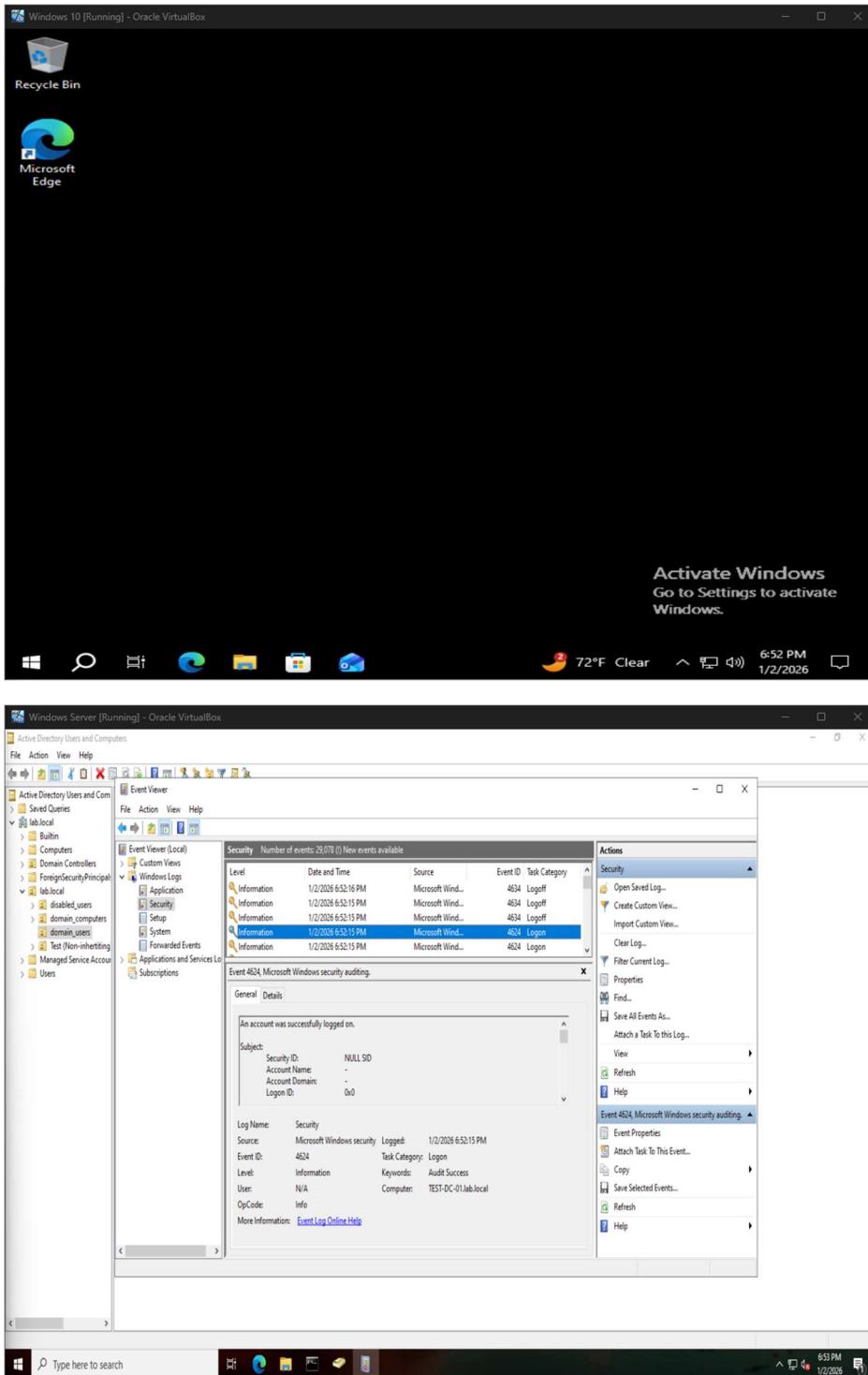
7. Temporary passwords were assigned to restore user access while maintaining security controls.



8. The user logged in using the temporary password and was prompted to create a new secure password.



9. Successful authentication confirmed that the account lockout issue had been fully resolved.



## **Resolution**

The issue was resolved by identifying failed authentication attempts, confirming account lockout enforcement, restoring access through account unlock and password reset, and verifying successful login in the Active Directory domain environment.