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### What is an Ethical Hacker?

The image of what a hacker is has changed throughout time. The term hack first originated from a couple of students that went to MIT when they were talking about a video game. During that time, the word hacking was used to describe another use for something in the cyber world (“Hackers”). In other words, hacking is finding different ways that a program or system can be altered from the original purpose that it was intended. Nowadays, the word has become more negative than what it was initially intended. Now, the image that comes to mind of a hacker is a person hiding behind a computer in a dark room that is programming for illegal usage. Because many people have this view of what a hacker is, it has caused many bad connotations with the word causing people to think that all hackers are bad. There are many ways to be an ethical hacker and do good for others without doing anything wrong.

Being a hacker does not necessarily mean that they are doing illegal activity. Many companies will pay people that try to hack their computer system and help find flaws which others could use for bad. Sometimes, it can be difficult for someone to tell if a person is hacking for the right reason and other times it is creating a grey area. For example, stealing someone’s personal information, or data breaching is an invasion of personal privacy and ethical wrong. In one of the many ethical codes for computer professionals, it says that a person should respect the privacy of others and to not harm them at all (“ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct”). Part of the grey area is when someone finds a flaw in a companies’ system. Sometimes

companies have been known for paying hacker when they find a flaw in their system and report it to the company. Others may question why they were trying to hack them. It is similar to having a stranger telling you that you have a bad lock on your front door after they have picked it open. The same situation happened to Allan Jay Dumanhug when he found a flaw in a company's system. When he told the company about the problem, they accused him of "trying to infiltrate the company" (Karpal). The ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct states that it is only ethical for someone to tell the owner about the violation of the code that they found. Many people, like Dumanhug, hack for different reasons. Some people may hack because they can earn money or for the fun of the challenge or invade the privacy of others. I think there are many ways that system-cracking can be ethical if the hacker is not invading the privacy or stealing from others.

Being a hacker comes with making responsible decisions that can significantly affect others. 1 Corinthians 10: 23-24 says "'I have the right to do anything,' you say—but not everything is beneficial. 'I have the right to do anything'—but not everything is constructive. No one should seek their own good, but the good of others." When implying this verse to hacking, just because a person can hack another person and use it against them it does not mean that they should. Instead, they should use that talent for something beneficial to others, like checking if there are any flaws in their code. Many companies today are having a hard time trusting hackers because of the image that comes with the word. A great solution for this problem is for companies to hire hackers beforehand and create trust with the hackers so the companies will not and worry about their intent. In the end, it is better to have someone tell you about the lousy lock on the door than having a robber break in and steal your items.

Works Cited

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