25 For 25
25 Things to Know/Try for a Better 2025

Cyber Career Version

Ron Woerner

Official Title

Hacking Your Career

Unlock Your Future:
Building a Thriving Career in Cybersecurity

Unlock the exciting world of cybersecurity and learn how to build a rewarding career protecting critical digital assets. Join us to discover the essential skills, certifications, and hands-on experience that will set you apart in this fast-growing field. We'll also explore how AI is transforming cybersecurity, creating new opportunities and challenges. Whether you're just starting out or looking to advance, this talk will inspire and equip you to take the next step in your cybersecurity journey!

Ron Woerner

Introduction

If you have questions/comments please feel free to ask them anytime. You don't have to hold them until the end of the talk.

If there are other resources similar to these that you think might be useful to people, please let the group know.

Hopefully, this will be an interactive and productive session.

Shamelessly stealing (more) from Aaron

Who am I?

I'd tell you who I am,
but do you really care?

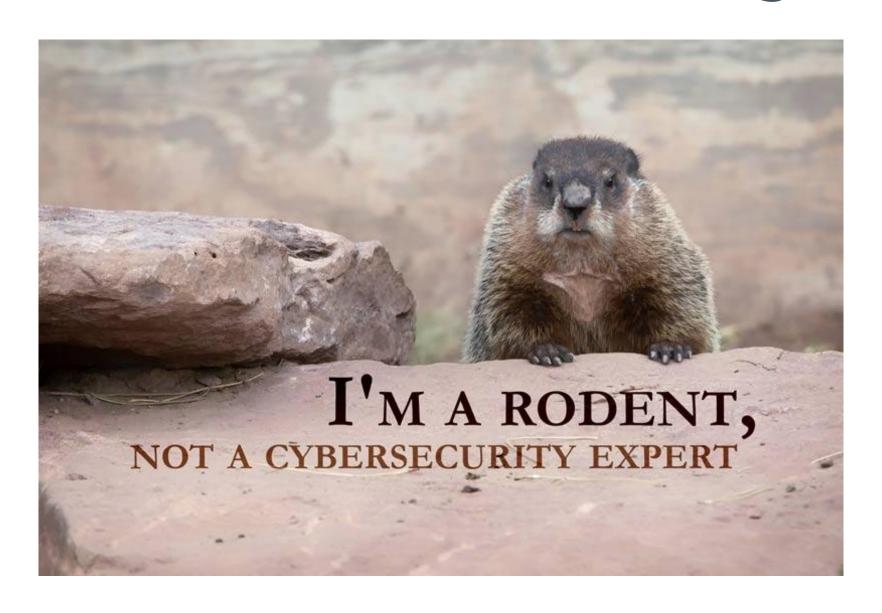Ron Woerner, CISSP, CISM

https://www.linkedin.com/in/ronwoerner/
https://linktr.ee/cyberron

WHO IS THIS GUY?

I am here representing only me.

I am not allowed to mention my primary employer...

What the $%$# are we doing here?

Quick Polls

Years of IT/Cybersecurity Experience

- \> 20
- 10-20
- 5-10
- <5

Who is looking for a new job?

- Actively
- Passively
- Nop. I'm happy.

https://www.ted.com/talks/ron_woerner_hackers_wanted
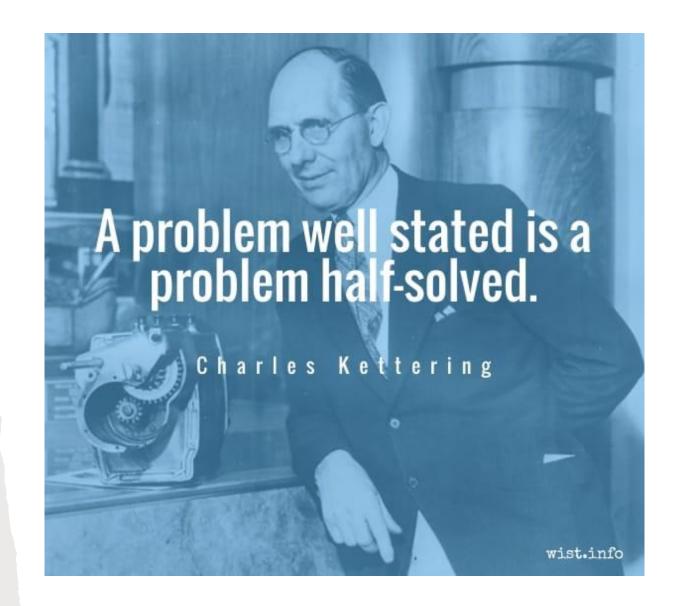
Hackers Dictionary

Hacker: *"One who enjoys the intellectual challenge of creatively overcoming or circumventing limitations."*

Raymond, E., The Jargon Lexicon, Glossary, http://catb.org/jargon/html/H/hacker.html

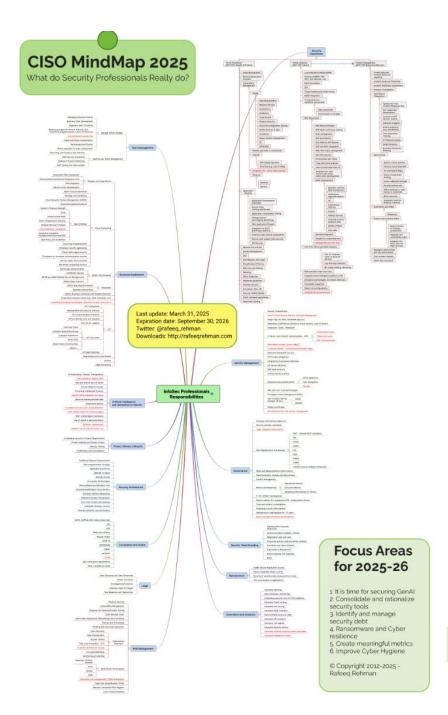**Hackers Wanted | Ron Woerner | TEDxOmaha**

Defining the Problem

- How do I build my career?

- What's up with cybersecurity jobs?

- Is there a cybersecurity talent / hiring gap?

- How to thrive in volatile times?

A problem well stated is a problem half-solved.

Charles Kettering

wist.info

What CISOs Do

CISO MindMap 2025

CISO MindMap 2025 — What do Security Professionals Really do?

Focus Areas for 2025-26

1. It is time for securing GenAI
2. Consolidate and rationalize security tools
3. Identify and manage security debt
4. Ransomware and Cyber resilience
5. Create meaningful metrics
6. Improve Cyber Hygiene

9

Be Prepared!

RIFS, Layoffs, DRPs, RTOs

HR & Applicant Tracking Systems

Red Flags in Job Postings 🚩 🚩

Red Flags:

- Job Requirements Make No Sense – Overly broad

- Two Or More Jobs In One Description – Lack Clarity

- Experience Requirements Don't Match Job Level

- Ignores Transferable Skills

Position Summary:

The Information Security Analyst is an entry-level position that performs monitoring of security events, security investigations, and incident response as the primary role. The Analyst will also participate in monitoring, troubleshooting, installation and maintenance on equipment and software related to electronic access control and general security-based solutions. In addition, they participate in in-house, regulatory and industry teams including working groups, committees, and business continuity teams as required.

Education, License & Cert:

B.S. degree in Computer Science related field, and/or 5 years equivalent work experience. One or more of the Certifications listed. GSEC GIAC Security Essentials Certification GSLC GIAC Security Leadership Certification CISM ISACA Certified Information Security Manager SSCP Systems Security Certified Practitioner CISSP Certified Information Systems Security Professional ISSAP Information Systems Security Architecture Professional MCSE Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer: Security

CISSP != Entry-level

credential for a chief security architect, analyst or professionals with similar responsibilities.

Experience:

- Five years of related experience — Thought it said entry-level?
- Extensive experience in enterprise security architecture design.
- Extensive experience in enterprise security document creation.
- Experience in designing and delivering employee security awareness training. WAIT WHAT?!...

Red Flags in Job Postings 🚩 🚩

Job Description

Your Career

The Principal Consultant, Cyber Risk Management Advisory for Proactive Services is focused on leading our Governance, Risk, and Compliance team across a comprehensive portfolio of clients. The individual will assess security risk across multiple frameworks and act as a technical key team member in client engagements. They will be the client's advocate for cybersecurity risk management and will provide strong recommendations in this domain.

Your Impact

- Security standards within professional services
- Industry knowledge of and experience with cybersecurity best practices within Governance Risk and Compliance to provide recommendations to proactively improve our client's security posture and maturity
- Lead and support Advisory engagements such as Tabletop Exercises, Cyber Risk Assessments, Incident Response Plan development, Ransomware Readiness Reviews & Breach Readiness Reviews
- The ability to ==work across multiple frameworks and regulatory standards== including, but not limited to, ==NIST CSF, CIS20, ISO, GDPR, CCPA, NYDFS, SOX, and HIPAA==
- Manage team, monitor progress, track budget, manage risk and ensure key stakeholders are kept informed about progress and expected outcomes while defining potential impacts and creating an effective mitigation strategy for multiple projects at a given time
- Skilled at proactively identifying security risks and vulnerabilities while ==eliminating cybersecurity threats== via stakeholder interviews, documentation review, and deep-dive testing and control validation
- ==Ensure client controls meet legal, regulatory, privacy, policy, standards and security requirements==

12

Red Flags in Job Postings 🚩 🚩

Red Flags:

- Job Requirements Make No Sense – Overly broad
- Two Or More Jobs In One Description – Lack Clarity
- Experience Requirements Don't Match Job Level
- Ignores Transferable Skills

A **bad job posting** can signal any number of *bad omens for good candidates:*

- This is a firm that doesn't know what they need from this security position
- This is a firm that will overwork me and my security colleagues
- This is a firm that is compliance driven and not committed to security and risk

2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study

Key Findings – 1:

- **Skills shortages*** make it difficult to secure the organization.
- **Lack of budget** is the main cause for talent shortages and skills gaps.
- **Participants' pathways** to enter the cybersecurity workforce are changing, as are their priorities.
- **Diverse backgrounds** can help solve the talent gap.

*Debate "Cybersecurity Skills Shortage"

Source: 2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study

2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study

Key Findings – 2:

- The expected advancements of **AI** will change the way cyber respondents view their skills shortage.

- Cyber professionals confident **Gen AI** will not replace their role.

- **Gen AI** presents benefits and challenges for cybersecurity.

- Organizations need a **Gen AI** strategy to responsibly implement the technology.
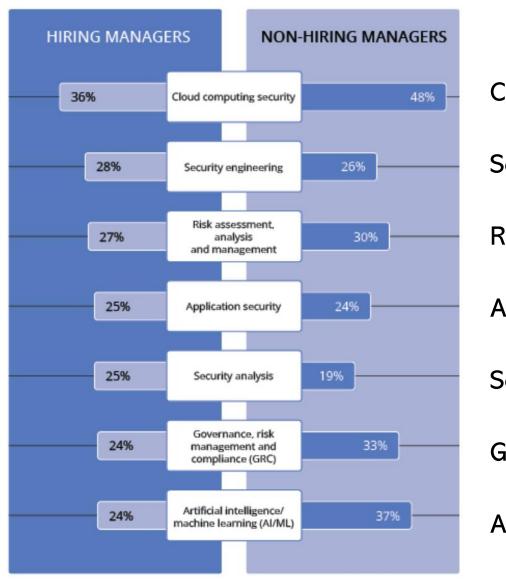
Workforce Insights

Technical Skills*

* Technical is only a part
  of needed skills

What technical skills are you most looking for right now when hiring?

What technical skills do you think are most in demand for security professionals looking to advance their careers?

HIRING MANAGERS		NON-HIRING MANAGERS	
36%	Cloud computing security	48%	Cloud
28%	Security engineering	26%	Security Engineering
27%	Risk assessment, analysis and management	30%	Risk Management
25%	Application security	24%	Application Security
25%	Security analysis	19%	Security analysis
24%	Governance, risk management and compliance (GRC)	33%	GRC
24%	Artificial intelligence/ machine learning (AI/ML)	37%	AI/ML

Base: 7,698 global cybersecurity professionals

Base: 8,154 global cybersecurity professionals

16

Workforce Insights

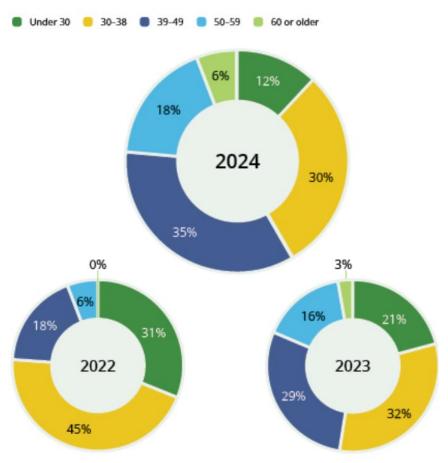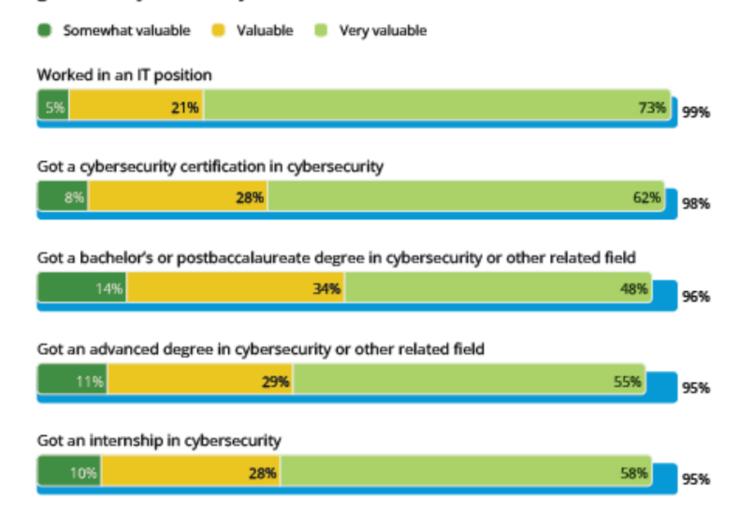Ages of new entrants into the cybersecurity profession (i.e., started in cybersecurity within the last year).

Legend: Under 30, 30–38, 39–49, 50–59, 60 or older

2024
- 12% Under 30
- 30% 30–38
- 35% 39–49
- 18% 50–59
- 6% 60 or older

2022
- 31% Under 30
- 45% 30–38
- 18% 39–49
- 6% 50–59
- 0% 60 or older

2023
- 21% Under 30
- 32% 30–38
- 29% 39–49
- 16% 50–59
- 3% 60 or older

Base: 488 global cybersecurity professionals who started in the past 12 months
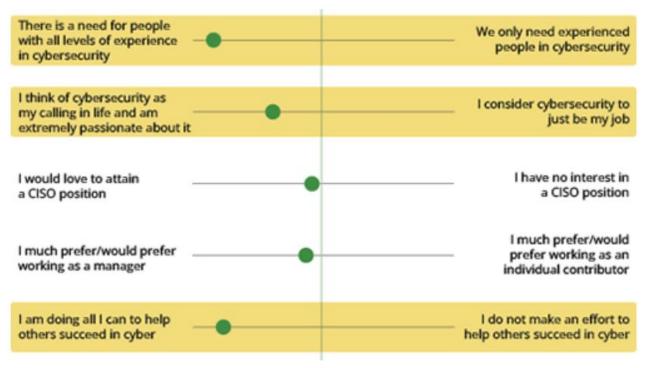695 surveyed in 2023; 356 surveyed in 2022
Note: Individual percentage values may not sum to totals due to rounding.

How valuable have you found each of the following in your career growth in cybersecurity?

Legend: Somewhat valuable, Valuable, Very valuable

Worked in an IT position
- 5% Somewhat valuable
- 21% Valuable
- 73% Very valuable
- 99%

Got a cybersecurity certification in cybersecurity
- 8% Somewhat valuable
- 28% Valuable
- 62% Very valuable
- 98%

Got a bachelor's or postbaccalaureate degree in cybersecurity or other related field
- 14% Somewhat valuable
- 34% Valuable
- 48% Very valuable
- 96%

Got an advanced degree in cybersecurity or other related field
- 11% Somewhat valuable
- 29% Valuable
- 55% Very valuable
- 95%

Got an internship in cybersecurity
- 10% Somewhat valuable
- 28% Valuable
- 58% Very valuable
- 95%

Source: 2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study

Cybersecurity Career Growth Aspirations and Pathways

Rank the following in terms of how meaningful they would be (or already are) for you to achieve in your cybersecurity career.

(Showing top three responses)

There is a need for people with all levels of experience in cybersecurity — We only need experienced people in cybersecurity

I think of cybersecurity as my calling in life and am extremely passionate about it — I consider cybersecurity to just be my job

I would love to attain a CISO position — I have no interest in a CISO position

I much prefer/would prefer working as a manager — I much prefer/would prefer working as an individual contributor

I am doing all I can to help others succeed in cyber — I do not make an effort to help others succeed in cyber

Balancing personal fulfillment and professional growth

43%

Achieving financial success and stability

38%

Successfully protecting my organization's assets

30%

Base: 15,852 global cybersecurity professionals

Source: 2024 ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study

Personal Challenges

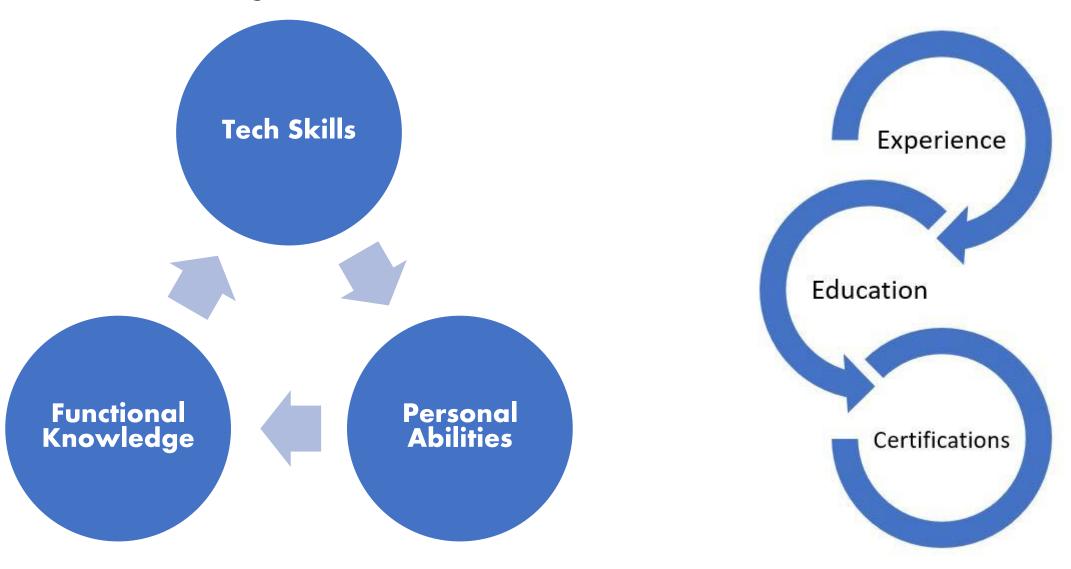| Impostor Syndrome | Fear / Failure & Risk-Taking | Company Culture / Toxic Work Environments | Burnout |

HT: Jennifer Leggio, "The Lion's Roar:
How to Bring Courage Back to Your Cyber Career"
RSAC 2025

What can we (The Industry) do?
Hint: Lots

Call to action for the industry

Reframe hiring practices

HT Helen Patton, "Are You Technical?
Proving Competency In Cyber," RSAC 2025

20

Cyber Career Requirements

Tech Skills

Functional Knowledge

Personal Abilities

Experience

Education

Certifications

Hire and Develop Differently

Do This	Not This
Jobs to be done	Titles
Apprenticeships	Internships
Career Maps	Job Families
Stackable Credentials	Stand Alone Credentials
Potential	History

Include:

- Formal Education
- Informal Learning
- On The Job Experiences
- Conferences & Communities
- Coaches and Mentors

What can we (personally) do?
Hint: Lots

See your career as a continual learning journey

Build a Resilient Mindset

Build a Resilient Mindset

BUILD A RESILIENT MINDSET

Build a Resilient Mindset

Build a Resilient Mindset

Hacking Your Career Tips

- Visualize Your Goals – what do you want to be when you grow up & why?
- Social Engineer Your Next Boss / OSINT
- ABC = Always Be Curious| Actively Learn
- Practice, Practice, Practice
- Be Tenacious
- Be a Hacker

When all else fails

Fake It 'Til You Make It

Photo by Sander Sammy on Unsplash

Ignore 'Em
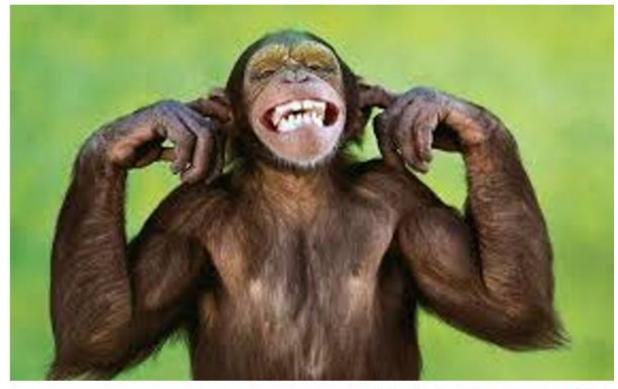
Photo by I have no idea

HT Helen Patton, "Are You Technical?
Proving Competency In Cyber," RSAC 2025

26

Building Your Brand
Differentiating yourself

Social Media
(primarily LinkedIn)

Personal Website

Your LinkedIn Profile and Website should match your resume

Building Interpersonal (soft) Skills

- Attitude (preferably good)
- Communications (Writing & Speaking)
- Teamwork / Collaboration
- Critical Thinking
- Tenacity
- Humor

Excuse me sir. There appears to be a hare in my pancakes.

I'm allowed 1 "Dad" Joke

Improving Communications & Leadership

TOASTMASTERS
INTERNATIONAL

Tech Talkers Toastmasters Club 6424

Main Menu	Welcome to "Tech Talkers"

Main Menu

Home

Meeting Information / Directions

Contact Us

Club Calendar

Public Downloads

Free Resources

Toastmasters Video

About & FAQs

Ice Breaker Project

Member Meeting Roles

Pathways

For more information on Toastmasters International, visit www.toastmasters.org

Welcome to "Tech Talkers"

Geeks (and aspiring geeks) welcome! 🤓

- We love techies, programmers, sys admins, testers, UX professionals, security professionals, students, and all types of geeks.
- We encourage our members to convey their passion.
- We help our members present information in a memorable way.
- Our members gain the confidence to speak up at work or present at a conference or meetup.
- Our members learn from each other as they improve their technical knowledge, communication, and leadership skills.

Tech Talkers Toastmasters can help you! Tech Talkers Toastmasters is a club that enables those in technology careers to improve communication and leadership skills in a safe, encouraging, and supportive environment. We're one of the few Toastmasters International clubs focused on technology topics.

We meet online via Zoom on the 1st and 3rd Fridays at noon CT. While we're based around Omaha, Nebraska, USA, anyone in tech may join us. No experience required; just a drive to improve yourself and an Internet connection.

https://techtalkers.toastmastersclubs.org/

Be part of a community - Contribute

"In a world where data is the new gold, cyber defenders battle unseen foes and safeguard our interconnected lives..."

Our Mission

We promote the **networking**, **skill development**, and **outreach** of the Omaha Nebraska cybersecurity community.

https://cybersecurityomaha.com/

But Ron, What About the 25 for 25?

I've only provided eighteen references so far…

Let's explore more.

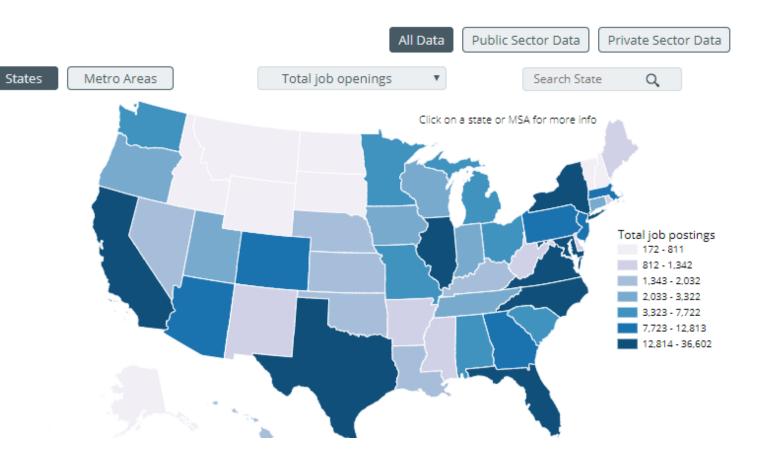https://www.cyberseek.org/heatmap.html

Cybersecurity Career Pathway

Cyber Careers Pathways Tool

This tool presents a new and interactive way to explore the updated work roles within the Workforce Framework for Cybersecurity (NICE Framework). It also highlights core attributes among each of the Work Roles and offers actionable insights for employers, professionals, and those considering a career in Cyber. To start, select a Work Role below, or enter keywords in the search bar.
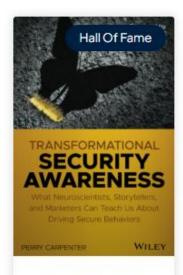
Select a Work Role

Begin typing to search work role names. Or **search job titles**.

Go to the Career Pathway Roadmap page

Oversight and Governance | Design and Development | Implementation and Operation | Protection and Defense | Investigation

Systems Authorization 611	Technology Program Auditing 805	Cybersecurity Policy and Planning 752		Secure Systems Development 631,632	Systems Testing and Evaluation 671	Network Operations 441	Technical Support 411	Insider Threat Analysis
Privacy Compliance 732						Digital Forensics 212	
Cybersecurity Legal Advice 731	Executive Cybersecurity Leadership 901			OT Cybersecurity Engineering	Software Security Assessment 622	Data Analysis 422	Database Administration 421	Vulnerability Analysis 541
		Secure Project Management 802	COMSEC Management 723					
Program Management 801	Cybersecurity Curriculum Development 711			Enterprise Architecture 651	Cybersecurity Architecture 652	Systems Security Analysis 461	Systems Administration 451	Infrastructure Support 521
								Incident Response 531
Product Support Management 803	Systems Security Management 722	Cybersecurity Workforce Management 751		Systems Requirements Planning 641		Knowledge Management 431		Defensive Cybersecurity 511
Technology Portfolio Management 804	Security Control Assessment 612	Cybersecurity Instruction 712		Secure Software Development 621	Technology Research and Development 661	Digital Evidence Analysis 211	Cybercrime Investigation 221	Threat Analysis 141

https://niccs.cisa.gov/workforce-development/cyber-career-pathways-tool   34
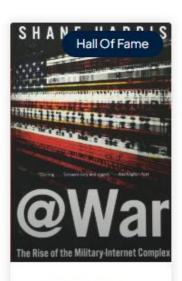
For Book Nerds

CyberCanon

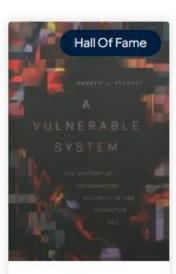## Your community for InfoSec's essential reads

In the chaotic flood of cybersecurity content, CyberCanon is your signal in the noise—**the InfoSec professional's first stop for must-consume wisdom.**
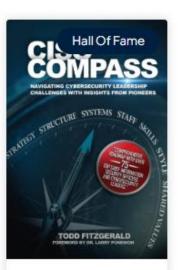

Hall Of Fame — Transformation Security Awareness: ...

Hall Of Fame — @War: The Rise of the Military– ...

Hall Of Fame — A Vulnerable System: The History of ...

Hall Of Fame — American Spies: Modern Surveillance, ...

Hall Of Fame — CISO Compass

Hall Of Fame — CISO Desk Reference Guide: A ...

https://cybercanon.org/

One Ring To Rule Them All…

cybersecurity GUIDE

What is Cybersecurity Guide?

Over the past few years, Cybersecurity Guide has grown into a massive resource referenced by leading cybersecurity professionals in academia, industry, and beyond.

Our global team of professional cybersecurity writers — leaning on their first-hand experience in the field — conduct interviews and deep-dive research, all in an effort to create the most up-to-date and comprehensive cybersecurity education resource available.

https://cybersecurityguide.org/

RESOURCE CENTER

Centers for Academic Excellence
Job Guide
Veteran's Guide
Women's Guide
Internship Guide
Security Clearance Guide
Ethical Hacker Guide
Coding for Cybersecurity Guide
Cybersecurity 101
Student Guide to Internet Safety
Scholarship Guide
Cybersecurity Math Guide
Small Business Guide
Cybersecurity for K-12 Students
Career Networking Guide
What is a Cyber Range?
Code Like a Hacker
Reacting to a Cyber Incident
Introduction to Cyber Defense
Cybersecurity Courses Online
Recommended Reading
Phishing Attacks
Cybersecurity Responsibility
How to Get Into Cybersecurity

The Obligatory Questions Slide

1 - aka Let's Play "Stump the Professor"

2 - Obligatory AI art

AI-generated content may be incorrect

Apply What You've Discovered

Write

- 3 Strengths
- 3 Weaknesses
- 3 Dream Jobs
- 3 Resources You'll Explore
- 3 Things You're Doing Today

Refine Your Career

TEST!

Who learned Something New?

June Online Meeting* Featuring Roger Grimes

Date: Tue, June 24

Time: 12:00-1:00PM CDT

Speaker: Roger Grimes
   (https://www.linkedin.com/in/rogeragrimes/)

Topic: "*Taming the Hacker Storm: A Way to Defeat Cybercriminals and Malware*" (https://www.amazon.com/Taming-Hacking-Storm-Framework-Defeating-ebook/dp/B0F2PT5P66)
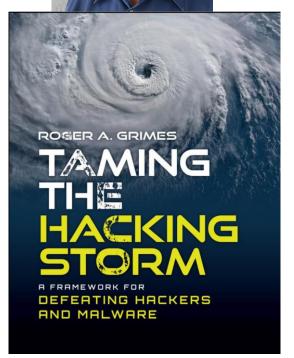
Please register
at https://bellevue.zoom.us/meeting/register/7wURjS4kRKmqP2wRrO3aOg.

* This is a special, free, virtual event for the Nebraska Cybersecurity Community sponsored by the area cybersecurity community.

Registration is Open!

ROGER A. GRIMES
TAMING THE HACKING STORM
A FRAMEWORK FOR DEFEATING HACKERS AND MALWARE

LIMITED TIME OFFER

Hacking Your Career

Unlock Your Future:
Building a Thriving Career in Cybersecurity

Ron Woerner

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Slides available at
https://www.nebraskacert.org/CSF/
&
https://github.com/hackerron

I'M A RODENT, NOT A CYBERSECURITY EXPERT