**Lesson 1: Introduction**

An introduction to cybersecurity and cyberattacks, as well as an overview of the course.

Picture this scenario: You create an account on a website (trendy social network, shopping platform, food delivery site, or whatever you choose to imagine). The website prompts you to fill in your full name, phone, email, and birthday. You'd probably start to type without hesitation, most likely not the first time you've given your information out. But have you ever paused and thought about who receives this information, where it goes, or how it's used and protected?

When you enter data into a site, it travels as **bits** across a chain of servers, with those chains forming larger networks with many devices. As your data travels, it goes through multiple checkpoints, making it vulnerable to malicious cybercriminals who could access it without your authorization. You now might wonder; how would one keep their data and information in networks and devices safe? The answer: cybersecurity.

Hands typing on a computer

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**What is Cybersecurity**

**Cybersecurity** is the practice of protecting devices, systems, and data from unauthorized attacks, access, or other digital threats.

Currently, the field of cybersecurity has been expanding to affect virtually everyone because the world has continued to become digital. Individuals, businesses, organizations, and government institutions rely more and more on internet connections and networks, and corporations increasingly collect personal data (such as Social Security numbers, credit scores and other financial details, or medical information) from customers.

**The Consequences**

Thus, **cyberthreats** are growing and evolving at a rapid rate. The number of data breaches conducted by malicious cybercriminals rises every year, resulting in stolen information, denied services, damaged infrastructure, and websites being down. The issue of cyberattacks is not just on the citizen and company scale-- it is on the international level as well, as governments strengthen their cybersecurity strategies against geopolitical rivals to protect national security.

**What We Can Do**

Corporations and businesses deploy teams of cybersecurity professionals to prevent, intercept, and fight cyberthreats. But as interconnectivity increases, it is more important than ever to realize that cybersecurity begins with *ourselves*. It is up to us, individuals and consumers, to be able to recognize cyberthreats targeted towards us and take steps to protect ourselves from those threats.

In this course, you will learn more about cyberthreats and how to be aware of them. Plus, you'll gain an understanding of how to stay safe online via online privacy, keep your data and services secure by being knowledgeable of company policies, and protect your devices through strong passwords and other methods. By the end, you will be equipped with the principal tools necessary for **self-cyber-protection** and empowered to take charge of your own cyber security.