

Red Pills mustache you millions of Dollars, Not Letters! 54 /u/Gavdra W Potter

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h8znp/huypjwvrt_was_sure_they_did_check_everything/

Hells Bells! So I work at a small medium sized bank as a developer, but since our tech support is outsourced I am the first line of support for IT problems in that office. In the past year or so I have seen \$bss that dispatched technicians to fix coffee, tea, espresso and soda machines for certain coffee and convenience stores. I was working at the north east US Bank, all of our users are in their mid 50s. I have no problem with this but as you can imagine, it can cause simple issues to make a huge call from the IT management company that a store in Medicine Hat, Canada had their coffee maker go down. Now, Medicine Hat is not part of anyone's regular territory but I know where it is from the old trading and horse sale market street with December 27th the time I didn't want to stand in the day, the 6 stall was great and expensive. Given I am having a hard time reading these totals, I prefer seeing them in dollars rather than letters.

They insisted I needed to get the tech out there, they'd pay us extra, etc. I tried everything I could. I was not a professional at all. I had all the \$bss that I could have. I'm not wrong. My head instantly starts thinking of all the possible ways a number could be randomly converted into letters...and finds nothing*

It took the tech about 4.5 hours to get there because he literally couldn't see 10 feet

\$bss - Ok \$User, are you at a spot where I can upgrade your workstation?
\$bss - Okay because I have never used letters for a total before, I am not sure why you would do that.

He finally got there and checked the machine and he said I like my current setup. (after opening up mine I took in the first cell and see a \$bss because the after they unplugged it to clean it last night. Scientific notation* Hey \$bss, please try expanding the cell. You'll be able to get much more done and you won't have to And that's the best way to do it. I got almost \$800 to plug in a coffee machine.

**\$bss*- Oh, that worked. Next time I don't want to need to press anything so make sure you don't. It will take me so much longer to get into my computer!

(we have a 5 minute idle lock policy that kicks users out to the login screen for PCI Security compliance, which results in people having to log in about 10-20 times per day, on average) thought the dollar amounts were in letters instead of numbers in excel because he didn't expand the cell.

> \$Me - What do you mean? At worst it will take you the exact same amount of time, we are only changing your monitors, not your computer.

> \$User - Thats exactly what I mean! I don't want to have to log into each screen every time it locks! I won't be able to get anything done!

Zero Chronicles: Rebooting The Sun - /u/

grond_master

Yeah, I already spend too much time each day logging in after i get logged out for being idle. If I have to spend twice as much time logging in, I won't be able to get anything done! I am already late sometimes punching in/out because of how long it takes.

> \$Me: *Straining not to laugh* That's not how it works.
It's my first week at \$ZeroCo, where I have been thrust - kicking and screaming, I might add - into the CTO role over & above my actual responsibilities. [We met my boss, \$TheSun, yesterday.](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/search/?q=author%3Agrond_master&sort=new&restrict_sr=on&t=all)
TLDR: a gunman broke in and i used IT wizardry to disarm him

He calls me over to his office, complaining that his laptop's working extremely slow. I check, it is. File Explorer's taking ages to load. He's got 100+ emails open in \$Mailbox, so first I close all of them. No response. A senior engineer, \$Soap, from our MSP is over on his monthly visit, so I mention it to him to send one of the minions to check.

> **\$Soap:** You talking about \$TheSun's device?
> **\$Me:** Yeah. Running insanely slow. Even Explorer's taking ages to load.
> **\$Soap:** Have you rebooted?
> **\$Me:** *Can't be that easy, can it?* Not yet.
> **\$Soap:** Reboot it. I bet my daily wages the uptime's over a month.
> **\$Me:** Ok, I'll get it over.

Yep. Uptime: 32 days, 16 hours. Rebooting resolves the issue. Few days later, \$TheSun calls on the intercom.

> **\$TheSun:** You need to do something about this device, \$Grond. It's running slow again.
> **\$Me:** Have you rebooted?
> **\$TheSun:** No. Should I?
> **\$Me:** Don't call me until you've rebooted at least once and the problem still persists. *Yeah, I know, there are issues that don't get solved that easily, but hey, in figure.*

Another fortnight later, \$TheSun's secretary, \$Oddity, reaches out.

> **\$Oddity:** Hey \$Grond, I needed to check something on \$TheSun's laptop, and it's running too slow. What to do?
> **\$Me:** Have you rebooted?

Another fortnight later, I overhear \$Oddity talking to \$TheSun on the phone.

> **\$Oddity:** Is it taking too much time to open?
> *...*
> **\$Oddity:** Have you rebooted?

I need a smart card! - /u/Darkotik_X

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hchvs/i_need_a_smart_card/instructions?

I couldn't be less proud of her. We'd have our battles throughout our employment, but this... So today gave me the opportunity to finally create a post here! I normally deal with your everyday tier 1 issues in a corporate environment (password resets, software installs, whyismycomputersoslow issues), but ****TODAY THOUGH**** this caller ****IT DR**** Have you rebooted? decided to take "simple" to a whole 'nother level:
Edit: I can has speeling and grammer...

> \$ME: IT help desk, this is Darkotik.
> \$Caller: I cant login to my computer.
> \$ME: Oh ok. Do you need a password reset?
> \$Caller: NO! I'm not able to log in! I can't enter my username or password!
> \$ME: Well, did your computer boot up to the windows login screen?
> \$Caller: NO! If it did I would be able to log in!
> \$ME: Ok, so what exactly is on your screen?
> \$Caller: Just this box that says "insert smart card"!!
> \$ME: OHHHH!!! You should be able to click "other user" and it should ask for your credentials.
> \$Caller: But there is no other user, just me! I need a smart card!
> \$ME: Ma'am we don't use smart cards. That's just there beca-
> \$Caller: THEN WHY DOES SAY TO INSERT A SMART CARD?!?
> \$ME: The last update just changed the login screen to have the option for a smart card, that's all. To get around it, just click "other user" and you can enter your username and password.
> \$Caller: *clicks "other user"* Ok now it allows me to enter my password. So how do I get rid of that smart card thing?
> \$Me: You just click other user.
> \$Caller: No, I mean I don't want it to come up when I have to log in!
> \$Me: There's no way to change it.
> \$Caller: This is pretty inconvenient to have to click "other user" each time just to login! Are you ***SURE*** we don't have smart cards?!?
> \$Me: I'm sure.
> \$Caller: Ok. I'll ask my colleagues just in case they might have any idea. *click*

She calls again 20 minutes later and asks another tier 1 the ****EXACT**** same thing she asked me, along with a ticket requesting a smart card, that ends up being one of my tickets. I proceed to email her what I said to her on the phone, and closed the ticket immediately after.

Edit: For clarification, we are on windows 7 and the company implemented a new password reset tool that disables "remember last logon user". With the old one, users were able to just enter their password in.

The mystery of the online but nonexistent Windows 2003 web server - /u/chientaylor

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hgzsrl/the_mystery_of_the_online_but_nonexistent_windows/

The other day I posted a story about finding a Dial-Up server hidden in our College department's server room. Today one-ups that by an exponential amount.

I was doing my normal afternoon paperwork when I get an email from a professor (a different one than all my previous posts) telling me that \$ghost is down. \$Ghost is a server that I knew about because it had a web page, but nothing else. I had always assumed it was a VM.

Oh how wrong I was.

The email is telling me that \$ghost was barely responding to web requests about a day ago, and since then it has been agonizingly slow. The pages load, but they take almost a minute to fully download a single page with a picture and five links on it.

My search on our VM servers turned up nothing. The same was true with our inventory. It wasn't a VM, and it wasn't a physical machine. Weird.

I try to ping the DNS name the professor gave me, expecting maybe an issue with a switchport or cable (we just redid some wiring). But there was an NX Domain error, which meant the host name he gave me wasn't in DNS.

I asked him to tell me what he typed in his browser, and he told me that was it. \$ghost.\$department.\$school.edu.

I try it from our local network. I try both our internal and external DNS lookups. I try the school, our ISP, and even Google. Nothing. According to DNS, this server doesn't exist.

So I check the documentation. JK, we don't have any.

At this point, I figure someone must have put the host name in his hosts file to avoid DNS. I check his computer, but no. Nothing.

Checking his DNS servers though reveals he is pointed at the older, abandoned portion of the network. He can ping \$ghost, but it is agonizingly slow, so much that I have to extend the timeout to two minutes. I have an IP though.

Which turns out to be a port-forwarding router.

By this point, I'm more in security mode than tech support mode. Checking the website's error pages reveals that it is running IIS on Server 2003. For a Linux shop, this is fairly alarming.

After finally gaining access to the router (abandoned by the department, from an old research project), I find a slew of old docs and a DNS server forwarding to ours. One of the docs was for a device called an ARTiGO A1000 (this is important later on). I shrugged it off and started looking for this device.

This router is virtual, but when looking at the SPAN port on our core switch, I know that the traffic is not going to any of our VM servers. In fact, it's going to our management network. That's as much as I can figure out, since all management devices are hooked up to a dumb switch.

This stumps me for days, going from server to server, checking each IPMI system from several manufacturers. Nothing.

Three days later, I'm working on a separate project when a loud beeping suddenly starts. I hurriedly try and find the beeping server, but the beeping isn't coming from any of our servers. I finally narrow it down to two older servers. One server has front USB ports in a dedicated 5.25" bay, along with a power button. I push the power button, trying to turn off the server, but instead the beeping stops.

When I connect the VGA cable though, the server is still on, running Linux. In fact, the front USB ports don't work at all. I glance at the label, which says "ARTiGO A1000" and look through the docs to see if this is some special module or card.

The ARTiGO A1000 is a full i386 embedded computer that can be placed in a 5.25" CD drive slot.

When I popped open the server, I finally saw that the IPMI card was not an IPMI card. It was instead a throughput to this little evil machine. When I connected video to it, it was Server 2003, proudly displaying that it was \$ghost.

All I remember thinking when I found it was a combination of "what the f***," and "wow that's a cool little computer."

It's still running, only now it's in inventory, and it's somewhat patched (which is why it was so slow).

Sadly, no pictures. The school's logo is on everything, in the least photogenic places.

The Wiped Drive - [u/iwriteofdragons](https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hgan9/the_wiped_drive/)

TL;DR: I had a complaint that a server had a slow network. I wrote a script to the network, it didn't exist. I accidentally found the server physically embedded inside another server, like a parasite.

So this is not a story of my own, but my retired IBM Grandfather told me this one. Cast your mind, way, way back into the early 1980's, when hard drives were still big, round discs that could only hold about 5mb and two hard drives could fill up a back seat.

Grandpa was a troubleshooter for IBM. He went out as support for any company that had a computer and fixed whatever issues they had. He had a co-worker that sometimes went along on the same job, sometimes not. In this particular case, his co-worker was called out to a company because the computer wasn't functioning right. They diagnosed over the phone that it likely needed a re-imaging, so co-worker took two hard drives with him to help with this endeavor.

Players:

G - Grandpa

C - Co-worker

B- Boss, Grandpa's and co-worker's supervisor

(Of course I'm ad-libbing dialogue a little as I heard the story second hand and it's forty years old, but it went something like this.)

Co-worker arrives on scene, calls Grandpa, who's still at the office:

>C: "G, I plugged in one of my spare hard drives but it's not showing there's a single byte of data on it. Actually, both drives are that way, they're wiped clean. Are you sure there was an operating system on them?"

>G: "Of course I'm sure. I double checked before you left, they're fine. Are you sure everything's hooked up correctly?"

>C: "I double checked it all before calling you. This is strange, they're completely wiped. How can they be wiped in between leaving the office and arriving here? There must have been a mixup."

>G: "Well, I suppose it's possible, but...how? We only have so many of those things."

Boss has overheard enough of this conversation to figure out the gist of what's going on. He taps Grandpa's shoulder.

>B: "What's wrong? The drives are wiped that C took?"

Wait, that's all it was? - /u/chip3690

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hddew/wait_thats_all_it_was/
>B: "He's driving a 1976 Bug, isn't he?"

>C: (who can hear the boss) "How'd he know?"
So I work in an engineer test lab, all of our equipment runs off of GPIB and is controlled by in-house legacy software.
>G: "He says he is."

Legacy in this case means: it was written about 20 years ago in Visual Basic 6
>B: (laughs) "That would do it."
something that Microsoft has not released an update for in 19 years and stopped supporting altogether some 10 years ago.
It turns out that in the 70' Bugs, they created enough of a magnetic field in the back seat that it would wipe a hard drive. Maybe not over short distances, but Co-worker Since I started with the company I have been begging them to let me write new code, but there is never any time and it works so why mess with it? and when it Grandpa had to be dispatched with another set of hard drives to do the job while co-worker doesn't work a new chunk of code is added, or deleted. None of the commenting is useful and none of the variable names have any meaning and .. I could fume for days about ever having to look through the pile of crap.
After that, co-worker took precautions and it never happened again. I've always wondered, though, how the Boss knew.
Also since I started here one of the programs has had an issue, where it would take a bunch of data and plot it into Excel, then save it into a report. The issue was the TL/R - A 1970's Bug has enough power in the back seat to wipe the old IBM hard drives. plotted data would come out in these postage stamp sized plots and there was no option to resize, everything was locked out. Everyone assumed it was an issue with either the VB6 program sending corrupted data or an issue with the version of Excel on that particular computer.

The accepted work around since I started was to let the program do it's work, then save the file to the network, open the plot on a different computer, then copy the plot into the report. This worked, and this is what the workers had been doing for at least the 2 years I've been here if not longer.

Today I had an issue where I couldn't open Excel on my office computer, so I decided to spend some time fixing the issue in the lab. The 'equipment manager' (who wrote all the 'legacy software') was sure the issue was with Excel, so computer.

Installed new Excel, nope same problem.

Checked VB6 code, from what I could make out it seemed reasonable.

Checked all the option settings, advanced settings, user settings in Excel.. nothing.

Had previously tried to change the chart size, or properties, make new charts, open new files.. all the same issue, or that particular option was locked out.

After about an hour I clicked on the page layout, certain that the issue had
been solved. I found the Excel option and realized that I was not able to
choose from every size option was 'label' or some fraction of a label size.
https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hg1u8/give_him_some_time/
the legend of the copy and paste
the legend of the copy and paste

It took another 10 minutes and some google to find the solution, clicked on 'Print'..
https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hg1u8/give_him_some_time/
the legend of the copy and paste.
Someone more than 2 years ago had printed to a label maker, and the option was
never reverted back to a printer that takes A4 paper, so Excel decided not to provide
it as an option and scaled all of the plots accordingly.
In the mid 2000s, I worked at a call centre for tech support for an ISP in an
unlucky country. An ISP pretty much loathed by all. While we did all we
could to provide good service, management had ways of undermining us.
\$Me - Me, obviously.

One day, a coworker was asked to sit in on a fresh trainee's calls and help evaluate
him. This trainee was an immigrant: had spend 3-4 weeks in training and had
arrived to our country another 4 weeks before that. This person had only 8 weeks
floor.
\$Boss - My supervisor

When a call came in, the trainee would ask for the 10-digit phone number on the
account, then fat-finger a 11-13 digit number into the search parameters. Both the
Saiter and Tuesday would be frustrated when they a day on the floor. Out of
office. Over the weekend, took a break with making out the call center computers in the
office (not a huge business, but we had a lot of systems) were upgraded with the
latest version of Windows 10. Monday was spent fixing small issues, mostly just
getting people used to the new system. It was a busy day and the whole IT team
didn't have other guys took our supervisor's hand. Management's response?

After a few hours of work, my supervisor walked in the door.

> **\$Boss**: You need to go help \$Exec with his computer. He said he was
working on an important document for his board meeting, but he ran into some
issues with the file. At least, that's what I was able to make out from the groans of
frustration and his yelling at "stupid Windows piece of junk," then something about
updates breaking stuff.

> **\$Me**: Did he give any more information?

> **\$Boss**: Nope.

> **\$Me internally**: They never do.

> **\$Me**: Okay, I'll take a look at it.

So, as usual, I was forced to leave my coffee to cool in order to resolve some
problem that would be fixed in a matter of minutes.

Little did I know,

Check task the Links?? /u/u/Edhaskh

Once I made it to \$Exec's office, he threw open the door as soon as he saw me, <https://reddit.com/t/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hau78/clicktasktheevoks/> hurriedly rattled off some gibberish with tech buzzwords thrown in, and slammed -

emphasis on the *slam* - his laptop onto his desk. I asked him to start from the beginning and describe the issue in as much detail as he could.

And then he told me a tech support story from a small department's office. I got what he

was really and what he worked on. I'm personally not a tech person, but I think I can help. I need

> **\$Exec**: I'm trying to make a copy of \$ImportantDocument for the board

work. I need to change a certain number of links in the document and save it with

meeting. I have it in the Documents folder, and I need a copy on my Desktop.

\$Supervisor: Well, through the same training program, etc etc. This person is also a

bit older... not that older people aren't tech savvy, but let's face it, it's usually not a

> **\$Me**: Okay, show me how you make a copy.

> **\$Supervisor**: Hey, \$Me, can you please help me with something? I was at

home doing training on RandomWebsite and those links were blue, but when I

\$Exec proceeds to go to his desktop, click New > Text Document, and save it with

linked to them, they turned purple and stayed purple. It was great b/c I could keep

track of my progress this way. Now when I'm trying to finish at work, they are all

\$Supervisor: -Can you make them turn purple so I know where I was? Why aren't

it took all the willpower in my arm to keep it from flying toward my forehead.

they purple now?

This day begins. I'm acting as a stand-in lead while my actual lead is on vacation.

I showed him the correct way to make a copy by right clicking and selecting Copy.

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How many times have you heard the words "omigod" or "hell no"?

Stropheles

much handholding is needed here. ~~from my side, I mean, I would not be doing pdf files~~/so/

Now I shall hit the keys, substituting my hand for the mouse and my head for the mouse, and I will explore the life of a word as it begins trying to type this with the keyboard.*

Sme: what are you doing?
ding: i was equipping it for my latest digital work but by a sleeping medical head
Matt: I wish the intel to their is so difficult. The field of sleep seems all to given off to him 30

Scoworker: I'm not sure what you mean so I'm trying to press control alt delete. When it does so I've started the download but it's not, but it never really comes down though it

\$me; if the buttons on your keyboard, they literally say each of those phrases, disconnected from the words that they stand for. So, if you're explaining argument to a postmodernist, there are three: press them all at once.

\$coworker ooooooooooohhhhhh they say this all the time it's very long and drawn out and gaggy, even though I don't like it as much as laughing at things that aren't because, and unsuccessful would be very funny if it weren't happening to me)

Scowlower manages to open task manager a few grueling seconds later.

don't even try to *hide* my frustration. The majority of my client errors can be

depression in the thick canopy until I saw that the beam plugged not one, but BOTH battery

>Scientist1: Hey, sorry to bother you, but the PGP key is coming back as invalid

but #CommunicationProgram still auto-starts, it just results in an error.

computer? brainpower to this. This person had a problem, but tried to resolve it himself first?

Ultimately we got #CommunicationProgram open for \$coworker. Not sure how I absolutely ~~love~~ **love** Actual Problems. The sort of challenges that crop up out of ended up as help desk for a few days while my lead was on vacation, but I've never nowhere that people look at and say, "... *huh*." The ones that keep you coming been more happy to see him return, a quick search. The ones that make you feel

Edit: Added a bit of info about my work, for context.

And to top it all off, I had backup in the form of \$clientIT who was clearly thinking the same way. We were both confused because the problem persisted even after we fixed it; it was just that the fix **did not make sense**. One key would fail, another key would pass, both would pass on my system, and nothing about either key would

be off.

The Telegramz Don't use Many Rongah don't trust Google Android Script

This went on for a day or two; neither of us had the explicit time to devote
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h001c/> of the timezones/
don't trust Google Android Script

That hardly stopped us from ping-pong back with test files and ideas. What program
was being used? Was it a possible bug between standards? What if we made a
stronger key? Weaker key? Which variable was the one throwing it off?

learn it.

So this when I experienced the closest thing to euphoria: a Eureka moment of a
sudden recollection of Wikipedia ping-pong years prior. I immediately generated two
keys and sent them to him:

For the scene, our android system sends out an email listing the
class start time. I send an email with the materials and also listing the start time. We
always stand in our class. This is a sweet but horrible grand many types you
know the one. Da just can't get mad that the class starts at 8:30. Congrat time. This is
the possible thread. I will be *\$as*.

I got a response back within a minute - my hypothesis was correct! The problem
was that the program they were using for PGP encryption was using [a 32-bit
date time] (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Year_2038_problem). Our default key
stage were in what has been the grand many of our class start time and my kids
would fail because the key wouldn't expire until the 2060s, and the program wasn't
designed to fail gracefully with that in mind.

\$as: Sure, no problem. Have you tried downloading it from the Play Store?

TL;DR: Hi, no problem, we start at 8:30am Central Time, so that would be 9:30am
Eastern Time. you're entire Android Phone is controlled by Google. They will know
we took standard PGP conventions like "replace them often" and decided to hell
with that. But, for a few brief, shifting days, it united two people who didn't want to
know *how* to fix it, but wanted to know *why* the fix worked. To this day, it's
my fondest IT memory and one I remind myself of when I get frustrated or
discussioned. Those moments truly make it for me.

\$as: *Gets Telegram APK via AnKMirror and installs it* There you go.

Anything else I can help with?

\$sgr: No, it's currently daylight. I have a tent and you have a tent. hour ahead of us,
since our class setting is at 8:30 Central. All you have a good day would be 9:30 Eastern.
Our learning system must have had an error, I'll see that its corrected to display the
correct class start time. I highly uses telegram now... but the level of ignorance
astounds me. You don't want to use a controlled and secure store to download your
app, but a third-party website that could potentially harm your device? Not to
mention that 10:30 Eastern Daylight, since 9:30 is standard

>\$me: no, Eastern Standard Time would actually be 8:30, not 10:30, but just be
ready for class when it is 9:30 where you are. 9:30 Eastern Daylight Time.

>\$client: Okay, see you at 7:30 Central Standard Time.

When someone asks for something then keeps interrupting as you try to explain -/u/superzenki

I was on duty in the Support desk today and we were being trolled. I had to spend 10 minutes researching if this particular city where the client was located had observed any light savings or something. A reply filed out and a message before I figured out that technically speaking, 7:30 Standard Time today would be Sunday night. So I just settled on that.

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hi8ac/>

when someone asks for something then keeps/
They still didn't show up on time. Nor could they grasp Cognos.

This started when I received a ticket this week for a faculty member whose Microsoft Office wasn't activated. This happens sometimes during the imaging process, it won't activate during and most techs are bad about checking it afterwards. The fix is to manually make it talk to our KMS server. However, this is the first instance I've seen where it had been working for months, then it just stopped working. So I called the user on his number provided:

>\$Me: Hello, this is \$Tech from \$University. I got your ticket for Microsoft Office.

>\$FM: Yes, it didn't happen until early June, and I already left town back in May. I won't be back until August.

>\$Me: Well that's going to be a problem because I can't activate Office unless you're on Webster's network. Do you have our VPN client installed?

>\$FM: No.

>\$Me: So the easiest way to do this is to call our Help Desk and they'll give you the form to fill out. Your Chair and Dean are both required to sign off on it, then a ticket will come to us to install the client.

>\$FM: Okay I'll do that.

So I wait a couple days and his ticket comes through. The journal notes from \$SysAdmin state that he already had a VPN account previously, so all that was needed was the client install. I call him up to take care of everything this afternoon. While the client was installing, I saw him downloading two things from the internet, and suspected he would ask for my help with them. I waited for him to mention it though.

>\$FM: When I was over in your area last fall while a tech was re-doing my laptop, him and your supervisor both told me that I could have an admin account and I just needed to fill out a form. They didn't know where to find it though. I even called the Help Desk and they didn't know anything. Do you know where to find this?

>\$Me: I've never heard about filling out a form for admin rights (I know some places do so, but not where I work). Ever since we took admin rights away from everybody, in my personal experience I've only ever seen one person get them granted so I'd be surprised if you did get approved.

>\$FM: Okay I'll just submit a new ticket.

I walk him through logging into VPN, then I fix the Microsoft issue and verify that it's activated.

>\$FM: I need two more things from you before you go. The first thing is that I need my home printer installed. The second thing I need is iTunes for my iPhone.

>\$Me: Is iTunes for personal use or University use?

>\$FM: For university use.

He went into some long spiel, and he did mention going to an international conference in July for the school, which is believable since we have international campuses. iTunes is an approved software, but only in cases where it's a University device, or they're allowed to use their personal device for work.

>\$Me: I can take care of iTunes for you, but we cannot install home printers.

As some of you may know from past tales, home printing is kind of a gray area for us right now. Faculty used to have admin rights and would install their own home printers. When we took away their admin rights, we were told "We never supported them in the first place, and there's nothing we can do." Supposedly, a \$SysAdmin pushed out the GPO that would allow standard users to install print drivers, but it didn't work. Enough faculty complained that our Director bought a program that would be installed onto faculty's laptops, that would allow this (and more). We're still in the testing phases of it, and I only know of one faculty member recently who started testing it.

>\$FM: You know, I think it's ironic. Last spring, I was on sabbatical and you guys told me that I was approved for home printing but couldn't install it because I didn't have the printer with me. Now I have the printer with me and you won't install it?

approval?

>\$FM: No, I can just submit a new ticket.

>\$Me: Well I can look you up in our ticketing system, I just need a few minutes.

I know I should have let him submit a new ticket but I wanted to entertain this guy and see if he actually got approved for the things he claimed, or was just trying to get me to install what he wanted for him. I found the ticket where his computer had to be re-imaged, but no notes of approval for admin rights/home printing.

>\$Me: Is this ticket for your computer being re-imaged the one with the approvals?

>\$FM: Yes

>\$Me: I'm not seeing any approvals in the journal notes.

>\$FM: Well that's fine, I'll just submit a new ticket. I just think it's ironic. To add onto that, I already had VPN access prior to when my laptop was re-imaged, and the client never got put back on there. Then, you told me I had to re-do my access and have my Chair and Dean sign off again. I'm not in town so I had to collect signatures one by one. And since I don't have a home printer/scanner I had to go to FedEx to do the form.

>\$Me: I'm sorry you had to go through all of that trouble to fix this issue, but you never told me that you had VPN access when I brought it up. I only knew because \$SysAdmin told me.

>\$FM: Well here's the flipside to your argument: why didn't you look me up in the system to see that I already had access?

>\$Me: Because I don't have that type of access. I'm desktop support, so I install the software. Networking is the team that can see who has access to what.

\$FM is silent for about a minute.

>\$FM: Well, I'm just going to submit a new ticket for everything I need.

>\$Me: Sounds good.

Now, I paraphrased most of this, but a lot of the conversation in between this was him constantly interrupting me when I tried to apologize for the whole VPN thing. I hate being interrupted, and became extremely rude when I told him I couldn't do what he "needed", so he quickly got on my bad side. Had he allowed me to talk more, I would have told him I'd inquire with my director about him being a tester for our new print-from-home program. I couldn't make any guarantees but I at least would have explored the option for him. But since he wanted to do things his way, I'll leave that up to whatever tech gets his ticket.

"Calls drop after 15 minutes...but only to the #Spider Conferences!" - /u/minesguy82

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hatxx/calls_drop_after_15_minutesbut_only_to_the_spider/

First off, I'm an AV control systems programmer. No, not antivirus, AudioVisual. I program Crestron and AMX control systems to control your presentation systems. This tale comes from last year.

The company I worked for had installed about 150 rooms for a large insurance firm (#Snoopy) in my local area. 80 of those rooms had a DSP that was equipped with a VoIP interface to allow for making conference calls using microphones on the table. This company had contracted with a large ISP (#MaBell) to handle their network configuration, as well as what the #MaBell was calling UCaaS (Unified Communications as a Service). What this really meant was that the insurance company didn't need to have their own instance of a VoIP gateway/call manager in their network. They paid the ISP to manage all of that and just set their phones and other devices up to communicate to the ISP's gateway. This included the DSP's in each room.

The insurance company was a heavy user of a certain, well-known conferencing service I'll call #SpiderCo for now. This incident happened after they had finished rolling out the service to all of their 3000 (I think it was that many, may have been less) or so employees at this site. The #Snoopy help desk started getting reports of calls to #SpiderCo conferences from some of the conference rooms using the DSP dropping after 15 minutes. The users would call back in, and some times it would keep working past 15 minutes, but then the call would drop after 45 minutes. The failure time was always after a multiple of 15 minutes, and only from conference rooms using the DSP to make the calls. The desk phones always worked and never had an issue.

So I jumped in and started investigating. I tried making multiple calls to my own company's #SpiderCo number while sniffing the SIP traffic. I came in on the weekend and made multiple calls to the conferencing service, both mine and #Snoopy's. I couldn't get a call to fail. Finally, I got in touch with the #MaBell VoIP engineers and the #Snoopy help desk and made arrangements to have the help desk notify the #MaBell guys when a call failed. The #MaBell guys would then immediately pull their SIP logs for the time when the call failed and send them to me. It then fell to me to pore through the logs and figure out what was going on.

It took a few days, but it finally happened, and I had logs from when the call failed.

After looking through the logs and pulling out all the relevant parts (I ended up with 2 files totaling about 18 K of a Zip file that was about 40 MB) I discovered what the issue was and the simple fix.
https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h8qt5/its_right_there/

Before I tell you the issue, I must digress to explain a little bit about how SIP works. I'm not an expert, for sure, so this is all based on research I did when I was trying to figure out this problem. In SIP world, there are a few timers that you have to worry about. The first is the Session Timer. This is a way for systems to determine if a call has dropped or an endpoint has otherwise gone offline. Depending on configuration, the endpoint or the call manager will attempt to renew the session once the actual session timer is half over. In this case the session timer was set to 30 minutes, and set to renew from the DSP. As half of 30 is 15, this was part of the problem that was causing the dropped calls. The second timer is the one on their desktop for VPN/Polycom phone setup/Cell phone email setup so there's that is called the T1 timer in SIP land. This is the timer that controls how long the endpoint will wait for a response from the other end. This is usually tuned for network latency. Many times, this timer defaults to 500 ms, which it was in our case.

Ok, now that you know that, here's what was happening: The DSP was attempting to renew the session. When the DSP attempted this, the call manager had to go to the far end and do a renewal. I don't know for sure, but my guess is that because of the heavy use of #SpiderCo there was some latency involved in getting a response to the session renewal request, which is why I never had any trouble on weekends. New user, maybe he needs some help. Our phone system doesn't require us to dial a something. Because of this delay in getting a response from the far end, the call manager told the DSP 'Hey, I'm trying, hang out for a sec.' Unfortunately, the DSP thought 'Screw you.' and didn't acknowledge the call manager's request. Then the response I go over personally to assist. From the far end finally came back, and so the call manager told the DSP 'We're all good to go'. This response came just outside of that 500 ms timeout. This time the DSP did acknowledge the request, but not correctly. It was still thinking 'Screw you.' The DSP immediately tried to renew the timer again, but without acknowledging the initial response from the call manager correctly. Having a second request come in while the initial request is still open caused the call manager to freak out and drop the call.

me: Ok no problem.
After going through all this and discovering this issue, the solution was to turn off the session timer on all of the DSPs and rely on the call manager to handle all that I work through the troubleshooting, his voicemail works fine, it just wasn't setup. I can only assume that it was a bug in the implementation of the VoIP stack in the DSP, but I never was able to get the DSP manufacturer to look. I show him the doc on his desktop and ask where the sheet is that was left on his desk, pointing him to the doc on his desktop. He never got that, apparently. My coworker set him up and he's *very* ~~anal retentive~~ thorough so I know he left it there.
TLDR: Don't let your DSP's keep time.

Test call, fine. Interoffice call, fine. Called his VM from my cell, all fine.

user: Oh while you're here can you help me setup email on my phone

****me****: I have a doc I can send you.

ftp vs wget vs browser vs attachment vs eyes - /u/meatb4ll

****EMAIL****
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6hd6je/>

ftp_vs_wget_vs_browser_vs_attachment_vs_eyes/
****Subject****: ****Android email setup****

***Hi \$user,** attached are instructions on how to setup email on your phone. Your password is PASSWORD. Let me know if you have any issues*

I'm the junior server tech at a v small tech company. We're a vendor to a bunch of hardware companies, and as server support, my job is basically to keep you running. Since we want to have a good reputation, we will go above and beyond.

****REPLY****:
***Hi \$me,** thanks for your help, what is my password?
You're a sysadmin who can't get pip to work? We'll first suggest you talk to your IT guys. Then when you're it for your company, we'll try to help. (as somebody fresh out of college without experience, those are the most painful issues, but I learn the most) So most of my stuff here will be difficult clients.

We're currently getting a new integration between jira and our software set up, and for the foreseeable future, I'm taking point because I'm the only one who has gotten it to work with any consistency. Once it settles down, I'll be writing up better documentation for troubleshooting.

Finally it's stable enough to deploy, and we're talking about getting the prep done. I'm going to be poking around their servers for a while to get things set up well, so let's get as much else working first.

But there's this plugin to install into Jira, so I send over a URL to it's location on the ftp server. Doesn't work. Why? I done fucked up: ftp://ftp.url.com/path/to/location has a pretty dumb typo.

So I fix it up and ask them to try again. Can't get it with ftp.

Ask them to use wget. Can't get it with wget. (And the output was weird. That damn server needs to be reconfigured)

And then I ask them to try pasting the url in the browser's address bar. Doesn't work. All three of these things I could do on my personal laptop at home. Including noticing the missing colon once I actually looked at the URL.

BUT! It's just ~200KB, so I attached it to the last email! Didn't see it.

Eventually a different sysadmin chimes in with:
> I got it. cp it out of /location/on/network/drive

Now, ScienceShot is a Web3 project that is committed to releasing the content of the original text.

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h684g/how_do_i_screenshot_my_silent_notifications_to_commit_a_federal/

[illegible]

```
$KSIUser:** "Hi, can you show me how to access someone's text messages? I found
```

So I just turn it on, you know, I tell him that I don't work in a box to give me access to the nodes of the web, I tell him to backup the messages so I start walking him through how

sykhis HlyneAC how do i screenshot?

h05wEx*st*ghN*igh*of*deI*span*st*Br*ess*the*br*st*so*es*age*st*on

\$Mea seconds, this isn't a device you own?"

🔗 LinkedIn: What I don't like about LinkedIn. Apparently I still have my profile as 'interested in

• **Memphis** Does it make sense for people to read their messages?

\$User sec "No, not licking!" need you to show me how to see them"

FROM Dallas Weighhouse do not hope permission from the other person to read their
 #KinnorOn skidz. I'd we're making I want to show how to do this here

© 2011 American Psychological Association or one of its allied publishers. This article is intended solely for the personal use of the individual user and is not to be disseminated broadly.

Small business (indicating the window button) shops that can help you do that, it's

Key findings include: it is possible to put the credit into law; regarding role of the SACS, senior

2005 new personal something you'd like before but...

kill me

“The standard sort of, ‘the windows are supposed to be the experts’ as I stare blankly

in the distance showing more faith in humanity*

```
taskcard scratch\*
```

>\$Kim aww thanks

Now, here's a sample of what you're saying: "2005**"? The version of SQL Server that's been out of support for over 12 months?

That is going to take a minimum of another year to implement?

I ask for clarification, stating that I don't feel comfortable applying for a job implementing a software package that is out of support.

He says, yeah, SQL Server 2005, but it could be a typo from the Department.

I'm adamant that I won't touch anything SQL Server 2005.

ZeroChronicles: Meeting The Sun - /u/ grond_master

[https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h59ob/
zero_chronicles_meeting_the_sun/](https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h59ob/zero_chronicles_meeting_the_sun/)

Hello All. I must apologise for not entertaining you with more stories since [my last one](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/search/?q=author%3Agrond_master&sort=new&restrict_sr=on&t=all) but life intervened.

in any case, moving on. I'll return to stories starring \$Dad, \$PP, or any of my other non-IT-but-technical friends as and when I remember the anecdotes. We now arrive to a time when I reached a stage where I am playing the starring role myself. Today, just an introduction to what I faced for 3 years before exiting the company.

I'm a communications guy. Ask me to create a media release, develop a crisis outreach plan, speak to the press, write your life story to put up on the website: I'm your guy. Just because I can touch-type does not mean I can IT as well. Unless you're my boss at \$ZeroCo, aka \$TheSun.

> *Side Note: I've not called him \$TheSun randomly. He's a guy who understands that the universe doesn't revolve around him, unlike many of our (l)users. The solar system will suffice, thank you very much.*

I've been hired at \$ZeroCo, a sub-50 employees company, as their Mktg/Comms guy. There are two levels of employees: professionals, who do the actual business, and admin/staff, who play more supportive roles. Their IT needs are taken care of by an MSP, and there's an in-house admin guy who holds the passwords and controls inventory. There is no need for anyone else to look at IT, but \$TheSun thinks that a professional level team member overseeing IT will help. A sorta-kind CTO, perhaps. Guess who got sandbagged with the role the first day he joined! Victory points to you if you said \$Grond!

The day after I was announced as the IT *ahem* in-charge, the guy who previously sat in the role, \$OtherName, took me aside during a smoke break. He come...

>Note: Grey Italics is **\$OtherName** talking to me. Rest is the dialogue between **\$TheSun** & **\$OtherName**.

>*It's been a long day, and I've been working on a 100 slide pitch presentation for the last few days. It's finally complete, and I've shown it to my boss & \$TheSun

that evening. There are some updates, and \$TheSun wants to make some changes. Putting in the updates takes me to 9 PM before I can email the final file to him and leave for home. I get a call from \$TheSun around 11:30, saying that he's unable to view all of his files on his desktop. He's already made changes to the presentation and saved them, when the system asked for a reboot, as part of a mandatory antivirus check process. He logged in post the reboot and wham - no files visible at all. I rush to his place, reaching around 1 AM. I'm worried about my presentation, his updated copy is the only version that everyone will agree should be shown to the prospective client.*

>*\$OtherName:** Okay, tell me what happened.

>*\$TheSun:** I was checking emails when the antivirus kicked in - it had just completed a scan, and needed to run a boot-time scan, so I rebooted. Since then, can't see any files, \$Mailbox isn't configured, nothing.

check.

Side note: \$OtherName isn't IT-savvy, he's just a smart end-user, with some Google-fu skills. He got latched on to my role because he resolved an issue someone had by googling the answer.

>*\$OtherName:** I can see the files in File Explorer - I just searched for the presentation I sent you, and I can **see** your version of it, just can't open it. Let's search for any other files.

>*\$TheSun:** Okay, hunt for \$RandomFileName.

>*\$OtherName:** It's there, in \$RandomFolder.

>*\$TheSun:** Open it.

>*\$OtherName:** Can't. Permission denied. *Wait what just happened? File found but permission denied? How?*

>*\$TheSun:** Oh. It's not encrypted, but if it asked for a password, it should be...

>*\$OtherName:** Stop. I don't want to know any of your passwords. And it didn't ask for one. It just said permission denied and didn't even open the file.

>*We ended up spending close to 3 hours in trying to google an answer to what was happening. Frustratingly, nothing came up. Finally, I closed all the windows and was about to shut down. I planned to send the laptop to the MSP in the morning, when I noticed something. During the evening meeting, \$TheSun had a desktop

wallpaper of \$FamousCityLandmark. This one showed a OS default wallpaper.*

No, I can not fix some random coffee

> **\$OtherName:** Uh... did you change your wallpaper?

shop's internet for you - /u/harrywwc

anymore?

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h3nwt/>

no_i_can_not_fix_some_random_coffee_shops/

> **\$OtherName:** No.

> *Which is when it struck me to check the user photo & login details, and voila!

tl;dr - fellow office worker in random coffee shop broke the internet (good news \$TheSun had somehow, instead of logging on to his domain-connected user though, only for them)

account, had logged in to the local guest account. That one, having no admin

privileges, could not open any files that belonged to a password-controlled user

account. I logged out of the guest account, and made \$TheSun log in to the correct

account. Showed him how to select the right account when logging in. All files

{sigh} - just got off the phone.

present and accounted for, opening perfectly, as they should. \$Mailbox correctly

configured. But \$TheSun wasn't satisfied. At 4 AM, he spent another hour checking

Some background - I am (now) a Project Manager, but as the only IT savvy (been

in the industry since the early 80s) person in the office, I get all the "Level 0"

awake in my CEO's house, trying to stifle my yawns. Finally, I begged off and left,

telling him we'll address any issues later in the day with the MSP staff.*

About 10mins ago a phone rings, and as the only one in the office I answer and give

I'm standing agape, wondering what horrors will I face if even the CEO is such an

\$standard-greeting ID-10T, as \$OtherName grins and welcomes me to the club. He even hands over the

'keys' to the club, walking away from it altogether.

person on the other end is one of my fellow office dwellers, off-site at some random

coffee shop

It would take me 3 years to be able to walk away myself. And the events that took

popcorn

>(fod) "The internet is broken"

Edit: *I can format, really. It's just that Reddit's submit page has a very small

>(me) well, as we are currently talking on the (VoIP) phone, it quite obviously _is_

textbox, while the edit page has a big one.*

working, else we wouldn't be having this conversation."

>(fod) "well, it wasn't working this morning"

>(me) "..."

>(fod) "and it's not working now"

>(me) "yes, yes it is"

infinitum* ;)

>(fod) "well, I'm not getting connected to \$cloud-file-service. it's telling me it can't

connect to the internet"

shop."

Where's the desktop better.van: Yup. - /u/ Shredgiant Count 1

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h2nd7/>

>(fod)"I connected to their wifi"

>(me)"and did you follow the instructions to connect to the internet?"

Was talking with Academic Support at torch today, realized that one of the co-workers I used to work with had the same school as a date/college freshman approached me. (these places usually have a web landing page that asks for a code printed on your receipt to give you x-minutes of internet access)

We're doing a refresh project for the town's new shopping place all the university by a fellows

>(fod) no

for that often, so folks looking for their sales department. Spent all the time this time

how happened this place was.

>(me)"I suggest you talk to the coffee shop staff and get them to help you get on to

the internet!" (hopefully it's not "Luke's" :)

As I said, I've just been hired down for the same place, I was started sharing

hold to drive in on this place. This led us to the moment where myself, and one of

>(fod)"I gotta go (obviously unhappy at my inability to magically tell her how

random coffee shop's internet works) {click}

>\$Me: Welcome to University of University! I'd be happy to assist you. Please sit at

(sigh) the table with the desktop computer and help me right there to his sister van.

It was 2009 and win 7 had just been released. We were busy ALL day long as we

had been building empty desktops and had to wait for the win 7 discs to come

Where's the they wanted for this desktop?

Eventually we got it in our heads that we could image a system, do a sysprep, and

save that new image onto a 1tb drive.

>\$Me: -sees that he's at an empty desk, trying to find a button on the actual desk-

Back No no! The drive is the desktop computer, very expensive so we were confident this

would be large enough. Almost all systems we shipped out were 250gb or 500gb

drives. We used norton ghost with UBCD to make the disc image and basically

>\$User: Oh sorry! I had drive in hand and deploying the image I couldn't find a button

on the desk and I thought it'd open up as a computer....

This gave the owner an idea. He was watching us for a while making us nervous as

we worked. I guess he saw what we were doing and got the idea to take this idea

While that's a really incredible awesome idea, I'm still in shock that a college

freshman doesn't know what a desktop is...

At 4 PM that day as we were getting ready to leave, the owner had us all sit down at

the table and discussed his new business proposal. I will never forget his words.

> \$OWN = Owner

> \$MGR = Manager

> \$ME = Me (Too lazy for sarcastic name)

> \$FR = Friend

So the owner had us all sit at our break table at the back of the room.

> \$OWN - I was watching all of you deploy those 7 machine today. It inspired me in a way that none of you will ever imagine. I saw the way you guys take a difficult task (not difficult just tedious) and make it look very easy. *Few seconds of silence mobile.

> \$MGR - How would you like us to accomplish this?

> \$OWN - With the unused company van.

Confused looks from all of us

> \$OWN - You all are going to build me a server rack in the back of the van, load up the server with various images, and deploy them on the road live to customers.

> \$MGR - Ooooooaaaaaaay?

> \$OWN - Anyone have any criticisms or suggestions for this project?

dead quiet

> \$OWN - I promise as long as you are respectful you will not piss me off with valid criticism.

manager.*

> \$OWN - *Turns to me.* Got something?

> \$ME - No no. I had a question about power issues but answered it as I was about to ask.

> \$FR - I gotta ask, who would we sell this to?

> \$OWN - *Looks offended* That is for me to worry about. You all have your week.

The meeting ended and everyone in the company was pulled off to clean out that van. The problems started immediately as the van had been used for the failed bounce house company. First we had to pull out the old bounce houses in there and

clean them up.

They had been in there for so long that spiders and roaches had pretty much made a colony. Our manager, being the responsible person he was, decided to buy a raid bug bomb and set it off inside. Yup.

So we dealt with the fallout and the cleanup from that and found our next problem. No server rack, from our vendors at least, would fit inside of that van. Our owners solution to this dilemma was to buy a bunch of 3/16th inch metal brackets and rails. Then he pulled out a mig welder from the back.

My friend got to work constructing the rack for the server. Everyone else got to work getting the required XP, VISTA and 7 images that would be required for this venture. Also grabbed some server standard and server 2008 images.

The owner came in with all of the parts needed for this venture and we immediately noticed a flaw in his plan.

> \$Me - Thats a 3U server.

> \$OWN - Yeah. The 4U drive bay server was double the price.

He had brought in a supermicro 3U server, 18 1tb hard drives, LGA 771 dual socket board, 32 GB ram, and 2 xeon.

I walked outside to inform my friend, who was welding the rack, of the change in server dimensions. His reponse was to look up at me with the welding helmet on and simply grab the rubber mallet. I walked away to the sounds of a rubber mallet and later an angle grinder.

I went back in and started wiring up the 3u storage server with my manager. Took about 2 hours to fully wire up the drives, load them with images, and deploy the server standard image on the server itself. We did not build an array with the drives. It was determined to be more of a liability so we set everything up JBOD under \$MGR's direction.

The challenging part was getting it into the custom built server case, but my manager had the best worst suggestion to help with that. Velcro strips. Yup.

We wrestled that into place and made sure it was secure. We came to two conclusions at that point. We would need at least 2 car batteries to power this server, and that none of us knew how to do that.

We were told to "figure it out" so we started googling. We later determined that 2

batteries would not be enough. We built a bank of 4 car batteries and ordered some high capacity capacitors from Ebay. Arduino was very new at this point in time) We wired them up and jury rigged them all into a wooden case with the batteries, separated by wood of course, and capacitors in a wooden box we built. We covered the box with felt and hooked up a small 19 inch square lcd to the server.

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h39m8/>

oh_i_just_rebooted_the_server_is_that_a_problem/

One of the shipping guys showed us how to wire it up to the van's electrical system.

We could not figure it out so we told him we would buy him dinner if he got it working for us.

Finally got a chance to post something - throughout my normal day-to-day dealings with incompetency, this one took the cake.

We hooked up a network port to the van and made a 400 foot crossover cable, cause

you needed those for direct unit to unit connections back then, so that we could

Backstory: two Exchange 2013 servers in a DAG, one in primary site failed a

couple of weeks ago when trying to apply a security patch. Patched manually,

restarted all Exchange and IIS services, carried out database checks, all fine. Back

With everything said and done, it all worked. The owner wanted us to run every

image from the van when possible.

Exchange server in secondary site had same patch applied last week, same failure.

It would be 2 months before we got a customer for this van. When we arrived, we

Ran through same steps, but server was not playing ball at all - opted for restore

found out that their units did not support network imaging so we simply pulled the

from backup, prior to patch installation. Removed from DAG, binned database

copies, re-added to DAG, re-seeded the smallest database from the primary site, left

over the weekend to complete. All users were working off the server in the primary

site, so no huge impact other than a bit of a performance hit.

few hours. Although what we actually did was ran the image file through their

network and ran each image from their in house server.

Over the weekend, the secondary server somehow dropped off the domain and

failed the re-seed - not the end of the world, re-domained and started it again.

We never got a third customer as when the owner was going to have the van

Confirmed test database had re-seeded correctly and could auto-failover between

hosts, so started re-seeding the others. Ran a red light and got t-boned right where the

server was. Completely destroyed the server and most of the electrical wiring we

did. We could save nothing from that server.

User on-site reports slow Outlook performance to local IT guy, who goes auto-pilot/

rogue and decides to reboot the Exchange server in the primary site - during the re-

We never spoke of it again.

seed to the secondary site. Although a VM, server also decides to apply pending

patches and takes 45 minutes to restart - very odd, spec of the hypervisor is pretty

good, shouldn't take that long...

Failed disk in the hypervisor's RAID5 array - which holds the Exchange server's

OS and database VHDs. Server is out-of-warranty and has no care-pack, cue

argument with accounts & sales as to whether we should absorb the cost or try to

quote the client for a replacement.

Force reboot also corrupted one of the mailbox databases, so had to perform an

eseutil, which took a million years due to the failed disk massively degrading the

performance of the array - cue Exchange complaining about I/O performance.

Managed to get the database in clean shutdown, brought it back online, and began

re-seeding back to the secondary.

No we don't need one - /u/NetT3ch
Case is still ongoing, but the last two days have been a real "Stom my face into the desk" saga. Also, make sure your supported Exchanges are on the latest CUs/roll-ups, as Microsoft will audibly laugh at you over the phone :)

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/ql2afq/no_we_dont_need_one/

EDIT: Customer quoted for a replacement drive and 3-year carepack, signed off
AA = Admin assistant
instantly, currently awaiting replacement drive being shipped to site.

CM = Call center manager

CD = Call Center Director

COO= Chief operating officer.

I'm the on site IT admin for our corporate office. I got an email two weeks ago to install a TV in a call center by a certain date. I replied telling them to put in the check request, get it approved and I'd install our standard outfit when it gets here. Sure enough they follow through but I was not told it had arrived. I completely forgot about the project.

Skip ahead to the date they needed it installed. I was on a conference call 30 mins away when I got a text at 10:30, Hey we need that TV wall mounted before 12 as there is a large meeting with investors and a bank. Start sweating here as the meeting had every position that started with a "C" in it.

Hop off conference call, drive to site. It is now 11. Start putting up the wall mount/TV while their admin assistant was hurrying around setting cookies, drinks, etc.

doing!?"

Me: I'm connecting a PC to the TV as most of these meetings COO want's a PC available on screen.

AA: Well Call Center Director said they are bringing their own laptop and to just have a HDMI cable available for them!

Me: Okay, I'm connecting this PC with a VGA cable so you don't have to worry about the HDMI port

PCs!

Me: I... uhh... Okay...

I test everything, HDMI cable, TV, remote, etc. All test out good. Mount is secure. Easy day. I walk over to another office to reply to some emails before I head back to corporate. It's 11:50

As I'm putting my laptop away admin assistant busts into the office

Her: I need your help! Fast!

Me: Yeah what's up?

Her: They only brought a flash drive!

Me:.....

Her: We need a PC ASAP. The presentation is starting in 5 mins!

Me: No it's not lol

I grab the PC I was trying to set up earlier, stupid me hadn't even logged into it yet, start to login to check everything out before I have to set it up in front of owners of the company.

Call center manager appears.

CM: Hey what's going on?

AA: He's working on getting the PC ready for the presentation.

CM: Okay is there anything we can do to make this go faster?

Me: No.

CM and AA sit in the office peering over my should while I check to see if Power Point is installed.

CD comes walking into my office.

CD: What's going on? *I hate this phrase*

CM: He's setting up the PC now to make sure it works.

CD: What's the ETA?

Me: As soon as possible, I'm working on it now, I can't give you an exact time.

CD: What do you mean?

Me: This PC wasn't set up because I was told not to install it with the TV. It could be done in 5 mins or 15. I don't give ETAs because I can't guarantee anything.

CD: Looks at me, ignores everything I said, looks at CM, What's the ETA?

CM looks at me, *uhhh...* I mean...

Me: The ETA is ASAP! I'm literally exclusively working on this PC for you!

said.

Uhh ohhh..

COO: That's what I want to hear! Thanks Nett3ch! CD. CM. Come with me, AA help him if he needs it.

Wipes away cold sweat.

It took me less than 10 mins to power on, login, check PP, logoff, then set up in the printing lab. I was mingling with the students, but I didn't use every one was mingling anyway.
Printing lab, library, and I said 35 but bear with me. - /u/Morphuless
https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6h1q0j/printing_at_the_library/

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gtp8n/>
I messed with CM and CD afterwards about how having more people staring over my shoulder wouldn't make it go any faster, they apologized. I apologized for the snap at him, we all laugh. Now I sit and wait, for one day, it will happen again. This isn't my first time. I was told that by a friend of mine who worked in tech support 15 or so years ago.

He pulled it up, and as I watched with mouth agape, he **took a screenshot of it and passed it to a Myrdoc man, a hairy fellow wearing a tunic. The original was in the landscape of the woods used to further the belief in these *majestic* creatures. He looks more at home wrestling alligators or being a lumberjack than sitting behind a desk.

I was almost too stunned that anyone would choose this as a method to say anything to me. What customer who recently purchased a PC at the shop as an old document with small florid writing that would have been challenging to read even in a shop worked for a small computer repair shop. They also had a computer, computers and provided support for a few months. \$Sasquash answered the phone, ran the cash register, and solved basic computer issues (is it plugged in, have you \$Manager.

A phone call from \$Customer comes in. As is usual for tech issues, she sounds upset and frustrated.

\$Customer – My computer is broken!

\$Sasquash – I'm sorry to hear that ma'am. Can you tell me what your problem is?

\$Customer – I just bought this thing and it doesn't work. Why are you selling such defective equipment?

\$Sasquash – I do apologize for the problems you are having. Could you please describe your issue please?

computer.

\$Sasquash – Can you describe any error messages or windows that pop up when the CD is loaded?

\$Customer – The CD won't go in at all. As soon as I put the CD in and close refund!

At this point I'm a bit confused. All CD drives have a catch basin to hold the CD in place. Then a horrible thought comes to me. The problem of course is how to relay this to the customer.

\$Sasquash – Ma'am. I think I have an idea that can fix your problem. It is going to sound a bit strange but please bear with me.

speakerphone.

\$Customer – What? Ok fine but this better work.

\$Sasquash – Yes ma'am. OK, turn off the computer and unplug all the cords from it.... Ok you've done that. Great. Ok. Now I know this sounds a bit odd but please bear with me. Pick up the computer and turn it upside down.

My manager looks at me strangely. I motion for him to keep quiet.

\$Customer –What! I want to speak to your manager.

\$Sasquash – Please ma'am. I know it sounds strange. I promise I'll get my manager right after this.

\$Customer – Fine. What kind of business do you run there?

I hear some huffing and grumbling as she complies with my request.

\$Sasquash – Ok. Plug all the cables back in and turn it on. Great. Ok, now try using putting that CD back into the player.

\$Customer – I demand to speak after your manager for this waste of my time. I can't put a CD into the player upside down!

There's a long pause. Then much more politely, \$Customer speaks again.

\$Customer – That worked perfectly young man. Thank you so much.

\$Sasquash – You are quite welcome. Have a great day!

\$Manager walks away without saying a word, shaking his head.

> \$TLDR, Customer set up her PC upside down, then complained that her CD drive was broken.

All IT Nerds Look the Same - /u/ i_downvote_your_mum

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gw25y/all_it_nerds_look_the_same/

Hello TFTS. I had an interesting and mildly distressing experience today that you may or may not be interested in, so I figured I would share.

A little backstory; I work for a prison telecom company. I handle hardware support for a particular facility, and often need a deputy with me to access some of our infrastructure. I'm pretty easily distinguishable since my company name is plastered on the front and back of my shirt. Today I was on my way to the public visitation center to replace a component while it was closed for the day, ergo, I needed a deputy to unlock the doors for me. Not seeing a deputy nearby, I ask one of the other building staff members if they could radio for someone to come let me in. She agrees and grabs her radio to call for an escort for me.

>**Staff Member:** Can someone come over to let Blaize [one of the sheriff's office IS personnel] into the visitation center?

She was doing me a favor, and I didn't know her all that well, so I chose not to correct her. I just brushed it off and waited for someone with the key to arrive. As I stood there, a different staff member comes up to me.

>**Staff Member 2:**Hi Blaize, glad I caught you. I was wondering if you could take a look at moving these two computers in my office since such and such is no longer with us and we don't really have the need for them. You see, they are getting in the way and I could really use the...

>**Me:** M'am, I'm truly sorry to interrupt you, but I'm not Blaize, I work with [my company], so I can't really do anything with your systems.

>**Staff Member 2:** Oh, I'm sorry. Have a good one!

Now I was becoming a little bothered, as I am familiar with Blaize, and while we are both computer guys with facial hair, the similarities end there. He has much darker hair and different style in both the way he cuts his and grooms his facial hair. You would think they would be able to see the difference between me, a comparative greenhorn for their facility to a guy that has been on their IS staff for some years now. I wish I could say there was some merit to the mistaken identity, but I would be hard pressed to agree. Regardless, I finished up my work and let

myself out. On the way back to my vehicle I can hear someone calling from across the parking lot.

Who knew induction cooktops make magnetic fields? -u/Treereme

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gvcry/who_knew_induction_cooktops_make_magnetic_fields/
I guess we all look alike

As requested in[this thread](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6grrex/the_haunted_user/dit5sk8/?context=3), here's the full story of a user who had the "death touch" for laptops.

This was many years ago, and my small college was pushing a new initiative - a laptop for every incoming student! I was also a student and part of the "student tech liaison" team in my college, who were the first line of defense for the actual (tiny) IT department. Mostly my job consisted of replacing paper in the dorm lab printer when it ran low, and fielding basic tech support questions after hours or whenever I was in my dorm room. We also ended up being called in to help with bigger issues, as in the time when a student didn't like the network cable hanging out of the port on the wall and plugged the loose end into the second port, causing a loopback and basically shutting down the network for two days. There was also the insane virus storm that happened the second fall of the program, when hundreds of non-updated, infected laptops came back to campus after the summer and plugged into the network, grinding it to a halt for weeks (tale for another day).

In this case, I was working with a student who seemed to have persistent hardware failures. They would come to me every few weeks with random issues that usually pointed to hardware failure or drive corruption. We'd replace the laptop and everything would be fine for a few weeks, and then they'd be back with another odd issue. Everything from sound ports failing to screens/video cards going wonky, to OS corruption.

After a number of replacements, we started to try and figure out what the student might be doing. Grilled them on how they transported the computer, where they used it, what were they doing when they noticed it breaking, etc. I couldn't find a single link, until they casually mentioned they needed their laptop fixed in a hurry so they could go cook for their grandparents tonight. I asked why they needed the laptop, and they said they used it to lookup/display recipes to cook and freeze so the grandparents would have good meals to eat throughout the week. With some probing questions, I learned they would set the laptop up near or even on the range while cooking. They said it was great, since the new range the grandparents had didn't get hot on top and only made the pans hot, so they didn't have to worry about melting the laptop.

Turns out, grandparents had a new induction cooktop, which use strong magnetic fields to induce a eddy current in the metal of the cooking pan which creates heat.

Well, what else could it mean? ~ /u/Beanzii.
Putting a running laptop (probably even an unpowered one) near these fields can cause all sorts of havoc. I'm honestly surprised more data wasn't lost from the hard drives, I think that may have clued me into the magnetic field thing faster if so.

Instead, the fields would burn out components on the various boards inside, causing the random failures.
GMorning TITS. Long time no post.

Explaining this to the student it was clear they didn't "get it". They kept arguing that since it didn't get hot, it couldn't be the problem. No amount of explaining seemed to make the concept click, so I just told them to keep it at least 3 feet away from the stove. I also told them that they'd be responsible for any more hardware failures and would have to pay the insurance deductible if anything came back with similar damage to before. Think they listened?

Of course not! However, once mom and dad had to pay for a couple of insurance deductibles in a row (I think it was \$200), the message finally got through. After that the student never asked me for help again, and as far as I know they had no more hardware failures.

>\$me: *COMPANY* this is Beanzii.

TL:DR - Cooking laptops with magnetic flux is fun!

>\$user: I AM HAVING ISSUE WITH THIS PRINTER AGAIN I DO NOT HAVE TIME FOR THESE INTERRUPTIONS

This is 8:30 in the morning, I don't need this in my ears.

>\$me: What exactly is the issue?

>\$user: There is a redlight and an error saying 'Mismatch Tray'.

Wow, a user actually gave a coherent problem in a concise way. This is new.

>\$me: That means you are either using the wrong paper or printing the wrong size.

>\$user: This is the same paper I have always used, this is broken you need to fix it.

>\$me: Are you printing to the same size?

>\$user: Yes I am! I AM NOT AN IDIOT FIX THIS NOW.

>\$me: Those are the only two issues it could be, can you check to make sure these two things are correct.

>\$user: I AM NOT AN IDIOT, WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE? I DON'T HAVE

TIME FOR THIS.

I need my LMS credentials...and I need to know what LMS is? - /u/SteeleGamer

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gyr5f/>

>\$me: I PRINT THESE THINGS EVERYDAY AND NEVER HAVE THIS ISSUE WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE?

At this point I am skeptical so I start checking the printer's web console and start the process of logging onto the users computer, we are about 2 minutes into the call clients. I only support said hospital. Some information to know before you read: at this point

LMS = Learning Management Software, basically teaches end users to use the programs they need for their job.

>\$me: I will log onto your computer to have a look.
I am NOT allowed to have an end user's password, unless I am giving them one after I reset it, which they are supposed to change immediately.

>\$user: Oh, I just found that the document I was sent was in A3, I have fixed it

now. Bye

>EU = The End User, Me = A Stressed Out Second Shift Help Desk Worker who is happily in a relationship, so I wouldn't ask some random nurse for their number so that I can make the occasional booty call.

Get this person calling a few times a week with similar attitudes and similar issues.
>EU: I NEED MY LMS PAssword AND USER NAME!!!!
Love it.

>Me: Okay, may I get a few details before we go into that?

>EU: Yep

>Me: May I have your name?

>EU: NO!

>Me: ...Uhm...

>EU: Yeah sure it's XXXXX Smith. Smith is spelled S as in Smith, I as in Eye, like the organ, M as in Mary, T, H

>Me: Okay and where are you located?

>EU: At my desk...

>Me: and what hospital?

>EU: Gets

>Me: As in Gettysburg?

>EU: Yea

Tech Support in the Swamp - Diesel - /u/

>Me: And a number for me to contact you back just in case we get disconnected?

UrchinJoe

>EU: Okay, that was very forward, I'm in a relationship, but I guess I can give it to you. ~~(xxx)xxx-xxxx~~
https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gv48g/tech_support_in_the_swamp_diesel/

>Me: Okay, and how can I help you?

>"Hey, **UrchinJoe [\$me]**, you're going to have to turn around".

>EU: I need my LMS login Username and I think I might need a password, so could you give me that too?

> Sure thing, **Project Manager [\$PM]**. What's up?"

>Me: Okay, it's just your regular credentials, so are you at the LMS Screen?
>**\$PM:** "We've got a problem with one of the 4x4s. Oh, and some of our former staff down by the coast have threatened to kidnap expats in the area".

>EU: What's LMS? I am not computer literate

>**\$Me:** "Who else is down there?"
includes:

>**\$PM:** "Just you and Sam. And they like Sam".

>She is a vegan

I'll back up. A few years ago, before I lived in the swamp, I worked for a small British medical charity with projects in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Haiti.

For about six months my job was pretty terrible: I'd fly in to struggling

>She thinks computers are Satanic
programmes to close bases. That meant emptying warehouses, donating assets to other local organisations, and documenting everything in excruciating detail. I

>Me: Okay, can I re--
didn't have to hire anyone - there was usually a project manager on site, and by the time I arrived most of the local staff had usually started to move on to other

>EU I am just going to ask my supervisor tomorrow. She might know. I don't know opportunities. Except in Small West African Country. We'd run a programme there for over a decade and there weren't many other organisations in the country.

So, it was a pretty tense environment, limited time and money, and lot of skill gaps. It's not surprising that the country management team hadn't really been thinking about tech support while the projects closed around them, but a little understanding of tech went a long way.

When I first arrived **\$PM** told me pretty much straight away that one of the 4x4s was seriously faulty. After about a decade rattling around some of the worst roads on the planet, it had started drinking up a lot more fuel than it used to. That's a problem, because we hope to donate the vehicle to the ministry of health.

>**\$Me:** "How much more fuel?"

He's not sure. OK, easy to find out. Check the odometer, compare that to the vehicle logbook. The numbers match, so at least I know that the mileage has been recorded. Every journey for the last ten years should be on file, but I only need a

couple of months for now. Now check the fuel slips. I can see that the vehicle has been refueled a lot over the past couple of months. Really, a lot. Much more than you'd need to cover the kind of distance that it's done. I do not know off the top of my head what distance that model of 4x4 is supposed to get to the gallon, but Google does. Even taking into account the age of the vehicle and the bad roads, it's doing poorly. Something like ten times the fuel consumption you'd expect.

I'm sure there's an engine fault that can cause that level of fuel consumption, but I start by checking the two most obvious problems.

****1)**** Is there a big hole in the fuel tank or fuel lines? Visual check, looking for holes or puddles of diesel under the vehicle. There is nothing.

****2)**** Theft. I sit down with the drivers and tell them I know one of them is stealing fuel. If they stop, I won't investigate any further. If they continue, someone's going to get fired early.

****\$PM**** and I talk about it, and he agrees to keep an eye on the consumption (and the drivers), but I have to leave the capital and close one of the smaller bases. Not much tech support happens. I find a box containing over thirty damaged VHF radios under a desk, which we need to 'decommission' (smash) to ensure local militia can't acquire them and use them to listen in on anyone else's travel plans. I nearly lost a hand when a generator fell on me while we dragged it out of the base (we were giving it to a hospital. Oh, the irony).

Back at the capital, I check the fuel consumption. According to the logbook and fuel slips it is now completely normal.

****\$Me:**** "I've found the fault. It's not in the engine, one of your drivers is stealing fuel. Or actually maybe more than one".

****\$PM:**** "How can you tell?"

I explain, and show my calculations. We then walked over to the fuel store.

****\$Me:**** "Didn't you have eleven drums before?"

****\$PM:**** "... yes."

There are ten drums in the fuel store. Whoever was stealing, they've stopped being clever about it and gone straight to the source. The gate is padlocked and only ****\$PM**** has the key. We have a locked room mystery.

The solution comes quickly. We don't have CCTV but we do have contracted

security guards.. One of them saw a driver taking a drum out last week, after hours. The guards are there now to keep an eye on the responses in plus the drivers often transport stock. Normally with a gate pass, but things are getting choppy as the project winds down.

five got inboxes and outboxes and all the boxes! - /u/ChoppingOnionsForYou

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gv2no/>

How he got the drum out turned out to have a simple answer: The store is a cage built of chicken wire and wooden poles, and the door lifts straight out at the hinge.

Problem solved: fire that guy. I'll head south; we have a warehouse down there to empty, and it's a 4 day round trip. It was 16:25. And since I was on earlies, it was 5 minutes until home time. Just 5 minutes - I should have gone to the loo!

Of course, I don't make it. **SPM** calls me half way with a credible kidnapping threat - but what could this new problem with the 4x4 be?

>Me: Good afternoon, MSP Support, this is Choppy, how can I help?
It's gone.

>User (angry!): Hello, put me through to my account manager! I called this morning, and no one's called me back since then! There's not much I can do to fix that. What had happened was, HR hadn't fired the driver straight away, but just paired all the drivers up with security guards until the end of the programme. Our enterprising fuel-thief had tricked the guard into Ana! My colleague had asked me to call this guy earlier, but I'd been unable to get through because the phone was constantly busy. He's got some problem with one of the other neighbouring countries, in a slightly worse-for-wear but actually perfectly functional 4x4. GoToMyPC, he said.

>Me (perhaps a bit over-enthusiastic): Oh hello! Is that USER? I've been trying to get through to you all afternoon (well, a little artistic licence is OK) - I gather you've been having trouble with GoToMyPC? We didn't recover it. I spent a week in an Interpol office, and the insurer's office, then had to go home disappointed. About three weeks later the Ebola outbreak hit the region, so the team we had left in-country were obviously kind of busy.

>User (slightly mollified): Oh, have you, well my wife... I've realised at the end of this that I never really fixed anything; the tech support was mostly just in diagnosing the *lack of* a tech problem. I hope it fits here. And he proceeded to tell me that his wife had probably been using the phone when anyway, problem.

>Me: So you've got GoToMyPC on your iPad? As an app, or do you use Safari to access it?

>User: It's an app. I have an icon on the screen that I touch, and it gets me in and I can see all my stuff.

>Me (a little sceptically): So when you've opened that app, you can see your work desktop, just the same as when you use GoToMyPC on your PC at home? Can you describe it to me?

>User: Yes, exactly like that. I've got Inboxes, and Outboxes and all the boxes I usually have!

>Me (puzzled): Um... Can you go out of that app again for me, and tell me the name of the app before I can start again?

The night i reinstalled a w98 over the phone /u/Brandynette

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gvqga/>
The penny having dropped, I was finally able to help him get hold of his mails. It turned out that recent changes at the company had denied some people the ability to hold mail locally on their PCs, so I pointed him in the direction of the Office 365 website. I've no idea how he got the idea it was GoToMyPC. I was a techie at a really small firm in Paraguay S.A., only 3+ supervisors. We were open until 20. We sold computers and repaired hardware but not operating systems. Still, I did head him off from making a complaint to the account manager! Pre-installed, what is that? Please refer to Microsoft. Google? LOL!

It was a long time ago, so please imagine the small details. Paraguay has a humidity of 80% and 32°C in the shadows at 10 in summer. Air-conditioning is a luxury and we have stand ventilators. But one summer night, around 18-19 or so...

|J:caller B:me

Call comes in

>J: My name is "J", I'm this old and have a problem.

>B: Hello, you are talking to "B". How can I be of assistance?

>J: My computer is giving me an error. I bought it last year at your firm.

>B: Please describe me the error or tell me the color of the screen?

>J: The screen goes blue with an error code. This is the code

Ohh crap ... blue screen of death! Either reboot or call Microsoft, if it isn't a hardware error

>B: this error code refers to an OS error. I'm sorry but you must call Microsoft to fix this!

>J: I know, I called. They closed at 18.

Supervisor comes up cause we need to have our meeting. Bah, we live in Paraguay. He wants to close early, since no one ever needed anything after 18. The special.

>B: The only thing I can do is pick up the pc and reinstall as a service. We will fix

it in 2 days.

(Rant in 3... 2... 1...!!!) J was actually clear, calm and serious.

>J: I really need this computer to work today because of a serious reason...

(can't remember, if it was work or family but it was the best reason one could have given me at that time)

>B: I am not really sure how I could help you since it's an OS error. This is normal, we've had several complaints about this version

Supervisor yells my name...

mute mic

yell back give me 10 min, I'll close up!

>J: To be honest you are my last hope, I need it to work! Could you help me reinstall it?

>J: I have never done it and I'm afraid, besides they said that an idiot could install it. I'm not an idiot, they are idiots for making a crappy product.

Triggered my revolutionary anti-Microsoft, open source spark... lel I have never had a support call like this, I'm intrigued.

>B: Ok, to reinstall it, you will need a copy, do you have one?

>J: yes

>B: Place it into the CD-drive and reboot.

>J: Nothing happens and it goes back to the blue screen of death...

Cd-rom is not selected as first boot device... gotta get into the bios.

>B: Ok, stay calm, this is going to be tricky. Once you reboot, immediately start pressing DEL repeatedly. A hidden menu will appear. That is called the bios.*

>J repeats instructions... bip... keyboard hitting sounds

>J: it is back at the BSoD

>B: Then you missed it, start hitting and then reboot!

>J keyboard hitting... bip... keyboard hitting...

>J: There is a green screen menu*

Supervisor comes and tells me to stop the call, since it's over the time...

>B: overtime my ass, we're open until 20!

(boss knows me and I'm safe!)

I just showed a noob the first secret of them all! I'm not ending this now besides I already have the key, since I'm the one who is going to open! Corrupt bastard, admin type who once in his life reinstalled something, your fat wife is the bosses sister SOB... is what I wanted to say... However, J is still waiting at the entrance to the Matrix!

>B: With the key buttons, move to the last tab of the menu. There will be a boot option. This boot option has to say CD-Rom.

>J: Yeah, I figured out that by reading. What else is here, what can I do with this menu??? WOW!

>B: J, seriously please don't touch anything else here or we could damage your pc and then we WILL need to get it fixed at our service!

S.A.)*

>J: OK, understood. Now what...???? (J exited the bios, I could tell)

>B: go to the last tab, save and exit. enter

>J: BIP... it is loading something at the top

>B: EXCELLENT! Now it is a step by step easy setup, Win98 will guide you through the rest...

>J: no it wont, I have this x version.

>B: OMG! Why did they sell a normal user that version, that version is for

someone like me or a programmer???

>J: Microsoft, you know....

>B: i knooowww!!!

>J: Could you help me step by step?*

*I'm like I can but seriously don't want to, this would take 3 hours at least.
Maaaaaann universe you had to pick me today? out of my head*

>B: ok but you owe me dinner! laugh

>J: laughs! DEAL!

>B: ok but you gotta give me a little time to get the manual for this.

*Couldn't find it, someone must be using it at home... crap. Only option is to install it by guiding J step by step... Im using linux, no pc at the firm has an W... Linux + Windows. AAAAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA, one has to die! Google? LOL. Couldn't find his version of Win98, but I do have a similar one... it'll have to do. Time to unearth another pc to use.
search mainboard + proc ... harddrive... mem... video card (cus GPUs were something new, rofl) hotwire that thing to a keyboard a mouse and a screen all in 20min or less...*

>J: plays elevator music

>B: WTF? J ARE YOU THERE???

>J: Yeah I'm here, I just felt it was appropriate while I waited...

loads...*

>B: Are you still waiting at the first Win98 install screen?

>J: Of course.

>B: great... Do this... and that

>J: Ok ok ok ok ok

*and so on and so forth, UNTIL!!! until I realized I fucked up! There was one different setting and yeah the universe praised me with a second try!
J was cool about it, he said we are human we make mistakes, hence Microsoft... we realized we were of similar minds and even as we had a hard battle with our machines, we had a strange but fun game night.

While I was still there the in morning, the lovely supervisor came in again.

*Eventually, it worked out J was out of his mind, couldn't believe he managed to do it, neither was I!
hahaha*

call ends

Supervisor asked me WTH is going on... phone rings! Not me, I dont care, not my call, I'm done for the week!

>X: I want to talk to the supervisor... I have something to report

>**HEAVY RANTING!!!**
one could hear her screaming

>S: Yes ma'am, what can I help you with?
HEAVY RANTING!!!
one could hear her screaming even louder

10 min pass, supervisor hangs up.

Cheese white, silently talks to me. Come with me, I'll drive you to get you some breakfast. Where would you like to go?
It was the brother in law of the sister in law... or some other strange "conexión familiar", that is the norm in paraguay
I never took his job, but the supervisor became my B****

place!
SNAP!
I'm still friends with J!

Btw, the key word to the error puzzle is ***"MILENIUM"***

Thank you very much for reading this very very very long call.

The problem profile and printer - /u/

superzenki

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gvf4g/>

> 4 Users have helped me to edit and update! Thank you very much <3
the_problem_profile_and_printer/

>\$TDLR Customer wanted a step by step walk trough of an OS installation.

It all started when my director asked me to look at a faculty member's laptop. This faculty member, who we'll call \$FM, was known as a problem among many techs. He was a Mac user, but he always managed to break things in weird ways that only made it harder for us to fix them. He was known as bad luck around computers, because even giving him brand new computers, they would somehow end up breaking. \$FM was very friendly and I don't think he intentionally sabotaged any of his machines. He was just very tech-illiterate and ignorant when it came to things, and I don't think anyone ever had the patience to sit down with him and show him how to use it properly because he would become super-reliant on certain techs and get the expectation that we'd provide training whenever he needed it. Many times he would drop by our office expecting help immediately, because of course he needed to work and teach, regardless of how many times we told him to at least place a ticket first if he was going to do that (luckily we moved to a secure building where only IT can get in, but this was before then). Anyway, onto the story:

>\$Director: Can you look at \$FM's laptop? Apparently he called our vendor because he couldn't print, and they told him they couldn't do anything.

>\$Me: Yeah, I'll take a look. That's interesting, because I had a ticket for him awhile back for the same thing. I could only get one printer working, and before I could troubleshoot the others he said it was fine.

While I should have fixed the others, \$FM can be very pushy and I'm sure had some "important work" to do, as he would often say. I did some research on how to reset the Printers on a Mac, and set up a time to look at his laptop again.

When I went up there, I noticed he had his personal printer from home hooked up for home printing. Here's the thing about working at university: our current policy on that is if people can get it working, we're not going to stop them. But there's limited support for what we can do if it doesn't work. So I showed him what I was doing beforehand, and explained that it would clear all the printers out and give it a fresh start. He didn't bring up the home printer as a concern, I figured that he would be able to do it again if he did it once (this assumption was the snowball that started this whole thing), and sometimes there would be old printers on people's machines that they didn't care about.

After resetting that, I was able to get all the printers in his area working. That's when he asked about his home printer.

>\$FM: Will I be able to get my home printer on there?

>\$Me: Do you remember how you set it up last time?

>\$FM: No.

>\$Me: It's most likely a USB cable going from your printer to the computer. I'd recommend plugging it in and see if it recognizes it. There may also be a disc you need to install the drivers/software for it with before plugging it in.

>\$FM: Okay, I'll try that when I get home.

I go back to my desk and finish off my day, thinking nothing of that ticket. The next day, I get a call from his cell phone almost as soon as I start for the day.

>\$FM: You've gotta help me. I tried plugging in the printer to my laptop and I don't see it with the other printers. I don't have any discs for this computer.

>\$Me: Unfortunately, our scope of home printers is limited to a best effort support.

>\$FM: But it was working until you worked on my laptop yesterday and now it's not. I need it for home printing.

>\$Me: Right. I worked on it to get your work printers working (as requested). Let me talk to my supervisor and see what I can do.

At that point I get my Operations Manager involved, who also did some tech work. He was on my side, that we should not be liable for this because he set it up on his own and not through us. He then went to our Assistant Director, who did not feel the same.

>\$AD: A component he needed for work was working and now it's not after you worked on it. You should have been more clear when resetting it and made sure he'd be able to set up his home printer on his own.

>\$Me: I showed him exactly what I was doing and explained what I would do. He just didn't realize it would clear his home printer and I didn't think I needed to clarify that.

>\$AD: Well you should have. Please work with \$OM on fixing this.

So I talk to \$FM again, who agrees to bring his home printer for us to troubleshoot. I go back to my office again when he gets there and to make sure it's all of the basics, even downloading the software for this printer doesn't get it to recognize anything is plugged in. So I talk to my \$OM and he suggests we get him a loaner, then bring the laptop and printer to our office for further testing (we should have just tested the printer on the loaner laptop). This ones a doozy.

I watch my \$OM work his magic and try to follow him, and he knows a lot more about Macs than I did at the time. He finds a bunch of old software that looks like it was migrated from previous images, even though he has a newer computer. I'm talking old programs like NetScape (most didn't work because PowerPC, but they were still there). We get periodic alerts from an external entity that scans our systems for security vulnerabilities. We also have internal scanning tools that (sometimes) work. I say sometimes because this story has me questioning why we even bothered. He decides the best thing to do is to put a clean image on it, but use Migration Assistant to migrate his data/profile rather than migrate it manually. This is where I got a call from a professor after a scheduled power outage put our equipment on a generator for an hour or so. The problem came in, and part of the reason we no longer use Migration Assistant at work. Even with a new image on it, the printer still wasn't coming up. \$OM then tries the printer on another Mac next to it with the same image, and it works fine. I can't dial in to the network! \$OM then decides to create a new profile for \$FM (we hadn't tried it in an admin account, foolishly). Of course it works, and we realized that we had just wasted about a day's worth of work troubleshooting, for something that could have been fixed within an hour. A learning experience for both of us.

"What do you mean 'dial in'? You mean SSH?"
We decide to tell him that his image had been corrupted from previous migrations and that he just needed a fresh image, and we even showed him in the office that it was working. No, my modem won't dial into \$voice (the name of the server). It keeps saying "line disconnected". We got all of his data transferred to his new profile, and put his software back on there, then returned his equipment to him.

Now I'm confused. On our network, \$voice is the VoIP server, which is connected to about twenty POTS lines. This might make sense, but there are only two IP phones; the one on my desk and the one in a lab made from an old payphone. working.

"Are you having trouble using your phone?"
>\$AD: Why did you do all of that for a printer? You know what? Nevermind.

"Yeah, my modem can't dial the dial-up server."
And she walked off before I could even explain our troubleshooting order. While \$FM had some minor problems after that, I luckily never heard about printers again from him. He's retired now but this story will always stick with me.

"Sorry sir, when was the last time you used our dial up server?" I knew that we had had one in the nineties, so I thought maybe he was trying to connect to it from memory and it was gone now.

"Oh, sometime yesterday before the blackout."

Hearing this, I go into full panic lockdown mode. Start the internal scanners, check

Nagios, turn on our backup honeypots, everything I can do that doesn't involve a full network shutdown. But nothing comes up. Just to be safe, I check the \$voice server. No dial-up software, no external dial-in options of any kind. Nothing.

I chat with the guy for a bit, asking him questions, but nothing comes up. He knows he connected to it, he knows the number, he can even tell me his IP address, which is not in our assigned space, but is only a single subnet below our lowest used one.

I point out scanners at the range, but find nothing. Realizing whatever it was probably went down after the power loss, I call our external scanner to see if they cover that range.

"Oh yeah, that one is usually flooded with red (serious issues). No ones told us who it belongs to though, and it's not on the list you send us."

After two days of scanning, digging through non-existent documentation (the docs for the old dial-up server literally say "Docs? Yeah right...") I decide that I'll start in the server room and trace the phone lines to the \$voice server to see if any go to a strange server.

After lifting up the floor panels and following the cables, I found a small bundle that seemed to go to the opposite end of the server room, away from the racks. Pulling up the last panel, I found a short telecom rack with the phone lines parallel.

There may have been a moment of staring in fascinated horror. After that, I grabbed a monitor and plugged it in, and was greeted by a BIOS error. Grabbing a PS2 keyboard (no USB hot-plug!) I finally managed to boot the system.

FreeBSD 5. An operating system so old I found its install disk on a floppy.

Booting it revealed that it had the same name as \$voice. \$voice was named after it, which is ironic since the old \$voice server nearly outlived the new \$voice server.

The server is now in the great server rack in the sky, but not without being able to say that it lived in a server room for almost a decade without being detected.

So no, we do not support dial-up anymore.

TL,DR; found an old dial-up server hiding under the floor of the server room which no one had touched for almost a decade. It still worked until a power outage messed with the BIOS.

I swear my email are vanishing on their own. - /u/Gravel090

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gtvmu/i_swear_my_email_are_vanishing_on_their_own/

Hello TFTS, it has been a bit since I had an incident worth posting about. Today that changed, one of my clients had been having an issue for a while and she used to live near my company headquarters and had been working with them about this issue and she had got nowhere with them because her issue was frankly weird. So when she moved north near my location and started coming to us she brought the same issue. Me=Gravel, DEL= Deleted Email Lady, CO=Coworker.

So DEL came in to our store one day having managed to acquire a boot lock from a browser redirect scammer she had decided to call and listen to. She did this despite having used our services for all her computer needs up till now. Once we resolved her boot lock she started coming in complaining of emails being deleted and wondering how that could happen. I did my best to inform her that emails don't just delete themselves and that she would have had to change a setting or been doing it herself. Unsurprisingly this was the same answer the other location had given her.

Unfortunately this answer upset her because she took it as if we had called her crazy, because after all, her emails had been going missing or getting deleted. So a few weeks after I gave her this answer she came back in and our conversation went something like this.

>DEL: "Look! Look! I have proof my emails are getting deleted."

Intrigued I come over and have a look. She proceeds to show me an email that is in the trash

>DEL: "See? That email was in my inbox this morning and now its not."

>ME: "Ok, well it wouldn't have moved there on its own, someone would have to have deleted it or put it there."

>DEL: "Well I know I didn't deleted it, would \$emailprovider have deleted it?"

>ME: "Why would they? Most providers don't really worry about how many emails someone has anymore. The only time it will auto delete emails is if they had been put in the trash."

>DEL: "Well I didn't put it in the trash, how could that happen?"

>ME: It doesn't..."

>DEL: "Ok then, I guess I will just watch and see when it happens"

DEL then left rather annoyed that again my answer was "that is not how that works at all." Several weeks later she comes back, this time with her husband in tow.

>DEL: "I think I figured out what is happening to my emails!"

CO decided to take the lead on this one and went to work with her.

>CO: "Ok, so what is happening with them?"

>DEL: "My husband hardly uses email, but he has been deleting emails he doesn't need and its deleting them on my email too."

>CO: "So he uses the same email address as you?"

>DEL: "Yes but he is on a different computer and he doesn't get many emails. How can we stop the emails from being deleted?"

>CO: "Stop using the same email."

>DEL: But he doesn't get that many emails so I just tell him when he gets on."

>CO: "Ok... the only thing I can think to do is change your profiles on \$3rdpartyemailapps from POP3 to IMAP to prevent it from sending changes to the email."

So CO spends the next hour or so going through every single device they own and changing their account settings. Several password resets are required along the way as they don't always know them. Once he is done they leave happy and CO goes back to his day a tad bit more annoyed.

Today, a few months later I end up talking to DEL on the phone because she answered the phone (we had her husbands computer in the store for a repair). After I go through letting her know the machine is done she drops this ball on me.

>DEL: "My emails are getting deleted again! I know that you guys changed some settings and they should not be deleted, but its happening again."

>ME: "While yes we did change some settings, the only way I can 100% say your emails will not be deleted is to simply not use the same account as your husband."

>DEL: "But he hardly uses email, and you changed the settings but the emails are still being deleted. Why did the settings get changed."

>ME: "Odds are, they didn't. The only way to guarantee your husband doesn't delete emails is to simply not have him on your account."

>DEL: "Well why is he deleted the emails?"

>ME: "I have no idea, I don't really know the guy. The only way to stop it would be to tell him not to delete things or to remove him from the account, at this point there is no other way."

>DEL "Can't you make him stop?"

FFS lady its your husband why not ask him

>ME: "I have no way to stop it. You would have to ask him or remove him from the account, there is no way to control another human to that extent."

>DEL: "But he keeps deleted the emails..."

>ME: "I know that, tell him to stop or get him his own email, there is no other options at this point."

I will spare you the rest but it went around a few more time exactly like that. I still am not sure she understands even remotely why I can't solve her problem magically. But she will be in tomorrow (my day off this week haha!) to collect her husbands machine and I am sure CO will get the same ear full from her again. So we will see what solution he can come up with, or it might simply be down to telling them that their email is now "out of scope" for us and they will have to deal with \$emailprovider directly to solve this. Who knows? All I know is that what should have been a 1 minute phone call turned into a 15 minute exit less roundabout, a ride I desperately wanted off.

TL;DR: My client has an issue with vanishing emails, turns out the culprit is her husband who uses the same account. Using separate emails like normal people is too unreasonable or difficult for some reason and she insists we prevent him from deleting emails. Faces are palmed, heads are desked and no one is made happy by the results.

Where is Marge? Or: The day I lost a Sun - /u/roflcopter-pilot

[https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gr7nq/
where_is_marge_or_the_day_i_lost_a_sun/](https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gr7nq/where_is_marge_or_the_day_i_lost_a_sun/)

This is a tale from my very early days of working in IT, about 15 years ago. I had an internship at a big company that, among other things, made certain hardware (can't go into much detail for anonymity reasons) which was supported for use with a massive amount of systems: Windows, Mac, Linux, DOS, Solaris, HP/UX, even VMS... you imagine it, they very likely supported it. For a lover of more exotic OSes and hardware, as I was (and still am), their testing center was heaven! Luckily I was allowed to spend a week there during my internship.

So there I was, at the second day of said week, happily working. I had been tasked with reconfiguring Sun machines in preparation for a new testing procedure. Having never worked with Solaris before this was a challenge, but with some help I got it mostly done - when lunch time came around, I had already finished 4 of the 5 needed machines and was mostly finished with the last one, just in time to hand it over to a senior engineer who was eager to launch the first test with them in the lab.

When I returned from lunch however, I was in for a shock: Marge was gone!

Marge was the name of the fifth and last [little SPARCstation](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/ed/Sun_SPARCstation_5.JPG/1024px-Sun_SPARCstation_5.JPG) I had to work on - all machines of a kind followed a certain naming convention: All running Windows were named after alcoholic beverages (yes, seriously. wonder why), all running Linux after flowers, all Macs after characters from the Sesame Street, etc. All Suns were named after characters from the Simpsons. Earlier I had finished work on Homer, Lisa, Barney and Apu... but where Marge had previously been all that remained were dangling cables and a startled CRT complaining "NO INPUT".

Great, so what do I do now? Can't just confess to my boss that I literally *lost* a machine, can I? Someone must've mistakenly thought it was not used anymore, I

guessed, because I had powered it down for lunch break and this desk was usually unused. I then found the log, asked people but with no luck. Nobody had seen anything, thanks to lunch time. After an hour of frantic searching I decided to ask the nearest admin for help. Through a ping he was able to see that, weirdly enough, Marge was up and running! It took quite some time to convince him that I was not mixing up names and to get him to help me find out where Marge now was. Okay, I'll try to keep this story as short as possible but I'm not sure if it'll work out. As it turned out, according to the MAC address tables of the switches Marge had taken a trip across the whole site of the company's campus. Off we go!

OK, off I go, disappointingly the admin wasn't too keen on the whole detective work thing. We have quite a tech-savvy user here (I'll just call him *savyuser* from now on) in our company which knows how to fix most of the problems he encounters Marge was online was patched to, though himself and so on. Occasionally he stumbles across something, calls us and we fix it in a few minutes but apart from that this user seems to be haunted by a *non-tech-liking-ghost* or whatever...

In the other building it only took me twenty minutes to find the room (should've given me a building map, too - totally nonsensical room numbering and confusing corridor layout don't mix) which happened to be an office next door to a storage room. In said office I surprisingly ran into another wide-eyed intern, and he had Marge sitting on a table, next to a pile of other PCs, laptops and some odd printers. As it turned out he was hired as an intern by the site's IT department and tasked that. We gave him a new hard drive, set Laptop Nr. 1 up again and voila, worked for some time again... until it screwed itself, happily user learned his lesson from storage according to their inventory system. Apparently Marge had been incorrectly flagged as in storage. Fed up with convincing people I decided to power Marge down under protest of the other intern, grabbed it under my arm and marched off. I had a deadline to meet!

We decided to give him a more modern (but not brand new) **Laptop Nr. 2** and this time not encrypt it in case something goes wrong again. The important data was saved on our network drives anyways which aren't connected as long as he hasn't entered his password specifically. A few months (almost a year) go by again and guess what... Laptop Nr. 2 starts to fail too. It's around Mid 2014 now. He got random bluescreens which weren't track-able to anything in particular other than some, as it seemed, hardware failure. Now some other IT staff had the exact same models so we knew that these wouldn't act up on their own (except hardware defects etc.) so we swapped the HDDs out and gave him one of ours and reinstalled it, both worked fine without any problem for a few months or so... then his laptop started to act up, again... We reinstalled Windows and everything but still, nothing we could fix anymore. Now we know that *savyuser* isn't someone who tinkers around or experiments since he's quite a "high head" here in the company, plus he has no admin rights anyways. However he agreed on us monitoring that laptop a bit to detect anything early if possible... Well that ended up being a complete fail. The laptop decided to die again, technician came and replaced the motherboard of Laptop Nr. 2, laptop died once more a few months later... Support replaced the

board again but it died AGAIN after around 2 months... Then the laptop was out of warranty again, great...

So we're at *&savvyuser*'s **Laptop Nr. 3** which was a Surface Pro 3. We're at around Mid 2015 now, since the other laptop died already anyways he said he'll buy one for us to set up. We did so but... I'll make it short, that Surface ended up crashing and Bluescreening all over the place from the beginning on. It may was the fault of Windows 8 but he decided to keep using it for over year in this state despite it crashing almost once a week and we offering him to try and repair it. A few updates were released and eventually we installed Windows 10 on it in 2016 but it didn't help much, Bluescreens were less frequent but still occurring sometimes. I'm surprised the file system didn't corrupt itself completely... I was using that Surface for a few weeks just to see if it was indeed that thing or the user, it ended up being a faulty Surface but Microsoft said "Nah, not our problem" and denied repairing it... Great...

Anyways, we're at around Mid-End 2016 now. He got a brand new **Laptop Nr. 4** from us which we used for a month just to make sure that nothing but ABSOLUTELY NOTHING can go wrong this time... yeah, you know the outcome. He was using it for under half a year until Early 2017 when he said that the laptop won't boot up anymore all of the sudden. Ended up being a bad mainboard which the technician replaced, but the new board was faulty too. He had to get a new one which took around 2 days, replaced it aaaaaand... keyboard backlight doesn't work. Technician came in again with the third "new" board (he admitted they aren't new but refurbished ones...) and the backlight worked again.

And here we are today... So far it works but I can already guarantee you that his laptop will die somewhere in the next few months again. He's not abusing these laptops as they're all treated very well, none of them had any visible abuse marks other than the usual "business usage" marks (occasional scratches, worn touchpad and keys etc.). Plus he has no admin rights so he can't modify anything critical and he's tech savvy enough to know what he's doing. I have no idea what ghost haunts this user but apparently it really doesn't like tech (or him)...

tl;dr - User goes through 4 laptops until this day which all end up failing somehow without any obvious reason why.

PS.: Sorry if anything "in the timeline" here is a bit messed up or not working out, I've tried my best to keep the times in order and as correct as possible but yeah, try yourself to remember each detail of the last ~5 years and you'll know how hard that is ;)

My computer isn't working - /u/Fields47

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gkgmo/my_computer_isnt_working/

Standard disclaimer: Long time lurker, first time poster. Didn't happen today, happened in 2014.

This involved me, a ****\$user**** very near her eol (retirement), and our clunky ****\$helpdesk**** software.

So back in 2014 I was working in IT support for a huge IT services provider in France as part of a 2 year apprenticeship in order to get a degree for stuff I already knew... as you do. This one afternoon i'm keeping an eye on our ****\$helpdesk**** software and spot a ticket from an office literally 30 meters away from my desk.

Rather than spend the 10 minutes assigning myself the ticket, adding the right codes and sending some standard troubleshooting steps, I decided I would just go to the person directly and see for myself (it gets me out of the office for 10 minutes).

I arrive at our client support callroom and one of the ladies is pacing around her desk looking at every cable sticking out of her computer and very perplexed, with no hesitation I assume this is ****\$user**** and make my way over to politely ask what the problem is exactly.

The ****\$user**** kindly explains that she just got back from lunch and that her computer won't turn on. This is strange and instantly my brain goes into turbo churning out the troubleshooting steps to the most complex and extravagant computer problems i'd seen as we techies do.

I stop myself and remember an important fact, I'm in IT support and I should follow protocol to save myself a lot of time and bother.

~~1. Have you tried turning it off and on again~~
2. Can you show me exactly what you did?

So the ****\$user**** sits back down at her desk and promptly pushes the button to turn the computer on, looks up at me and says "you see, it just doesn't work".

I let out a little giggle before informing her that she is pressing the CD drive button and indicate to her the location of the power button for the machine. She presses it and the computer springs to life.

we have a laugh and a little chat before I get on back to my office to spend 20
Setting up a modem in Windows 10
 I know that no **Sheldesk** software should be that long
 https://reddit.com/r/tesladesk/techsupport/comments/6g1lo2/setting_up_a_modem/
Can't run Windows 10??? - /a/

Hope you enjoyed
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gf54a/you-would-a-story-uncle-almond-new/>
 You would a story-uncle almond new when he was working as techsupport. It started off with a lady asking why her brand new Modem wasn't working.
 what do you mean windows xp hardware cant run/

Okay, this is a very old tale from back in the heady days of 2009. I (**\$Me** in Dad's counting) worked at a **Bispoke Software Corp** where we supply and support **WP** business, so I'm used to random questions but this one made me shake my head. This happened last night, I got a call from a guy who seems to be broken in his **Q** system but had a tattered **Windows 7** desktop that was old (I had killed the **Dad** in story but it sounds like the **old** version of **XP** and the **gen** had a very **Pro** but **fr** ending gave him this old **XP** computer but it was giving beep codes. We eventually got turned out (had **RAM**) but then he starts asking "why doesn't it have **WiFi**?" We have to **play Bispoke Software** "Company the **majority** **Woodbine** **back** **long** **how** **work** **help** **on** **I** **had** **to** **keep** **saying** **it** **is** **at** **least** **15** **years** **old** **and** **and** **out** **every** **thing** **or** **have** **is** **between** **5** **years** **old** **He** **then** **asked** **"if** **I** **put** **12gb** **ram** **into** **it** **could** **I** **run** **Windows** **7** **or** **10** **?"** **of** **the** **machines** **expired** **years** **ago** **that** **and** **didn't** **work** **and** **how** **could** **it** **run** **on** **XP** **hardware** **it's** **not** **as** **easy** **as** **plugging** **in** **a** **usb** **stick** **.In** **the** **end** **I** **don't** **think** **he** **fully** **knew** **why** **he** **couldn't** **run** **Windows** **7** **or** **10** **but** **was** **at** **least** **light** **at** **the** **way** **in** **a** **machine** **could** **be** **if** **we** **the** **in** **our** **software** **.Joy** **of** **joys** **they** **have** **had** **the** **brain** **power** **to** **buy** **a** **suitable** **box** **with** **all** **the** **right** **stuff** **needed** **but** **edit:** **because** **people** **keep** **saying** **you** **can** **install** **it** **from** **a** **usb** **I** **should** **clarify** **.The** **old** **low** **budget** **and** **why** **he** **couldn't** **run** **Windows** **7** **or** **10** **is** **that** **3gb** **of** **ram** **in** **it** **but** **a** **out** **Pen** **in** **small** **4** **which** **he** **thought** **4** **was** **a** **bad** **score** **and** **he** **wants** **to** **get** **to** **is** **just** **like** **it** **would** **be** **an** **i5** **with** **6gb** **ram** **.He** **wanted** **the** **Aero** **theme** **all** **the** **animations** **,etc** **.A** **simple** **enough** **request** **met** **with** **a** **fairly** **standard** **response** **but** **this** **doesn't** **bode** **Dad** **for** **the** **future** **I** **have** **to** **plug** **it** **into** **the** **wall**

£ad\$Cbstoina*What's a browser, why do I have to do that?

> **\$Me** Well, you've used Internet Explorer before, right? That's a browser. He told me he had her dig through the trash to get the wires back and set up her ~~Bank~~ ^{Bank} properly. It was the only real browser anyone really used so don't judge me, luckily yes, they have used it before. These days I simply use the phrase "Open the Internet" and most people seem to understand that.*

```
> **$Me** So can you open the browser please?
```

> **\$Customer** Not at the moment, no.

Okay, maybe they haven't got an internet connection. Lets test that.

>***\$Me** Are you on the internet there?

>***\$Customer** Yes, we can all get on the internet, I'm on it now, that's how I got your number.

>***\$Me** Ah, okay, *we're getting somewhere at last* Can you type this address into your address bar?

>***\$Customer** I don't need it installing on this machine, it's on the new machine.

*This is starting to get a bit odd now and a little bit frustrating but I am a calm and patient member of the **\$SupportTeam** so I can do this.*

me?

And this, dear reader, is where the whole reason they couldn't do this in the first place becomes *very* clear.

>***\$Customer** Well, we haven't unpacked it yet.

>***\$Me** It's still in the box?

>***\$Customer** Yes, it only arrived half an hour ago.

>***\$Me** Riiiiight....

>***\$Customer** I thought you could do all this remotely? *For some reason the customer sounds baffled*

>***\$Me** Well we can, but it does kind of depend on the PC being switched on.

Oddly the customer seemed to think that we could assemble, plug in, turn on and install software onto a computer... over the phone.

I think the customer was on hold for 5 minutes (in reality probably a fraction of that) until the entire office, who had been listening to the whole conversation stopped laughing.

The customer was politely asked to get the PC plugged in and connected to the internet before calling us back. He called back two days later and we managed to successfully remote in and set everything back up.

I really don't think they needed to write a letter of complaint saying how unhelpful we'd been in that we'd told them with the pager to be framed.

The tale of broken pagers
BushKush273

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gij1j/tl-dr-customer-thinks-we-can-assemble-a-computer-remotely/the_tale_of_broken_pagers/

Hello! First time posting here as I finally remember this subreddit after dealing with a rather interesting customer. This little story just happened as I'm working the Saturday evening shift as a solo help desk person at a healthcare network.

Unfortunately, we still have a good amount of pagers that we utilize for many important roles in the hospital. Half of them don't work and at each hospital we have an area where hospital staff can swap out their pager if their current one stops working. The people who are in charge of those pagers (normally Security) tend to not care much for them and don't keep track of which ones work and which ones well.

Well now I have a nursing supervisor who says her pager completely died on her so she went and got a new one. Easy call. I swap the number to the new pager, send a test page, and tell her to wait 15-30 minutes for the change to go through. An hour goes by..she calls back and still no test page. After some basic troubleshooting I one.

On to the second spare! She calls back after getting the second spare pager and I perform the same swap. This one was a little funky so I had to call the paging company to do it for me. Normally this means that it's done right so I'm pretty confident this will work. Another hour goes by.. I receive another call from the nursing supervisor that the pager still isn't working! I made sure she did all the basic troubleshooting and I call the paging company back to have them check the pager. Everything looks good. This is where I find the culprit of our problem...

I call the nursing supervisor back. At this point it just passed 7pm and she is getting ready to leave and the evening supervisor is taking over. The evening supervisor picks up and immediately goes:

>"Oh..Day Supervisor, the pager is off. That would explain why no pages are coming through. You gotta make sure it's on."

30 second pause...BEEP BEEP. The pager is ringing!

>"Yeah seems like its working. Thanks!"

Brotha Mob As at 83

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g68f4/my_printer_is_broken/
I shall also take this time to let all of my fellow help desk workers out there know
Gee's shop is on today!!!!-----
this... don't no call no show on a weekend leaving your coworker alone :(

Worked tech support and voicemail agent. One of my favorite calls is and like this in. Since the work network help speaker, she asked that host of all kinds of national and international PRANKS. SCROCKEN races super M engine, the racing, and MotoGP to name a few.

[illegible]

YHWH: Yes! And if you've worked at a racetrack you will understand, when a racing horse owner gets such a site, it becomes their site. They want to play. One such thing like this I issued a new set of credentials since my GWIFT (I immediately) ~~WTF~~ ~~NOT WORKING~~ into the restroom, let alone anywhere. The groups make the rules and if you break them, your gone faster than any other as a link, rebooted the user's thin client. Started getting yelled at about: This being was acceptable. She turned into a total bitch.

To understand the eventual problem, you have to understand what a cluster this site was for. Really, for a sign of the times, for a place where users were using the fatality, keyboards, Echomint, and the hard logged in a risky to DFs and some few square on USB. These lines would be right in the hands of a hard logged in, which was down in the testing of a cluster of hard logging. Fathoming the school of sense would they have been of a basic function to Third grade to the new site, and that changed from event to event. The week following each event we fipped down off the support of a hard logged in, that was a no, I probably could have paid for a copy by being in the all the copper, but I was young, stupid, and too busy ogling the cars, motorcycles, and girls that came along with the races.

It was always a challenge meeting all of the planning department's site layouts, especially if there was a miscommunication. In this instance the miscommunication was that our souvenir/track merchandise booth was in fact 10 feet further away from its IDF than our printout specified. This was a problem, as there was no way to get a line strung up across a pole, over a pathway used by pedestrians and trucks during off time. Normally this store would have 5 Ethernet with 3 additional spares if something were to go down. For safety they wouldn't allow a line on a pole, nor hazard.

Never fear though, we had a secret weapon in old Cisco dsl technology. I can't remember exactly what it was called, but imagine a slow but steady connection over a two wire pone line. Because the tent was sitting next to an old phone junction terminal (those green/gray rectangular boxes out in front of your house on the street corner) we could use a bunch of the 24 line block for our two wire dsl. Suddenly we had enough connections with extra to spare. These connections were brought into the tent, connected to a switch and bridged to allow for higher throughput for the store registers.

One important thing to note is where these dsl connections terminated in the back end. They didn't go to one switch, they actually terminated to multiple different switches on our network (controllers really, but similar idea.) These controllers existed on multiple different vlans and in some cases entirely different IDFs. So we had a store, with what appeared to be single ingress, but whose connections actually came from multiple locations on our network. Can you venture a guess as to what we were about to encounter? If I had, I would have left for the year...

So we've got a moved store, a poorly designed backend, and a racing body with the power of Caesar. It's going to be a wonderful day.

Let's set the mood for the final day of the event, 30 minutes prior to the final and most important championship race. It's hot, sunny, and despite the normal service calls for cut lines or phone block re-punches. All seems well and we are enjoying the view from our IT office. Then we get the call, internet is down for the racing body. Well heck, but we have redundancies. I get in my golf cart and drive away to take a look. Then another call comes in on the radio just moments after the first call, internet is down for the media center (where all the reporters hang out with supplied internet in dual terminated biscuit boxes. This is very important). "That's odd," I think, and my counterpart gets dispatched to it. Then another call, souvenir tent/store connections are down. Oh dear. Total site failure 30 minutes before the end, we don't restore services, we get fined \$250,000 by the racing body.

I race back to the office and we all start printing out copies of our resumes while trying to figure out the problem. All signs point to a network loop, but we have no idea how, since we have stp on all core switches. Our head network guy starts reviewing his logs while we are dispatched to try and find the problem. While the racing body called us first, it turns out that it was in fact the media center that lost connectivity first, they just hadn't had a sec to call us apparently until multiple reporters started complaining. The network guys logs show failure starting in the media center, then the racing bodies location, then the souvenir store/tent. We rush into the media center and start looking over every wired connection and what do we find? A reporter plugged one end of their patch cable into their connection, and the other end into the one next to them. This was done because they wanted to "make it

look neater."

Woman angry that her new computer is broken - /u/tommygun641

After this, switches start to come back online, services are restored, and we start dealing again, just a few minutes before the final race. Easily the most stressful tech emergency of my life.

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gbr84/>

woman_angry_that_her_new_computer_is_broken/

So what happened?

window.

2. We reworked our connections to the store, but these connections went to multiple different switches on our network, some of which were NOT core switches. This enabled.

3. In an attempt to be neater, a reporter inadvertently loops the network in the media center which causes a cascading failure across the entire site through the teaching me what's wrong with it when the manager comes in laughing. We ask what's wrong and he says I need to help this woman out the front because it would be "great experience" for me.

We got good and drunk that night. 10ft almost cost us \$250,000

I walk out and theres a woman standing there looking very upset with two laptops in front of her.

Me: hello, what seems to be the problem?

Her: I bought this laptop from JB-HIFI last week and it's broken. They wouldn't fix it and told me to come here.

Me: alright so what's wrong with it exactly?

Her: it wont copy anything

Me: alright I'll give it a look.

So I go to the back and get a spare usb stick and am about to stick it in when she stops me.

Her: what are you doing?

Me: copying from your computer

Her: that's not what you do.

I look a little puzzled and I look over to where the manager is and he's trying not to laugh so I turn to the lady and ask her to show me how to copy stuff.

She pulls a usb mouse out of her pocket and plugs it into her old computer. She left clicks on a bunch of stuff and clicks "copy". She then unplugs the mouse and plugs

it into the new one, left clicks and up comes the sidebar with no "paste" option. She then turns to me and says "see"

"You should have told me these things

needed power" - /u/BootyStanks

So she just explained to her that she's doing it wrong and how you are supposed to do it and even ended up selling her a portable 2th hard drive. But the second she left the store I laughed me head off.

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8ow2/you_should_have_told_me_these_things_needed_power/

So a little background i work for a POS company and i had a remote appointment to set up this guys EMV pin pads. The chip card readers. He had already had them plugged in and ready to go by the time i called. I got logged into his PCs and installed all the necessary programs.

Me= me Cx=client

Me: is the pin pad saying anything now?

Cx: nope its not saying anything

****30 min go by of trouble shooting****

****i reinstalled everything****

Me: now?

Cx: nope, nothing

****have cx recheck all wires, check damn near every device in the store****

Me: now?

Cx: not a thing

Me:what exactly is on the screen. Be VERY specific

Cx: im saying their is nothing on them. They arent even lighting up

****Fury begins to rise****

Me: is the power cord plugged in?

Cx: i dont think they came with any

Me: please check, sir

A Sappy Story - /u/Killanos

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gbkix/a_sappy_story/

Cx: huh, i guess they did

plugs them in, all pin pads are working and taking credit cards
Hi guys,

I'm going, to be honest, and say this is not my main account because I want to remain anonymous
Cx: well, you should have told me these things needed power. I dont have time to waste on these things.

This story happened about 1 1/2 years ago. (winter of 2015)
i didnt know what to say

I was working for a cell phone and phone subscription provider at the time. It was
Me: ill be sure to check, next time *click*
quite stressful because of how telesales worked

back then. I had little to no nice people there because most wanted either a free phone, a free subscription or a just rant.

But this lady melted my heart. WARNING: SAPPY STORY

**\$ME: me

\$Cx: the lovely young lady

X: the company \$ME worked for

\$TL: team leader that was on the shift**

> **\$ME**: -Thank you for calling **X**. My name is **\$ME**. How can I help you with?

\$Cx: - Hi there. I wanted to ask for an upgrade

\$ME: -Sure. Can you provide me with a phone number?

\$Cx: - Yeah. It's _____

\$ME: Great. *the owner is a male based on the name*. Can you confirm the email address, the name of the account and the pin/password?

go*

> **\$Cx**: Sure. *provides* **\$ME** *the details*

\$ME: Alright. *checks the account. Old flip phone from `08. Husband has an iPhone 6S*

\$ME: May I ask why haven't you upgraded sooner?

\$Cx: I have epilepsy. Using it while I was on the treatment would've worsened the treatment. I already had a stroke a day

trynototcry.jpeg

Context: **\$ME** *was diagnosed with mild epilepsy and noticed the effects that

have on people \$ME's age. I was lucky that I can still live a normal life without sacrificing a lot.*

> **\$ME**: When.. were you first diagnosed?

\$Cx: By the end of 2007. But I'm doing alright now

stilltrynottocry.gif

The treatment is rough. The medicine is not your usual "take it 3 times a day and when you are better you can stop". The medication is carefully picked (in some cases, made based on the person) and gradually administered.

> **\$ME**: How are you doing now?

\$Cx: I'm actually blessed that I can go out without any wheelchair.

\$ME: Wheelchair?

\$Cx: Yeah. Before, I could easily get bruises, break my bones and couldn't walk properly. Balance and stuff.

people*

> **\$ME**: *speechless for a solid minute*

\$Cx: Are you still there?

\$ME: Yeah, I'm sorry. I know that what I'm going to say is going to sound like a lie, but I have been diagnosed with mild epilepsy about 2 years ago.

\$Cx: *voice cracking* Really? Please don't just say that just to get me to buy the [amazing] tablet.

X *had a promotion for a [wonderful] tablet*

> **\$ME**: I promise this is not at all my intention.

\$ME: I still have the random spasms once a week and I get terrified.

\$Cx: Pfff. You should see me. You can't tell whether I'm having a spasm or a new breakdance move.

Both laughing on it. First time I really felt connected to a different level with a person. Hot [fabulous] mess I was

We talk for a solid 15 min regarding our issue, the "Jump Time" effect that we feel, the spasms, the dreams we have in regards to the illness

> **\$ME**: Oh right. I forgot about your phone.

\$Cx: Right, the reason I called.

Bussiness as usual, with the only difference that she had to pay the upgrade fee. I waived it so she doesn't have to pay anything with me

> **\$ME**: It's all set. I hope you will get better and enjoy your smartphone.

\$Cx: Take care. And try not to surprise your friends with random break dance moves. And thank you for not making me pay the [great] upgrade fee.

over*

> **\$ME**: **it started to rain** Will do. Take care and wish you all the best. ***

An interesting interview - /u/superzenki

\$TL **: *WTF just happened.png*

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6gbg8b/>

an_interesting_interview/

Edit: Edit

2nd Edit : Thank you for upvotes and comments. I appreciate the warm welcome :D. Take care you beautiful bastards
I went for an interview today with a company that's 100% Macs. I previously had a phone interview with them that went pretty well, so they called me in person. I was doing this on my lunch break from my regular, so I already felt rushed, although nothing they did made me feel that way. They were really laid back about everything. I went into the room with two Macs sitting on the table. In this story we have \$Interviewer1, \$Interviewer2, & \$Me.

\$I1: We want you to diagnose these and see if you can fix them. This first one doesn't connect to our network.

I open it up, and I can see it connected to their guest network, but no browser will load a webpage. Eventually, Chrome loads up with a DNS error so that points me in the right direction. I turn the wireless off and back on, but that changes nothing. I go to the Network Preferences from the top menu bar, but it's a gray box. At this point I'm thinking that they've locked me into a standard user account with no access to System Preferences.

> \$Me: I'm supposed to be trying to connect to the guest wireless, right?

> \$I2: Maybe...(he says as to not give the answer away).

I try their regular network, but it asks for a username and password. Knowing it can't be that simple, I don't bother to ask for a username/password.

> \$Me: Well, when I try to go to Network Preferences, nothing loads.

> \$I1: Show us.

So I show them, and of course after closing everything out and re-opening it, Network Preferences loads. I then go through all of the Advanced settings, and everything looks normal. I can't think of what else to try, so I do a Renew DHCP Lease. I try re-loading a webpage again, but it doesn't load. So I'm ready to tell them that I'm stumped, and it loads while they're standing over me.

\$I2: Hey, good job! I modified the DNS to make it off by one number. Here's the second laptop, go ahead and try to open Chrome on it.

I do, and it says "You do not have permission to open Google Chrome." Strange. I

look in the Applications folder and there's no icon, I figured it may be a corrupted install or something. So I go out and download a fresh copy and install it while keeping the other one. As I'm opening up the new one, I get a hint.

What do I know? They're the engineers... u/Hokulewa

>\$I2: You can use the other one for Google if you need to.
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g9q10/>

what do i know theyre the engineers/

So I decide to start trying to fix the original copy by Googling, and find something that points me in the right direction. After a couple more minutes, he comes over and looks at my shoulder to give me more hints.

So, I'm not working in tech support... I'm writing operator documentation for new mission systems which will be going into a military aircraft: start-up and shut-down checklists, testing procedures, and how to simply use the equipment in flight. trying to figure out what's going on with this one.

But the engineers keep redesigning stuff because it's not working right or not meeting the functional requirements, which makes it rather hard to write the documentation. So, I'm spending time in the development lab while they hammer on the systems, keeping notes and being generally bored to tears since it's a secure internet.

I do and see that No Access is selected for Chrome. I chuckled at how I overlooked something that simple, but I don't see that often and I wasn't even expecting this. I'm not an engineer. I'm a former technician with 20 years of experience with these types of systems on this type of aircraft. I don't know how to design this kind of equipment, but I sure know how to troubleshoot problems. That's why they have

me writing the documentation. They showed me around and it seemed like a really laid-back environment. Pretty much everyone wearing jeans, some people working in bean bags on their laptop.

Their break room had a bunch of games in it, and I got free food leftover from breakfast. Overall a good learning experience whether or not I get the job. Anyway, they've got this airborne surveillance camera system which feeds video to an onboard operator station. And there's a delay in the feed the engineers can't figure out.

They're pointing the dismounted camera at the display monitor, with a high-precision clock beside it, so the monitor shows the clock and what *was* on the monitor just a moment ago... a slightly older picture of the clock. The difference between the two times indicates how much the video feed is delayed. They are freeze-framing the video to see how many milliseconds apart the two times are.

They started out with a huge delay, like 600 milliseconds, which they have worked out and fixed. Now they've got a 40 msec delay left and can't figure it out.

So, I ask, "What's the input lag for that LCD panel?"

They reply that it's a 60 Hz panel.

"No," I say, "the display itself has a natural latency unrelated to the refresh rate that creates a delay between the signal arrival and time it's displayed." They are using a cheap off-brand PC monitor in the lab, not the ridiculously expensive one that will be on the plane. "A run-of-the-mill PC monitor can easily have a 30-40 msec input

lag which would create exactly the problem that you're seeing here," I say,

I CAN'T ACCESS NONE OF IT! - /u/

The other engineer pipes up with "I think it's 120 Hz, actually. That's not the problem. They just slightly away from Ireland keep staring at the 40 msec difference in the times displayed.

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8d02/>

i_cant_access_none_of_it/

I just shrug my shoulders and say "Ok. I'm going to lunch."

That was a couple of days ago. As far as I know, they still haven't checked to see if Hi all, it's been a long time since my last post, so how about a short and funny (to me, at least) one to get back into the swing of things.

Characters in this tale from tech support:

***\$ANIM**: The hero of the story; the hardworking senior technician of the team, fuelled by coffee and very little sleep.

***\$USER**: Probably has a certificate of computer proficiency.

It was another sunny day glaring into the high-rise office. Things were unnaturally quiet but that's okay, I have plenty of project work to keep me busy. Just as I sip on my latest (6th) cup of coffee for the day \$USER storms into the office.

\$USER had recently been given their first laptop with the company as they had taken up a new role meaning they now needed to be able to be mobile around the office and naturally the desktop was not suitable for this.

\$USER: *slams laptop down on desk and makes a gesture befitting the assistant from "The Price is Right"*

>\$USER: "I can't access none of it!"

\$USER is gesturing towards their mapped network drives, each with a big red 'X' on them.

I take one look at the machine, and without missing a beat respond.

"This printer is supposed to be Plug-and-Play!" - /u/BakaDango

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ganhc/this_printer_is_supposed_to_be_plugandplay/

There is an eighth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a stupidity as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between \$user and \$tech, between computer science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge-base. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area which we call the Family Tech Support Zone.

Everyone here has experienced (at least) one PC that becomes the bane of their existence; you know, the one that always malfunctions no matter how many parts are replaced or attempts are made to resuscitate it. For me, this is my Grandmother's computer. Between faulty ram, a corrupted HDD, and bad cables, every few months I am required to perform maintenance on her draconian machine. After replacing every component besides the power supply and motherboard in her PC and reinstalling her 3 greeting card creation applications, I prayed that this would finally allow me freedom from her long-winded calls and having to deal with my hot-headed uncle as the middleman IT guy. I would usually relay instructions to him as he, unlike my grandmother is able to use websites besides [email.com].

But then my uncle *had* to buy them a printer.

Cast:

\$me = guy trying to enjoy his day off

\$unc = uncle = \$user

>\$unc: "So I'm trying to get this damn new printer to work but Windows won't recognize it. I **bleeping** hate Windows **bleeping** 10!

minute"

>\$unc: "This **bleeping** thing is supposed to be plug-and-play! I bet if you didn't upgrade her to 10 it would have worked fine! 7 was fine!

>>*Author's Note: I did not upgrade her computer to 10, it did so automatically when I wasn't there.*

I check device manager and the printer isn't showing up. Download and install the drivers and still nothing.

>\$me: "Okay, I need you to make sure all of the cables are plugged in properly, nice and snug"

>\$unc: "I did that already, but I'll do it again. I restarted it too, before you ask"

>>\$internally: *they're learning*

>\$unc: "Okay, printer is plugged in."

>\$me: "Hm, I still don't see anything. How about this, try plugging it into a different USB port."

>\$unc: "I don't know which USB is which USB so I'm going to unplug them all and put them all into different ports"

>\$me: "That seems unnecessary and could cause more issues, just foll-

>\$unc: "Okay, I did it."

I see the keyboard and mouse reinitialize, but no printer. I start to think... how many USB ports could that PC have? I'm fairly sure it has 4 total, and if I do my math ports.

>\$me: "How many USB cables are plugged in?"

>\$unc: "There's two"

>\$me: "So that's the mouse and the keyboard, what about the printer?"

>\$unc: "There's no printer cable! I already told you, this is supposed to be plug-and-play! I plugged it in, but the computer can't see it!"

>\$me: *facepalming into oblivion* "No, it's plug-into-the-computer and play! Not power-and-play! Plug in the cable please!"

>\$unc: "But the printer is across the room!"

I'll spare you the details, but I walked my uncle through configuring the printer to the network and was able to connect to the printer afterwards with ease. This was the most incredible interpretation of plug-and-play I've heard to date; never

underestimate the mind of a \$user.

Ring of wire - /u/Chilled_IT

TL;DR: Windows 10 is a terrible operating system.

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g9opq/ring_of_wire/

This happened about a week ago. A new intern was tasked to check where all the computers and printers are on two of our departments. The departments moved to different floors and were told to just move themselves over and let everything else stay at their place.

Buuuuuuut as you can maybe guess, they cut the cable ties, unplugged computer/keyboard/mouse/phone and moved into their new floor. My boss was enraged, called the bosses of those departments and quoted the content of the email again followed by *is that so hard to understand? Now go and put everything back where you took it from, my men wont do that!!!*

This is when new intern was given the task to go and check. Each computer and printer has a sticker on them with a number. He was given a layout of the floors and which computer and printer needed to be in which room. He was not told to move necessary.

So far so good, he gets going and we go on with our usual daily routines. Suddenly the phone rings....

Players:

\$CIT - Dumbfounded me

\$TNI - The New Intern

\$Boss - Well my boss...

>\$CIT: Hello, you are speaking with \$CIT, how can I help you?

>\$TNI: Hey it's me, there is a printer and it doesn't have a sticker on it. How do I get the IP of it?

>\$CIT: Use the interface on it, it has to say "Network Settings" or so somewhere around those options. Just click your way through it.

>\$TNI: Nope, tried that already. The interface isn't doing anything.

>\$CIT: Did you turn it off and on again? *I hate to ask that*

>\$TNI: Tried that too, same result.

>\$CIT: Is the ethernet-cable plugged in?

>\$TNI: Yes.

>\$CIT: I will scan the subnet of the floor, screenshot the result of active devices and then you unplug it and we scan again.

Said and done, both scans show same result.

>\$CIT: Ok, I'm coming over.

I walk down 3 floors, through a long hallway and up 2 two floors to arrive at sight. \$TNI shows me the printer and I verify that it is really not doing a thing. I try the reboot too...nada. I start the computer that is in the same room as the printer to check if I can get something out of that with the COM-port that is for some reason still attached although it is on ethernet.

Note: Don't try to make sense of it, there is a bottomless list of things that shouldn't be there, but are there, because of frequent staff-changes and nobody knowing what the previous person did.

I try to log in to my account...nada. No connection to the domain. I check the cables, all plugged in. I log in as the local admin and check the network-settings....all good.

>\$CIT: Look, you stay here, I go back and check the patch panel and switches in our server room. *makes mental note of patch panel number I have to check*

2 floors down, long hallway, 3 floors up....

The server room is can only be accessed through the office of \$Boss. As I enter our department, I hear that all my coworkers are on the phone, which is odd. Usually quiet at our department. I walk in \$Boss' office, go to the server room and check the patch panel....all good. Checking all switches...all good.

University Helicopter Parent Season - u/TedTheViking

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ga5j6/>

remote troubleshooting?
>\$Boss: \$CIT, tell me what you did in the server room. We cannot connect to any of those devices on those two floors.
university_helldesk_helicopter_parent_season/

This just happened, and it happened before, and it will probably happen again.
>\$CIT: Um...I just checked the patch panels and switches. All goody, it seems.

explain to him to the rest of the story
Most of an abbreviated version of this story elsewhere and it was well received, so I decided I'd post it here as well.

>\$Boss: Gotta be something \$TNI did...*waves at the other ones to follow him*...
CIT caller

\$CIT, you stay here, we go check out what the issue is.
A few years ago, I worked at the IT helpdesk for a public university. We'd get a

basically flood of student \$TNI. Every fall, and many of them would inevitably need

>\$CIT: But how can he mess something up by just documenting things?
help with account creation, forgotten passwords, and the like. To us, the late

\$TNI and bad news were known as "Helicopter Parent Season" as we'd frequently get

>\$Boss (while walking out of the office): Don't know, but we will find out
calls from parents who were trying to micromanage every detail of their children's

life. \$TNI Unfortunately, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) has

rules against advanced meddling.

obtains id, verifies caller
While I wait for one of them to return, I get several more calls about them not

getting any network connection. Frustrated and angry callers. I just give them the

info that it is being worked on and hang up.
This particular story takes place in the dead of summer. I was sitting in a second-

hand \$TNI in the office chair with my painted legs full of cr. It showed and my youngling

Finally, one of them comes back, just shaking his head and reports to me that \$TNI

had just dealt with a call from an irritated parent, and was fantasizing

about unplugging some cables and supposedly plugging them right back in after he found

out where they lead. That wasn't a part of his given job. He managed to create a ring

between two switches that are on their floor, so the switches were playing an

awesome game of data-ping-pong.
The phone rang, making me wince. I turned the finger volume down before hitting

the mutton on my headset.
Just How? and Why? were the things I was wondering about...

>\$CIT: I'm not at my computer right now. Can I help you?

>\$M: Hello Dad (BD)**: Hi, I need to set up my son's account and register him for

classes, but I don't have the password any more.

\$TNI: DR: Intern is supposed to document which pc/printer is in which room of two

>\$C: Should I call back when I am at my computer?
departments. Manages to unplug cables for no good reason and create a ring while

>**Me***: I can help with a password reset, but I will need to speak with the

plugging it back in.
\$TNI: yes sir.

>\$C: OK, yes sir. I'm having trouble getting him to do it. Could you just help me

reset the password?

Yes, this intern is still around will be for about another half a year.

\$C hangs up

>**Me***: Unfortunately, I can't. FERPA prevents me from making account

Yes, he has done more things that made us facepalm.
\$TNI goes to get coffee and contemplates life.

>**BD***: But he wants me to do it.

>**Me***: I'm sorry sir, but I'll have to speak with him. What you're asking would

be illegal.

The Beta Site part 3 it /u/

I braced myself for an angry, self-righteous tirade.

gingebread - /u/CanadianAlbanian

> **BD**: Oh. Well. I guess he doesn't really want to go to college then. Maybe

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g7v6z/

he'll actually listen when I tell him next year.

the beta site part 2 then it must be/

Then he hung up. That was it. A parent respected the rules and didn't blame the

hell desk employee. I was flabbergasted.

It was in the help desk support site where I saw the link to the beta site (https://

important to read on a list of the support team's posts/6g7v6z/). I wanted to send the man flowers.

the beta site part 2/). My Colleague JarJar (named because he

has more than a passing resemblance to the Star Wars character of the same name)

My colleague said that the guys who work on the monitors were the ones who

checked the logs and was the one to head the beta site half of the office. The Golden

Archives place around the corner was open 24 hours, so that worked for us.

HarJar: When I typed he said he was working and the monitors just went black

all of a sudden. He said he had confirmed all the cables were plugged in and in the

right spot as well. He said he was watching the right but from the beta site. No other,

and told me plugging them into different ports on the PC. I thought wow I like this

kid; it sounds like he knows his troubleshooting. He said he thought the monitors

had a hard time checking the coding? or something.

SM: Yeah, that feeling. I asked him "Did the red any light on the power button on

the monitors?" He said "Why have you not checked anything on the screen". That was my first

red flag.....clearly they were getting power....

> JarJar: Central, North and West all went down at the same time. The servers are

working in the PCo.com response. I can't understand how re-routing traffic along

the fibre here, would stop connectivity at the other sites.

"Is your computer on?" I said.

common?

"Umm no....ok let me try turning it on....ah great now the monitors are working!"

At the same time we both say...

.....lol

> SAN

I go to the server cabinet, a small room in the basement with two racks and a

hideously over-rated air con unit. JarJar is making enquiries of his own and has

called the other IT member Basil (because he looks like TV character Basil Fawlty)

in to Central to see if he can make sense of what's happening there.

I bring up the server console and discover that the SAN has no config, no allocated

storage, nothing. My turn to swear. I call JarJar

>Me: Tell Basil to check the SAN config.

>JarJar: It's gone, hasn't it.

>Me: Yes.

The guys who set this network up in the first place (who left no documentation for anything) routed all data traffic through the Beta site. VPNs, Internet gateway, Mail, everything was in that cabinet. The blade chassis that everything was crammed into, was showing more lights than a proverbial christmas tree, and none of them were green. I did a mental calculation of everything on there and died a little inside. It was going to be a long day.

3AM. I'm sat in the Beta Site directors office with Jarjar and FinMan. The company can still produce, it can still schedule deliveries, but there is nothing else. We're discussing steps.

>FinMan: Root Cause?

>JarJar: The Blade Chassis had a brain fart. It has a major component failure that's taken it offline. The worst part of this is that the SAN has somehow also detected this failure and lost it's disks. It probably attempts to re-confirm its config from the domain controller in the blade chassis and was part-way through when the chassis went down.

>FinMan: And this affects North because...

>Me: The SAN at North replicates config and some data at around 9PM, so my guess is that it picked up the corrupted config and did the same. This was all set up way in advance of us starting here, so to get it working quickly I'd need to speak to the people who configured it in the first place.

>FinMan: Well, one of them is in prison, and you'd need a oujia board for the other. Do what you can, we need this data back as soon as possible.

5AM. I've managed to jury-rig an internet connection, find a config for the SAN here and edited it to suit our needs. It's applied to the SAN and the device is restarted. I start to rebuild the arrays from scratch but I can only allocate storage space. I persist the best I can.

11AM. All of the staff have been told of the issue and only essential staff are in. The drives have rebuilt, but the data is badly mangled or outright missing. The backup tapes are required.

Midnight. All Backups are restored. As the full backups run at 1AM, We're now down 1 days transactions, so I reach for the hourly incrementals.

6AM. Incrementals are on. I advise FinMan that staff can now start to come in but only from midday today. I go for buckets of coffee and breakfast.

8AM. JarJar has finished talking Basil through what I have done. He has reached the same stage as us, but is waiting for replication.

10:30AM. Supplier arrives on site and looks at the blade chassis. He verifies that it's one of the controller modules but has brought the wrong one because their admin transposed two numbers on the model.

1:30PM. Supplier arrives back on site with the correct component and replaces it.

3PM. Words cannot explain how tired I am. I've been drinking coffee like it was water and FinMan has been sending staff on coffee runs every hour for us. Both myself and JarJar have now been awake for over 2 whole days. The SAN is up and running without error. The Chassis is up, and I'm starting to bring up servers. Data at the Beta site is good, and a handfull of selected users are logging in and starting to work.

servers.

8Pm. The IIS, Proxy and print servers are now running so we have internet access. A lot of that I have had to configure from memory with JarJar's help. I now research how to program the SAN for successful replication.

10PM. Coffee is my friend. I love coffee. I want to make babies with coffee.... ok, maybe not, but I've had so much coffee that I'm starting to see in slow motion. Oh, I also have a working SAN data replication config. JarJar agrees that it's ok and that we have backups. I apply the config.

long.

8AM. Basil confirms that the data replication is good. He has full visibility at his end, and we have full visibility at our end. We end the call and find FinMan.

>JarJar: It's all working now. We may have some data loss, but nothing that we can't handle later.

>FinMan: Good work guys. I've instructed Payroll to pay you a little bonus for this. CEO is very happy that it's been handled so quickly. We've booked you into <posh hotel down the road that charges £350 a night> where you have an executive

room each. Today is Thursday, you check out tomorrow morning and I don't expect to see you until Monday Morning.

Power Button? - u/jrusnak

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8ezc/power_button/
On the way to the Hotel, I got a call from Basil.

>Me: What? I'm tired and grumpy and heading for a nice cosy bed.
\$JR = \$Jrusnak, your ever-optimistic university tech support employee

>Basil: Angry Lady dropped by. She wonders when you're going to bring back the only car she'll drive?
\$CU = \$Classic User, you'd be surprised just how many people make it to near-adulthood with negative to zero computer experience.

>Me: The BMW? FinMan said I'm not back until Monday. She can have it then.
This story about the importance of asking ALL the questions before diving in comes from my 1st tech support job as a student at a large university working student tech support. We provided on-site support to phone & laptop wielding college first-years to seniors and lived in the dorms with them (as we were all college students at the time). As we lived in the dorms with them, and people knew where we stayed, people just "dropped by" our dorm/office all the time.

Around 11pm/Midnight and a young woman knocks on my door with a panicked look and a Macbook in her hand. At this point I'm in my pajamas and half-asleep.. but there's no rest for the (1) Weary (2) Wicked ~or~ (3) On-site tech support so...

>\$JR: (in a sleep-haze) Good evening! Hi! Yes, what's up?
>\$CU: (in panic) Hey! My computer is frozen!

Now this is pretty common, we see students writing papers and not saving them until they're 6 hours in at which point their laptop crashes and they lose everything, I go into hero-mode

>\$JR: Oh! Oh no! Bring it in, let's see what we can do!

I set her laptop on my desk and begin going through basic troubleshooting with my extensive 2 months of experience

>\$JR: (Trying Cmd/Opt/Esc, checking key responsiveness, trying to move anything) Err.... It looks completely frozen...
>\$CU: Yes! I know! It's been like this for an hour!!
>\$JR: (Quickly realizing this is not a salvageable situation) Okay, well, it looks like it's crashed, and that's bad. Before I try restarting it, what data are you going to lose if we have to restart it?
>\$CU: (confused) Data... loss?
>\$JR: Ah, my bad, I mean like.. what were you doing before it crashed? How far were you into your paper? Were you working on a powerpoint? I see excel is open?
>\$CU: Oh, erm... well I was on the internet...

>\$JR: Okay! So you were researching, that's good, we might be able to recover your voice from your history and...
 Always ask 2 clarifying questions. - /u/Zestee911
 >\$CU: Oh, eh, no, no research, just browsing the internet. Like.. facebook and stuff.
 (Slightly annoyed to be confused) Oh! I see.. so.. you don't need anything saved?
 >\$CU: Saved?
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8xpe/>
 >\$JR: I mean have you tried to restart your computer?
 always ask 2 clarifying questions/
 >\$CU: Restart it? What do... how do you do that!?

*slowly realizing this is one of *those* customers*
 Hi Guys, been lurking for several months since I became IT Manager at a local, not-so-small warehouse. Finally have a good story for you, even if it was my own stupidity. This story took place late April of this year.
 \$JR: Well, you hold the power button down, and that turns it off.
 >\$CU: Power button? Where is that?
 (gentle smile, holding back the "you called me in the middle of the night for this" line of questioning)
 Get stopped in the parking lot Thursday at 5:01pm. One of the shipping guys says there is a loud beeping coming from the data cabinet mounted above his station. Said "I'll check it first thing in the A.M." and promptly forget about it.
 >\$JR: Right here, if you hold a power button down on most electronics they'll just turn off.
 Friday morning 7:55am, no sooner than my ass hit the chair, I get a call from the department lead asking when I'm going to come fix this issue, I can hear the beep faintly in the background during our conversation, it's constant, and unwavering. I know he won't let this go for long, so I drag my caffeine deprived behind out to the department. The noise is so high pitched that I can't exactly pinpoint the direction it's coming from. I ask the guys in the area, they SWEAR it is coming from the data cabinet mounted 30ish feet above our heads.
 >\$JR: Right, well, there you go.
 >\$CU: (Flabbergasted at the physical computer hardware interaction steps she's just learned) Thank you!

At this point, I now realize I should have asked 2 more questions, maybe even looked around the area. : But instead, I walked to the other side of the warehouse, jumped on the scissor lift and slowly made my way back to the beep. The guys are space.

After finagling this over-sized scissor lift through a door 6 inches taller than this lift at it's lowest, and then into the corner where the data cabinet was mounted, I raised up so that I can see inside the cabinet, then open the door. No sound escapes the cabinet, save for the quiet hum of a HP ProCurve switch. Thinking I might be losing my senses, I raise myself up to the top of the cabinet so I can put my ear close to the security alarm box that is mounted nearby. Nothing... Only now do I realize it's not coming from anywhere up here.

After a quietly berating myself for a quick second I drop down, and stick my head under his desk. There is a small package scale tucked way back in a corner with a fading blue light emitting a shrill tone. I hand him the scale, still beeping, and proceed to slowly drive my oversize lift out of their work area, and back to it's charging location so I can continue to look busy until lunch.

TL;DR: Switch cabinet beeping in warehouse, failed to consider alternative

options. Find package scale under desk with a dying battery...

My Dad's Fight Against the Log Files from Hell - /u/Poo-et

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g8pob/my_dads_fight_against_the_log_files_from_hell/

My dad recently got a 3 month secondment at his workplace to move to the safety analytics department at a major air traffic control company. The problem is that the department doesn't get access to any of the programs to actually test - all they get are the log files that the programs generate. Usually this isn't a problem, as some creative filtering later and only the useful information is left. This time, however, it was not to be.

In air traffic control, controllers have to manage airstrips and organise planes to avoid collisions. This is usually done by way of a touchscreen interface to improve workflow. The program the department would be analysing was responsible for managing this GUI. The only problem was that every single time the screen was touched, the program would dump EVERYTHING about the screen to the log file. We're talking fonts, styling, positions, the lot. Important information such as how result.

And these log files were MASSIVE. We're talking 200Mb of text. This would usually be a pain, but not quite a disaster. The only problem was that it was a CSV of XML files. Spreadsheets would choke on the 30kb XML values, text editors on the 200Mb of other worthless data, and XML editors would nope out at the sight of the CSV extension. Mind you, all this processing is being done on a farm of a couple hundred processors, interfaced with remote desktops to process the raw amount of data they are given. After a while spent wrangling unsuccessfully, he called it a morning and went to lunch, closing the remote session. After he returned, he tried again to reopen the session, but nothing happened. He phoned tech support, and while he was waiting he clicked the button to open the session a couple dozen times out of boredom and mild frustration. While he was on the phone trying to troubleshoot, his screen went blank. A few minutes of unsuccessful troubleshooting later though, and the image suddenly reappeared, now with login screen. Success!

He managed to get on to the server, and get back to log file wrangling, and the problem was solved.

Or so he thought. A few minutes later, his screen once again went blank. Thinking it would go away again and was a product of him doing something client sided, he left the computer to go make some tea. He returned to a login screen.

It turns out that EVERY SINGLE TIME he clicked the 'start session' button, the server would create a new session. The reason that the server would load was that it was trying to resume what he was working on previously - loading these evil log files into a text editor and CSV editor. So now, there were 30 sessions, all of which were in the process of loading a 200mb CSV, twice. And this server held the infrastructure for several other departments as well, so a total restart was not an option either if the company didn't want to lose hundreds of man-hours for no reason. So they had to wait it out, and close each session when they loaded.

contribute.
TL:DR Big server loaded a 200mb CSV into two different editors, on 30 different sessions, all at once.
This story is about a month old.

Context : I work in the IT service for a professional school (where you learn your "future" job, usually students are around 20yrs old). I do everything from a sheets).

At the time, I was editing things on the deployment server for this summer break where we are (IT team) deploying *Windows 10* on the PC's. I was trying to skip the PxE "Press F12 to enter PxE" part on remote because it's incredibly boring to press F12 or changes the BOIS setting on 400+ PC's. I thought, with my settings, only the IT PC's in <MY VLAN> will be affected, I was wrong...

Note that, at this point you steel need to go through several steps to complete an install.

Usually teachers are really clueless and call for nothing like "screen not working!!!" when the screen is just OFF or thing like that.

As I said, i change something in one server that every PC will now boot on PxE and ask for credentials (Admin domain) and, of course, a PC booted at that same time...

About an hour later, I got a call a teacher from a class that is far from my desk. \$Me as Batman and \$T as the teacher.

>\$ME: Hello, IT desk, it's \$Me, how can I help you today?

>\$T: Hi, it is \$T from class \$NbClass and I have a problem with the computer. It already took an hour to start it and I my students need to work!

>\$Me *internally*: an hour? What?

After some basics and useless troubleshooting I decided to go take a look.

As I walk in the classroom, my brain crash. **Windows 10?!?*

I immediately thought that this teacher got the credentials of the domain admin (Which will get him fired for using them and not reporting the problem) but the nice person I am simply asked what did he do:

>\$Me: What did you do when the PC started? Did you log in as usual?

>\$T: Yes, with <insert basic login for teachers here> and then it said "wait a moment" or something like that.

>\$Me *internally*: What? Did I accidentally disable admin only right for the PxE?

Well, I already reversed the modifications so it's fine.

>\$Me: But did the login screen looked a bit odd?

>\$T: Yeah, it was a low quality screen...

>\$Me (remember, we are in front of young people that are probably all better than him with computers): So usually you call because your screen is literally OFF but log in on a weird looking screen, go through several unknown step and wait an hour for calling us?

Soft laugh from the students

>\$T: Yeah... I'm sorry, but when will the PC usable?

>\$Me: Right now, it's already ready but you will have to deal with Windows 10

>\$T: Oh, ok fine, good day.

>\$Me: Good day.

About an hour later, my coworker come in (from a classroom with a problem) and it goes like:

>\$Cw: You remember the teacher that installed *Windows 10* this morning?

>\$Me: Yeah, why?

>\$Cw: He called because he need help understanding "the new PC" and when I notebook.*

>***Pull out a FREAKING SURFACE PRO WITH WINDOWS 10!!!**

Thanks but no thanks for helping -/u/beeradvocate12

We tried to get a phone system installed and everything went wrong. Later that day I reinstalled *Windows 7* for avoiding more problems (it was *my* fault on start

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g96t8/>
On boys, next year is going to be fun with *Windows 10*.
thanks_but_no_thanks_for_helping/

TL;DR: **Teacher** that usually call for little things reinstalled a PC (from W7 to W10) because **I** failed something and then, complain he don't understand the new one, pull out a **surface pro** with **Windows 10** on it.
This is a fun tale of a phone system install gone wrong. Let me give you a little back story. I run a small MSP handling IT for a vast range of industries. The company I'm going to be talking about is a doctors office that I have worked with off and on for 7 years. The reason I say off and on is because they fired me 7 months ago for no reason went to the biggest MSP in town realized it was costing them 4 times what I charged them and hired me back 3 months ago. During my absence they decided it was time replace their failing phone system and when I say they I mean one of the 3 docs that are partners in the practice. The above doc happens to also co-own a EMR company with his brother. Him and his brother are both from India and most of the EMR company is either based in India or from India (this has relevance to the story). So well I was gone the choice was made without talking to any other vendors that we are going to get a Sangoma Freepbx Phone System 60 and 35 Sangoma S500 phones. And when I started back with them I told them I deploy and managed Freepbx but not with those phones but I could help with minor things if needed. Lets fast forward to a month before we are suppose to go live on the system. The EMR company setting up this phone system for us is 5 hours away and person doing the config is refusing to come onsite for any of it and wants to do everything remotely. They shipped the system and all the phones to the doc office and I had to bring them all to my office so I could setup them all up on their new switches get them configured on the VLAN and let him start programming everything. I brought the phones back to the doc office a week and half prior to going live so he could get the PRI running and test everything. I forgot to add we told him 3 months prior and several times after that the exact config they wanted for the phone system. We went live on the phone system Monday and 80% of it wasn't working or was configured wrong. I went back and forth on the phone with him and get it to 50% working. Then spent the past 4 days trying to get things setup how they needed it and the more and more time I spend on this I see everything is getting lost in translation. For example we asked that the indicator light on the phones lights up red when the phone has a voicemail like the manual said it would. He took that as disable the indicator light completely. We also asked him to create buttons for parking spots when you park a call on each phone he completely ignored it. And here is the best part so we noticed yesterday when he started to create templates for the phone configs and in doing so removed the DND button from the phones he pushed that config to. I sent him an e-mail yesterday saying when you configure the rest of the phones with the template make sure DND doesn't get removed because that's going to cause problems. Then

yesterday afternoon they put a bunch of phones on DND because they were short staffed and wanted the queue of work cleared. I pushed the config to all the phones late last night and sent me e-mail and one of the items he said was don't

no other button is still there. I get a call this morning there is no DND button and no one can take their phones off DND so they only have 3 working phones to answer all their calls. That was 4 hours ago and he still can't get the button back and they still can't answer phone calls. There is a massive laundry list of issues going on with this system and I suggested to the office manager we bring one of my sub-contractors well versed in FreePBX. When we talked to doc leading this project he said I will make a phone call and take care of this. After I left he went upstairs well he had patients downstairs waiting for procedures and said I'm projects or need help from each other a lot of the time.

And when they said I was already working on those items and we had a massive list of issues I, myself, me.

he said throw away the list I don't care about the problems and I want you guys to tell me what you want. They have no idea what these phones can do or what to ask for. And there are still 20+ problems that haven't been resolved. I'm just waiting to see this whole system fail. Especially since the doc leading this phone system project is the one that decided to fire me with out asking for input from anyone else

and that when he re-hired almost fired me again because I raised my rate when I came back. In the 4 days they have been live they have gotten several complaints get out of doing any work and refused to document or plan anything. When he did do work, he'd do it on his own and keep everything to himself. He'd also deflect blame for any of the systems he maintains. In his infamous words "I can ping it, thus it isn't a network problem!".

We were at the tail end of a core switch/firewall/vpn replacement project. Our previous core switches in our two data centres (Primary and DR) both failed within weeks of each other, and a work around was put in place. They were end of life, had no warranty and weren't in a high availability setup.

We were trying to get the project wrapped up as it had been going on for more then 6 months, did I mention \$na was also slow to get things done? Anyway, we were at the point where \$na said that only the mail server and wireless were running through the old firewall.

>\$na: We need to move the mail server to the new firewall.

>\$man: So what else is still running on the old firewall?

>\$na: Just the mail server and the wireless. Everything else is on the new firewall.

>\$man: Ok, have \$me help you with the mail server.

>\$na: We'll have a planned outage tonight to get it moved over, it should not be down more then an hour.

\$man handing \$na a laptop

>\$man: Use this to test the wireless as well once its changed over.

>\$na: I'll do that after the mail server move.

Trusting \$na not to plan or document anything, I had a chat with him about what needed changing, how long, when and what I need to do. I then sent an email to \$na and \$man with those details, along with my own testing and any changes to other systems I maintain. With that we had a plan in place and steps to reference to ensure we were prepared.

I went home and VPN'd in (partially to test the VPN) while \$na stayed at the office. He gave me a call and we got started.

>\$na: So I'll be changing the settings on the firewall. Once done this should force the mail server to the new firewall and you can test.

>\$me: Ok I'm good to go, let me know when it's done so I can update our external DNS, filtering and other services.

I waited patiently and was told after a few minutes that it was done and to test. I did problems...

>\$me: My work PC lost internet (I was RDP'd into my workstation at the office)...

>\$na: Let me check something on the firewall

>\$me (investigating further): All of the servers have lost internet access as well

>\$na: Oh yeah I removed a lot of them from special internet access, tell me which ones need it and we can get them going.

I rattle off a long list of servers and he gets them sorted, everything else seems fine. \$na says he'll check some other stuff and finish up everything else and he should be fine without me. I hang up and logoff. Based on prior experiences though, I suspect issues with something in the morning.

I drive in to work, walk in and see the level 1 already on the phone. He puts it on hold and tells me that there are a lot of problems. I walk over to my computer, login and check my email for more details and find... \$na is sick and won't be in or reachable... FML.

I go through all the issues and likely causes, and then find what had happened. \$na had changed the core of routers out from the old firewall to the new firewall. Since the majority of our routing wasn't statically set in the routing table, this changed the routing for every network device from the old firewall to the new one. So his

comment about nothing running on the old one was an outright lie. \$man comes in so I tell him the news.

Background: I am \$IT for a non-IT company that provides information to the masses in my town, as the only IT person I end up being asked to help with many >\$me: Most things are offline but I'm fixing them as we speak. I've narrowed down the cause, \$na changed our core switch routing that was pointing to the old firewall to the new one, this changed all servers over.

Story:

\$user comes into our office

>\$man: So everything was still on the old firewall before?

>**\$user**· **\$IT** can you come help me?

>\$me: Yes. When it changed over, about 1/3 of the configuration wasn't copied from the old firewall to the new one, so most things broke.

>**\$IT**· Sure, **\$user**·, what's going on?

>\$man: *expletives* I asked \$na if anything was on there and he said only mail and wireless *more expletives* Well, I've gone up and down the elevator 3 times now and the doors won't open on the 2nd floor.

>\$me: I'll get to work fixing it, let me know if you find anymore systems not working and I'll take a look at them.

I follow her to the elevators, we get in while making idle chit-chat

Looking through the rules, policies, NAT and IPs setup on the new firewall, I found that \$na had only managed to replicate about 2/3's of them, thus leading to issues. Now some info here, our elevators have 2 sets of doors since the second floor is on one side (which you can see from the first floor because of building layout) and the entrance on the 1st floor is on the other. wireless had broken completely, there was no configuration on the new firewall.

When looking at the old firewall, I'd found that despite \$na's protesting about security (as a way to get out of implementing things), he'd allowed the guest SSID

full access to our internal network. I cringed and facepalmed my way through it and **\$user** presses the button for level 2, doors close in front of her, we stop at the second floor, still staring at those doors.

It took me most of the day to get mostly everything working. Some third party systems were delayed due to timezone and procedures on their side. Needless to everything.

>**\$IT**· **\$User**·, turn around!

TL;DR - Network admin made a little change overnight he said would only affect 2 **\$user** turns around to see the elevator doors behind her wide open onto the services, but took out everything and called in sick the next morning, leaving me to cleanup the mess.

>**\$user**·: oh...

This person was getting on the elevator and expecting the wrong doors to open up to a brick wall, never even thinking about orientation of the building.

I keep this story in mind with me now to remind me that ask even the most obvious questions to users you never know how intelligent they may be.

Your webmail got me fired - /u/ FlexMoneyBiceps

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fzgx7/your_webmail_got_me_fired/

\$FMB = \$FlexMoneyBiceps, this handsome hunk of flesh, not a robot, you can't prove it, and working L1 ISP support during this time

\$CC = \$CrazyCustomer, an ISP customer who doesn't understand how webmail, or craigslist, in the end, works

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So this is a story from when I used to work at \$RelativelyMediumSizedISP. \$RMSISP, like all ISPs stuck in the 90s, provided (and still provides, though I think they're trying to get away from that) email addresses for all of their customers, with webmail to come with it. I'm abbreviating the story a bit and cutting out the filler- it's been a while, and I can't exactly remember the exact words.

Phone rings.

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\$FMB: Hi, this is \$ISP tech support, how can I help you?

\$CC: You [fantastic people] got me [fantastically] fired! I can't even access my webmail, you [amazing people]! I just wanted you to move it from my home computer to my work computer!

\$FMB: I'm sorry to hear that- but it's webmail, you can access it from any computer just by going to (webmail address) and putting in your username and password.

\$CC: Yeah but it's on my [fantastic] work computer now! I want it on my home computer! You guys need to stop doing such a [swell] job and do your [goshdarn fantastic] job!

\$FMB: Is it not showing up in your webmail? Do you have a client that you have, that's set to POP3?

\$CC: I don't use a mail client or whatever! I just want my [goshdarn] email! And I

want you to pay my lost wages!

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Obviously, this isn't how webmail works. She doesn't want to hear it, though. I am curious at this point how the 'fired' bit is going to come in- I know it will somewhere along the line.

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\$FMB: Okay, I can definitely help you with accessing your webmail. Let's get a browser window open- whichever you prefer, IE, Firefox, Chrome... (I always listed these just in case they didn't know what a browser actually was.)

\$CC: No! Your tech came out here, moved my webmail from my home computer to my work computer, and then my job [fantastically] fired me for it! You need to send someone back out here to fix your [swell] job, you [fantastically amazing people]!

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Checking her records, she hadn't had a tech out since installation. What?

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\$FMB: Ma'am, we haven't sent anyone out to your location since you got your internet installed. Who did you have come out?

\$CC: One of your techs! I told you! I'm going to quit my service you [goshdarn swell...bags]! I demand you reimburse me!

\$FMB: Did you call in for tech support first? (She doesn't have any recent calls logged either.)

\$CC: No, [smart donkey], I went to craigslist and just had one of your internet people come out!

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what.

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\$FMB: ...Ma'am, let me get this straight. You went to Craigslist and hired someone to move your webmail, which is on our servers, from your home computer, to your work computer?

\$CC: Yes! How is that so hard to understand? I hired one of your internet people, and now my job has fired me because they said something about 'unauthorized access' and 'tampering with company equipment'! What did your [amazing, fun-loving] tech do?!

\$FMB: Ma'am, people you hire from Craigslist aren't associated with \$ISP. We don't do anything with Craigslist.

\$CC: It's on the internet! You're the internet company! I want you to come back out here, get my webmail off my old work computer, and I want you to pay me for the job you made me lose! Now!

\$FMB: ...I can help you with getting your webmail, ma'am, if you're willing to job.

\$CC: Then I don't want to talk to you, you [fun-loving amazing swell bag]! Get me your supervisor!

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So I escalated it up. While I had the lady on hold, and was explaining the situation to the L2 who had to deal with her, I legitimately had a hard time explaining it because I was laughing so hard. I loved these kinds of calls- we can't help you, we won't help you, you won't let us help you, and you're nuclear fire mad. It's the best. Then I got promoted a week later and my job ended up consisting almost entirely of these types of calls.

I reject your solution and substitute my own! - /u/PairOfParedPears

End of the story- she didn't let the L2 show her how to get into webmail, she threatened to sue about the reimbursement, and then she got stonewalled right to legal after making that threat. I don't think she called in ever again.

Hi, everyone! Although I don't actually work in IT, I do play tech support for my elderly relatives and now, for the first (and likely last) time, my roommate. A little background on her: she is a super sweet person who is very knowledgeable in her particular field of study, but fairly clueless about pretty much everything else (including computers). This exchange just happened earlier today.

Scene: We're both sitting at the dining room table; I'm eating my breakfast of waffles with peanut butter, and she's trying to bake muffins using a recipe she found online. All seems to be going well, until:

Roommate: Aaargh, my computer is being so slow! I can't even load the website!

Me: Huh, that's weird. Are you getting any sort of error message or anything? (I know I probably should have just left her to her own devices, but morbid curiosity got the better of me.)

Roommate: No...Well I did get a pop-up earlier that said "Your disc is almost full"

Me: Oh, that just means your hard drive is running out of space. You should be able to just delete some old files or transfer them to an external drive and your computer will be fine.

Roommate: No, I don't think that's it. I think I just have too many things open in [Browser]. I'm going to close some of these tabs and see if that helps.

Me: ...

Roommate: Hmm, it's still slow. I bet I have to restart my computer for the changes to take effect. I'm going to do that now.

Me: ...

Roommate: Aaaargh, why is the website still not loading right? It must be a problem with the internet.

Me : You know, when my grandma was having a similar issue, I found that

emptying the trash helped a lot.

(Side note: My grandmother had a love/hate relationship with the trash bin. Apparently she had no idea you had to empty it.)

"It's really hard to see in here because it's so dark." - /u/th3d3s

Roommate: Well, I just emptied it like a few months ago, but I guess I can try that.

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g4cq5/its_really_hard_to_see_in_here_because_its_so_dark/

Me: ...

Roommate: Oh, wow, it's fixed now! Hopefully that doesn't happen again.

So this is a little different because the person having troubles understanding technology was a tech with multiple years of hands-on/onsite experience. Granted,

Me: Emptying the trash was just a temporary fix. You're going to run out of space sooner or later, so I highly recommend you buy an external hard drive and transfer 90% of the hands-on was with residential grade equipment, e.g. routers, PCs, printers, etc, but that is no excuse for what happens...

We get an alert that one of our clients is completely offline. We used a tool called Roommate: No, I don't think it's an issue anymore. The error message went away. Kaseya at the time and it would send us an email and/or text message if a

production server was offline for 15 minutes. All the PCs and servers were screaming.)

showing offline so we were fairly confident it was an Internet outage. We called the ISP and they said that there were no outages in the area, but they could not see our cable modem online.

We decided to send an onsite tech. The tech was a noob when it came to servers, switchs, SANs, etc, but we were confident they could reboot a network device to get them back online. This particular client had a SAN, 3 Hosts, a few APC UPS's, network.

The onsite tech calls one of our escalation engineers after being onsite for 15 minutes without being able to pin-point the root cause. The escalation engineer starts with the basics:

-Escalation Engineer: '\$† ve you rebooted the cable modem yet?"

-Onsite Tech: "No, I can't seem to find it in this server room."

-Escalation Engineer: '\$ö¶ •, well it is here!" (Describes in very specific detail where the modem is located)

-Onsite Tech: "Well, now that I'm onsite, I'm getting reports from people here that they can't get to anything on the servers either."

-Escalation Engineer: '\$ô, Â ö¶ •. Then it has to be something else other than the cable modem. Do you see the network rack? Can you see if the switches are powered on? Better yet, do you hear any battery backups beeping?"

-Onsite.Tech: "Maybe, there's alot of beeping equipment in here."

An important lesson on password control systems

-Escalation Engineer: 'Sö|| perfect. Can you see if one of the batteries has a warning on it or?"

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g4hx8/>

-Onsite Tech: "Not really, it's really hard to see in here because it's so dark."

-Escalation Engineer: '%F†R Æ-v†B 7v—F6, —2 §W7B -ç6—FR F†R Fö÷'pay to the left."

[In a previous tale](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/69xy92/youre_very_clever_but_its_11_all_the_way_down/)

-Onsite Tech: "Yeah, I found the light switch, but it's not working either." We learned an important lesson on recursion. Today, we're going to learn about password

-Escalation Engineer: '\$•2 THERE POWER TO THE ROOM??????"

-Onsite Tech: "I don't know, I don't think so."

\$Me: Played by Jeff Goldblum from Jurassic Park

-Escalation Engineer: '\$ôÔdr E2B6Fb AFSD(AS*DFU H#IFGE*&

\$User: Played by Richard Attenborough from Jurassic Park

SGF#@*&BF @#*&B@##*F &#GH@* &FG@ G#*&@ -- GET SOMEONE TO CHECK THE CIRCUIT BREAKERS!!!"

\$SeniorTech: Played by Laura Dern in Jurassic Park

\$TheBoss: Played by Sam Neill from Jurassic park.

Network is back online 15 minutes later... The onsite tech was not fired for this adventure, but it's safe to say he didn't last very much longer.

\$ShittyMSP is where I work, and \$ShittyUrgentCareClinic is the customer.

Because I work nights and they're not open nights, this was the first call I've gotten for them.

> \$Me: Thank you for calling the \$ShittyUrgentCareClinic help desk, this is Jeff, how can I help you?

> \$User: Well, I just got back from vacation, and I think my password expired

Now, \$ShittyUrgentCareClinic has a tool they want us to use to determine 1) if we can do the thing, 2) if not, who do we tell to do the thing 3) how do to the thing and 4) how important is the thing. I would generally call this tool a huge pain in my ass because it relies on a series of drop down menus and you have to know if a particular application is listed under \$applications, \$citrix, \$enterpriseApplications, why.

> \$Me: Alright, let me just double check password reset policy... Right, yep, in order to reset your password I will need to verify your identity. To do that, per policy, I'll need to call the center and speak with someone there to confirm that you work at the center and are trying to reset your password

> \$User: But no one else is here.

> \$Me: Come again?

> \$User: Well, it's 6am here, and we open at 8am. I come in before everyone else and turn on the computers and log on past the encryption, then turn on the machines and run the calibration and self checks. No one else will be here for half an hour, atleast.

> \$Me: Oh... ok... Well, I can make the ticket and pend it for 30 minutes and call back, which I can use to verify you. If that works for you?

> \$User: Sure, that'll work.

So I make the ticket, pend it for 30 minutes, then call back.

> \$AnsweringMachine: Thank you for calling \$ShittyUrgentCareClinic of \$smallTownSouthCarolina. We're closed right now, if this is an emergency, you should have called 911 you idiot. We'll be open at 8am.

Hang up.

> \$Me: Hey, \$theBoss, do we have direct call numbers for the \$ShittyUrgentCareClinic centers?

> \$theBoss: No, why?

> \$Me: I need to call a center to verify a user and reset his password.

opens.

> \$Me: I already did. When we talked he said he needs his account unlocked so he can get the machines up and running.

> \$theBoss: Well, I guess they're going to be a bit late then, aren't they?

A bit later I get another call

> \$Me: Thank you for calling the \$ShittyUrgentCareClinic help desk, this is Jeff, how can I help you?

> \$theUser: Pretty sure we talked earlier about unlocking my account? There's some more staff here now, so you can verify my identity.

centers.

> \$theUser: Oh, the voicemail thing? Right.

> \$Me: Any chance you have a direct number for the center or could turn off long the answering machine long enough for me to call in?

> \$theUser: No... only the center director can turn it off, and it's the only number for the center. What are our other options?

> \$Me: Well, basically, I just have to pend this ticket out until the center opens

> \$theUser: Well shit. Good thing I called the other assistant director, they should be in in a few minutes.

> \$Me: OK, well, I'll keep an eye out for this ticket and call you as soon as you guys open.

And I do. I call in at 8:02 on the dot, with the server open, AD pulled up, his account already to go. By 8:05 I've verified his identity, got him on the phone, and hold.

> \$Me: Hey I changed this guy's password and he cannot get in. Deleted browsing history and restarted machine.

> \$TheBoss: Do you have the \$stupidPasswordTool?

> \$Me: The what?

> \$TheBoss: The \$stupidPasswordTool? You need it to reset passwords for \$shittyUrgentCareClinic, even if you change it in AD

> \$Me: OK... can you change the password for me?

> \$TheBoss: Sorry, no. \$shittyUrgentCareClinic wants to control how many people have the \$stupidPasswordTool, so I don't. There's a list, hold on, I'll send it to you.

By the time I get the list (and see that they're a random combination of L1s and L2s and a good chunk of the names on it are not current employees) I realize oh right, Mondays! Everyone is on the phone and there are five or six calls waiting.

I ended up getting that guy's password reset by halfway ordering \$SeniorTech to do it. It took two and a half hours and four calls, but I did it.

Caller didn't even go to university that we support... - /u/SirHobbes3

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g41f5/caller_didnt_even_go_to_university_that_we_support/

Soo, I work for computer support at a mid-sized state university. We support the residence halls on campus as well as some of the staff members who work in them. We also offer support to students who reside on campus as well as offering some minor assistance related to university account issues with off-campus students (but often times we end up sending them to the people who actually maintain that stuff as we are very limited with what we can do with a student's account)

Anyway, this tale happened today while we were doing nothing (which is common during the summer for... obvious reasons). The phone starts ringing and so I get up and go answer it. I noticed that it was a 919 area code (which includes Chapel Hills, NC but more on that later) but whatever. So I pick up the phone and greet the caller and they say that they're having issues connecting their AppleTV to the internet. Ok, no problem, they should be using ethernet since the WiFi here is WPA-Enterprise. So I try to ask the guy how he's attempting to connect to the internet and things immediately get worse from here. He tells me that he has the HDMI cable plugged in and that his TV is on and then proceeds to start ranting about how he cannot finish setting up the ATV because he cannot get to the menu to find the MAC address because he cannot complete the setup. This leads me to ask him what part of the setup process he is getting stuck on which causes him to get even more frustrated and give me even more vague information that doesn't allow me to help him at all. So after I tell him to set it up manually instead of using his iPhone (which was where it was hanging because, of course, the ATVs don't support WPA-Enterprise) he just told me that he was going to put his "girlfriend" on and have her explain it to me better. Ironically, she did not explain anything better. I eventually got around to asking what building they were in (which I should have verified to begin with) so that we could simply come look at it ourselves and this is where it gets good. She tells me that they are in Chapel Hill and that they live in an apartment and this is where I stop and inform her that since she does not live on campus and that it is not a network that we support that I am unable to help her. She call.

I was later informed by one of the guys who has worked here for a few years that they've gotten quite a few calls like that because our tutorial page regarding the issue shows up at the top of Google for whatever reason and people simply call the number without thinking about that the page pertains to a UNIVERSITY and that we don't offer full fledged computer support. And my boss also told me that the

page in particular gets like 3,000 hits a day (which is definitely more than all our
other pages on our site combined) so yeah in our tech support

Something's worng with my smartphone - / u/AbuDun91919

[https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g0ymg/
somethings_worng_with_my_smartphone/](https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g0ymg/somethings_worng_with_my_smartphone/)

Hi TFTS, LTL, FTP, yadda yadda.

I'm not working in tech support, but I still wanted to share this fun little story about my Grandmother, I hope it is appreciated!

Some years ago my Grandmother, 72 at this time, got her first smartphone, before that she had one of those senior phones.

Me, my father and some cousins worked togehter in explaining her how everything worked, and she pretty much got it after one hour or so. She could even answer to whatsApp messages, take pictures and look up the weather on the internet.

When the whole familiy came together for some birthday, she told me to "Fix her phone, the battery is running low pretty fast!"
I deactivated WiFi (didn't have one), Bluetooth and GPS and removed some unused programs (no clue how they got on the phone)

After about one week I got a call from her.

>"Hello AbuDun, you didn't fix my phone at all, the battery is low again!"

I thought some time what the problem could be, the phone was still pretty new at that time, until it dawned on me.

>"Grandma, how long doeas your battery actually last?"
already!!!"

>" " sibling printer skills - /u/my_fav_slav

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6g0h72/sibling_printer_skills/
Apparently her previous phone had to be charged only every three weeks...

I told her that was actually very long for a smartphone, thankfully she accepted it without further explanation.
Long time lurker, first time poster.

Some background info:

This story happened when i was around 17, and my sister was 15.

I'm partially responsible that everything network related at home works at this age, so when anything breaks or doesn't work correctly they come and find me wherever i may be hiding.

at the time i had myself installed in my room with my pc and tv to keep me entertained, while the family computer was at ground level, and was the only computer at home with a printer.

I arrived home one sunny day, when i noticed my sister at the family desktop, preparing to print a boatload of papers, after a few quick questions why she was gonna go print the entire book collection of any writer ever, she explained that she was printing some big project for school that she had to deliver the next day. The printer however, was an old piece of junk, that refused to work anything it smelled any form of stress, so after a few minutes of going to town on the powercord it decided it was tired of this game of disconnecting and reconnecting, and actually do it's job, my sister happy to continue her bussiness, i went upstairs to my room to surf on youtube a bit.

not even 10 minutes later, i suddenly here the hall door SMASH open, sister stopping at the bottom of the stairs, while screaming her lungs out
> \$me COME-QUICKLY-I-NEED-HELP-PLZPLZPLZPLZ

After shouting that for everybody in a kilometer radius to hear, she bolts back to wherever she came from.

Me thinking something caught fire or exploded, I bolt down the stairs prepared for a tornado to have formed in a room. When i arrived she was sitting at the family computer, feeding the printer papers one by one, crying out of pure panic, shouting at me
PRINTING

She was sitting there in pure panic, feeding this printer papers one by one, becuz if you placed more than 1 paper in the tray it would just eat them all at once and just

ruin 5 papers, while the black ink was just leaving spots every so often.

The Inheritance - The Beta Site Part 2 - /u/gingerhousecat

Something happened and the printer is casually feeding this printer paper after paper, and when she noticed it was running out of ink, she timed feeding it a paper, <https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6f2h3o/> bolting to the stairs to shout at me for help, then bolt back to feed it another paper the inheritance the beta site part 2/ in time so it wouldn't stop printing.

Following [Part One](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fsjw7/the_inheritance_the_beta_site_part_1/) I checked out of the hotel after a decent breakfast because expenses. Three espressos and a large latte to go, and I headed to the Beta Site. Waiting for me was the Finance Manager (FinMan). After 10 minutes i finally gathered enough air in my lungs to tell her to stop inserting papers, to which she, still panicking, answered
>FinMan: Report!
> BUT THEN IT STOPS PRINTING

FinMan took a bit of getting used to. He was ex military - proudly telling us he was in Second Battalion Parachute Regiment (2Para for all those UK Military people). He was also the largest nerd around, and sort of looked like Sir Patrick Stewart, so pretended to be Captain Picard from that Star Trek show because all of IT are geeks.
It has been a few years now, still comedy gold.

>Me: Network's slow.

He smiled, which meant that I'd seen through that tough exterior of his, and found the soft centre inside.

>Me: Whoever set up the network, decided that they wanted to save money. Instead of running a fibre between both ends of the building, they simply daisy-chained switches to work as repeaters, boosting the length. Unfortunately, as more taxed.

>FinMan: Is that all?

>Me: Not exactly. To overcome that, they installed a domain controller in the warehouse cabinet. It makes it a bit quicker, but replication down the dodgy link is killing it even more. To further compound matters, the cable runs are five percent longer than recommended maximum. This is causing packet drops along the route.

>FinMan: What's your recommendation?

>Me: Put a fibre in between the two switches. You'll need 2 modules to connect each switch but the performance will pick up. I've costed it for you.

>FinMan: Ok. Send it to me and I'll consider it. I believe that you'll be wanting to

get back now.

So I drove back to Central.

2 Weeks Later...

Fibre is in and tested. I've programmed the two modules and ensured that I have spares, and even saved a config for both switches. I've been told that I can't do this during office hours, so again I book out the BMW (just to spite the Angry Lady) and head there after work.

Warehouse Switch. Module installed, fibre connected, config loaded and saved.

Sales switch. Module installed, fibre connected, config loaded and saved.

Back to warehouse, test, and fantastic speeds obtained.

Back to Sales, test and ... Nothing.

Reboot the switch and reload the config. Still nothing. I cannot ping the gateway, I cannot get any network resource, nor can I access the internet. I can however, ping the warehouse switch and the warehouse server and the machines down there. A barely audible WTF escapes my lips.

Switch config is loaded on my laptop, and there's absolutely nothing wrong with it at all. Comparing it with the previous version, there are no gateway or routing changes that would cause this error. I walk to the vending machine for a coffee flavoured drink that barely has any caffeine in it. As I do, my phone rings.

>FinMan: I can't get remote access, are you still tinkering?

>Me: No. We have a fault here. Something bad's happened.

>FinMan: Define Bad for me in this context?

Server.

FinMan utters an expletive.

>Me: I already said that. I'm working on it though.

After I disconnect the call and drink the foul beverage that is supposed to be coffee, the phone rings again. It's my colleague back at Central

>Colleague: What did you do?

I have a computer forensics degree! - /u/

>Me: Why?

fruit-support

>Colleague: We've lost the entire network at Central, North and West.
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fykdb/>

i_have_a_computer_forensics_degree/
Part 3 coming soon...

Long time lurker, first time poster

Today I have a story from my new tech support job. I support certain phones and this companies account system.

This call started out like about 80% of my calls do. They forgot (or ass the customers say "<company> forgot my password!") their password.

Alot of the conversation has been censored to protect the identity of me, the customer and the company. Profanity was also removed per mods request.

\$cx = Customer

\$me = Me - The poor tech support adviser

\$me: Thank you for contacting <company> my name is \$me! Can I start off with getting a good callback number for you? Just in case we get disconnected.

\$cx: Oh, we best not get disconnected. I've been on hold for over ten minutes!

\$me: I will do my best, \$cx. But I do need that number to continue.

\$cx: ###-###-####

\$me: Thank you and is blah@blahblah.com a good email for you still?

\$cx: How in the world do you have my email already?

\$me: Well it looks like you have called in # times in the last few months about various issues.

\$cx: And you keep this information?

\$me: Yes. We keep the information to better assist you.

\$cx: Okay. Well after this call we will need to work on deleting all of that information. Thank you.

\$me: Okay. What seems to be the problem today, \$cx?

\$cx: Well I have quite a few issues today. I have been on hold for an ungodly amount of time and I dont understand how a company as big as <company> can have such long hold times!

\$me: Well a company as big as <company> is bound to have a lot of customers. If you would like, I can give you a link you can use to submit feedback. We would really appreciate it.

\$cx: No. I just need back into my account.

\$me: I can definitely help you out with that! What seems to be the issue today?

\$cx: well I recently reset my password and <company> seems to have forgotten it! How does that even happen?

\$me: Is the sign in page telling you that the password is incorrect?

\$cx: Were you not listening to me?

\$me: I was. I did not hear you give this information. I am very sorry if I missed it.

\$cx: Jesus Christ. Yes. It is saying that the password is incorrect. I am POSITIVE I am entering the correct password.

\$me: Okay. Well we can go ahead and reset the password, and I can assist in resetting the password if you'd like?

\$cx: I just reset it dude

\$me: And we are going to need to reset it again.

\$cx: You cant just... give me the password you have on file? Because its not my fault you guys forgot MY password.

\$me: No. No one at <company> has access to passwords.

\$cx: This is way to difficult. I have a computer forensics degree and I cant even figure out how to work this thing.

I'd just like to pause right here. The company I work for makes possibly one of the easiest phones to use. It is in no way difficult to use these phones.

though.

\$cx: I shouldn't need help with a password reset!

\$me: Okay. Would you like me to stick around in case you have any questions?

\$cx: No! Guide me! I am just saying this shouldn't be needed!

\$me: Okay. I need to take a quick look at the account to ensure I take you to the right place. Can i please have your <accountID>?

\$cx: Well if I could remember that darn thing I would!

\$me: How are you signing in, then?

\$cx: I am just putting random emails in.

\$me: Sir, do you have access to a computer?

\$cx: Yessssss..... why?

\$me: it would be a lot easier to do this on a computer. Can you jump on that computer and open up a web browser?

\$cx: A web browser? You mean pull up the internet?

\$me: *Thinking to myself "You just said you had a computer forensics degree..."* Yes, \$cx.

\$cx: Okay. Where do I go?

\$me: okay go to <accountPage>.<company>.com

\$cx: *talking out loud to himself* <accountPage>@<company>.com

<accountPage>.<company>.com

\$cx: Right. It says its not loading

At This point I decided I didn't want to deal with this. So I decided to try to get the customer set up with screen share.

\$me: Okay, \$cx. I have a tool here that will allow me to see your screen. This way i okay?

\$cx: WHAT ARE YOU? THE DARN NSA NOW? I DONT NEED YOU TO VPN INTO MY COMPUTER TO TELL ME HOW TO GO TO <accountPage>@<company>.com! I KNOW EXACTLY HOW THIS WORKS. YOU GIVE ME A LINK TO DOWNLOAD A VPN THAT YOU THEN USE TO TAKE CONTROL OF MY KEYBOARD AND MOUSE. THEN YOU DEMAND MONEY FROM ME SO I CAN HAVE ACCESS TO MY COMPUTER AGAIN! NO. NOT TODAY, KID.

\$me: Sir. Thats the problem. It's not <accountPage>@<company>.com. Its <accountPage> DOT, PERIOD, POINT <company>.com And I can assure you, We are only able to view your screen and point to where we need you to click.

\$cx: I KNOW HOW TO TYPE A LINK. AND YOU'RE WRONG. ITS <accountPage>@<company>.com AND YOUR DARN SERVER IS DOWN BECAUSE IT SAYS "HMMMM, we cannot find that website" AND DONT YOU DARE TELL ME HOW A VPN WORKS. THE VPN WILL ALLOW YOU TO TAKE CONTROL OF MY KEYBOARD AND MOUSE! I HAVE A DEGREE IN COMPUTER FORENSICS! I GAREN-GOD-DARN-TEE I KNOW A BIT MORE ABOUT COMPUTERS THAN YOU. IM NO IDIOT

Right. It sure sound like it. You contacted me for help with your computer...

\$me: Okay sir. Let me know when you are ready for directions.

At this time I hear \$cx typing away and every once in a while I hear "Darn it" In a very strained sounding voice. After about 2 minutes of this...

\$cx: YOUR DARN SERVER IS DOWN! <accountPage>@<company>.com IS NOT RESPONDING!

\$me: That is probably because <accountPage>@<company>.com is not a proper URL. But <accountPage>.<company>.com is a proper URL

\$cx: YOU JUST THINK I AM ANOTHER ONE OF THE IDIOTS YOU TALK TO EVERY DAY DONT YOU? WHATEVER. JUST TO *tickle your fancy* I WILL DO <accountPage>.<company>.com

First of all... who even says "Tickle your fancy"?
at this point I hear ***VERY*** slow typing.

Then I hear the line go quiet. \$cx muted himself for about 5 seconds. I assume he face palmed and yelled some profanities at himself

Not sure if user is idiot or visionary. - /u/

rykker
\$me: Did that work for you?

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6ftb61/>

\$cx: yes. What now, \$me?
not_sure_if_user_is_idiot_or_visionary/

\$me: Huh, I guess the server really isnt down. Weird. Anyway! go ahead and click
on Forgot.....
Cast

\$me: rykker

TL;DR: Man claims he has a computer forensics degree multiple times. Goes on to
tell me a VPN would grant me access to his keyboard and mouse and take over his
program.

computer. And then proceeds to try to enter an email as a URL and tell me I am
wrong when I tell him that it isnt a URL. He finally tries a proper URL and calms

his shit.
So this happened many many years ago back when people were starting to float and
fly above their cubicles to the tune of Madonna's "Ray of Light", but the details are
pretty hazy... this was during a computer lab at school and I was asked by the
instructor to help out fellow students in the lab. I don't remember what the lab
assignment was, I just remember I was busy helping out my fellow classmates
when \$savant approaches me.

\$savant: How do I copy something off the document and paste it into another?

\$me: Just select the text you want, Press CTRL+C to copy, and then CTRL+V
to paste.

\$savant: Ok.

Shuffles away. Shuffles back.

\$savant: It doesn't work.

\$me: Did you highlight all the text you wanted to copy and press CTRL+C?

\$savant: Yes.

\$me (distracted helping other students): Well maybe the keys are broken, try
swapping out a different keyboard...

Where are a few white ink tags on the system - /u/

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fyh9e/>

Player 1: A new kid in town, my station Broa Yostage p brother, I get a call to computers the first to game.

The machine drinks none of Jagan's milk, takes a good attitude when I turn and help him, my computer works and he gives me a little for his own repairs. Guy says that it's overheating so I take it

back and open the case and it's what I've seen hundreds of times before. It's a case full of dust and dirt, this is no big deal and something that wouldn't take long. I have it at the front desk when I start to feel something tickling my arm.... my hand.

➤ Me: "Okay, what's the problem?"

my computer. I myself don't like ants so the teenage girl cashier had to deal with the high customer while the grown woman waited in the bathroom washing his hands.

****\$me**.** (*Half-stunned between wondering how in the world he thought that that He gives me this blank look... would work... did he think his fingers were a storage medium? That the other

>Me: "What color is the font on the website?"
Um, that's not how that works...

≥Me: "What color is the page in Word?"

>Me: "Probably. Go back to Word, hit ctrl+a and then change the font to black."

This of course worked like magic and all of the words appeared in a flash.

>Bro: "Sweet."

>Me: "You're welcome."

Please contact your IT Administrator - /u/
T/L: Sometimes the obvious escapes us. There is no such thing as white ink and
GalebDK which doesn't show up on white.

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fv2t8/>

Edit: Some people are telling me that on the big professional printers, there is white
please_contact_your_it_administrator/
ink available. This is complete news to me. But I'm talking about a small desktop
printer and in that case - there is no such thing as white ink.

Hey everyone, this is my first post, been a lurker/commentator? for awhile though.
Just got off this call and I really want to share it.

When a user calls in, our ticket system pulls in their information so we can see their
full name, line of business, email, username, ect. We can also see if they are an
associate or if they are a contractor, agent, ect.

\$Me - Guy that works as level 1 tech support at big insurance company help desk.

\$SoftDevGal - Software developer gal that can't put 2 and 2 together.

software

\$DBApp - App used by software devs to access databases

>*\$Me:* Thank you for calling the IT Helpdesk, this is \$Me, who am I speaking
with today?

VPN

>*\$Me:* Ok, whats the error its giving you?

>*\$SoftDevGal:* Please contact your IT administrator...

Really...

>*\$Me:* Ok, whats the rest of the error say?

>*\$SoftDevGal:* Well the full error says 'Error: Please contact your IT
administrator. You do not have permission to login to VPN'.

>*\$Me:* Okay, have you ever used VPN before?

>*\$SoftDevGal:* No.

Check users permissions in AD - No permissions to use VPN

> **\$Me:** Ok, it looks like you don't have permission to use the VPN client, you'll need submit a request through \$SoftRequestApp to get access, but since you're a contractor you wont have permission to do that so you'll need to have your manager do that for you and it can take 1-3 business days to be completed.

> **\$SoftDevGal:** Ok, I can do that.

Here is where I start closing out the ticket and do my closing stuff lines when...

> **Me:** Is there anything else I can help you with today?

> **SoftDevGal:** Uh yes! I am having problems with \$DBApp

Ugh... Really lady?

> **Me:** Ok, what error are you getting with \$DBApp?

> **SoftDevGal:** Well I am trying to login and it says the domain cant be found.

Face = Desk

> **Me:** Well thats because it cant find the domain. You're not connected the VPN which you need to be on the network.

> **SoftDevGal:** Oh..

Duh!

> **Me:** Is there anything else I can help you with?

access.

Wtf lady? No, you're done. Cut off.

> **SoftDevGal:** My coworker says since I have the VPN client I should be fine.

> **Me:** Yes you have the client but you don't permissions to use the application. You need to speak with your manager to request access so that you can sign into it and connect to the network. Is there anything else technical I can help you with?

> **SoftDevGal:** Umm..

> **Me:** Ok then I am going to send you an email with your ticket numbers and

transfer you to our after call survey and you have a great day.*~click~*
"No ma'am, VPN's are not magic..." - /u/
UGHH
RobZilla10001

[https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fthnd/
no_maam_vpns_are_not_magic/](https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fthnd/no_maam_vpns_are_not_magic/)
EDIT: Formatting

Backstory on me: I work Deskside Support, contracted by a company that is big in Europe (or so I hear) but has a pretty small footprint in the U.S. My team consists of only 6 people nationwide (as far as DSS goes) and I am one of only 2 that are actually on site (the third uses a citrix receiver to remote into the network). My office is located in a call center. We are contracted to a company that provides a specific, non-tech related service.

Rule 8: Nothing is, has never been, or will ever be "user proof."

Ticket arrives, "User Cannot Connect to VPN at home". Damn helpdesk. I've been going through my queue and renaming tickets every morning so they actually make sense. I don't care where the VPN isn't working, as long as they're not stupid enough to say "it's not working in the office, hmmm, better send it up". Rename to "VPN - Can't Connect". Search the ticket for helpful information, "user states they installed certificates". Rule 0: Users lie. Call the user, she's about as helpful as the ticket. Remote in, check her certificates, she has 1 of 2 root certificates and no personal certificate. Oy. Making a mental note to fire off a nastygram to the helpdesk supervisor, I install all pertinent certificates. Ask the user if she remembers the message, queue poorly paraphrased, vague error message (thank you Cisco AnyConnect, for providing 0 troubleshooting help in your error messages!). Advise user to try the laptop tonight and CB tomorrow, disconnect, notate ticket.

The following day I hear nothing from the user. Call her back the next day (+2 days from the original call, for those keeping track), and the user sends me to voicemail. Leave our canned voicemail message, go about my business. Several hours later, I receive an incoming call. Lo and behold! She hath responded!

>\$RZ - Me, obvs.

>\$Ditz - User

>

>\$RZ - \$Company Deskside Support, this is \$RZ speaking, how may I help you?

>\$Ditz - It didn't work.

>\$RZ - I'm sorry, to whom am I speaking? And do you have a ticket number?

>\$Ditz - *gives name, rattles off ticket number* It still doesn't work. I still can't work from home.

>\$RZ - Give me one moment to bring up your ticket. *load ticket, mentally reevaluate work done from notes* Hmm. So what error message did it give you?

>\$Ditz - *same poorly paraphrased, vague error message*

>\$RZ - Interesting. *remotes to the user* Can you show me the exact steps you use when connecting to VPN and attempting to company resources.

>\$Ditz - *queue user jumping straight into the program*

>\$RZ - \$Ditz, you're not launching the VPN?

>\$Ditz - What do you mean?

>\$RZ - Don't you launch Cisco AnyConnect prior to using these programs?

>\$Ditz -no?

>\$RZ - Ok, well there's the beginning of your issues. Cisco AnyConnect is the VPN program. If you don't launch it and connect first, then you're not connected to the corporate network, and won't be able to connect to corporate resources.

>\$Ditz -oh.

>\$RZ - So give that a shot and give me a call back tomorrow. If it doesn't work, take a screenshot so we can see the exact error message.

Notate ticket.

Once again 2 day turnaround, weekend in between. Monday morning, I call the user back. This time she answers.

>\$RZ - This is \$RZ with \$Company Deskside Support, can I speak with \$Ditz

>\$Ditz - Yeah, it's still not working.

>\$RZ - Were you able to to get a screenshot of the error?

>\$Ditz - No. I forgot.

>\$RZ - Hmmm. Do you mind if I remote in again, just to doublecheck that the VPN profile is loaded correctly?

>\$Ditz - Sure.

At this point, I'm unable to connect. The user says the wifi isn't connecting (alarm bell 1) and asks if I need her to plug into the LAN. I advise her to do so. She takes some time to do this, and her computer locks while she's goofing off

>\$Ditz - It locked. Let me log in. *attempts to login* It says something about trust/relationship and won't let me login.

Alarm Bell 2, the sysadmins have a list of computers that don't have the SMB patch yet and have begun kicking them off the network. This must be the issue

>\$RZ - Unplug the LAN cable, login and then replace the LAN cable. I believe you may not be at patch level. Let me know once you're logged in and I'll remote in and check. If that's the case, we can get you patched and back on the domain shortly.

>\$Ditz - Ok. *logs in, allows me to connect*

Connected, open elevated command prompt, run command:

-F—6Ò ööæÆ-æR övWB× 6¶ vW2 Â `indstr KB4012212

nothing found. Guess who needs patched?

>\$RZ - Alright, so we'll get this patch installed, put you back on the domain, force McAfee to update, and then you should be AOK.

go through the motions, push out the patch, login as local admin, remove from and readd to domain, reboot, push the script that tells mcafee to update, reboot again, again.

>\$RZ - Ok so now that all of that is taken care of, take the machine home tonight and try to connect to the VPN. Give me a call back tomorrow and let me know how it goes.

>\$Ditz - Sure.

*call the user back the next day, get through, ask her if she was able to connect, still no, ask her if she got a screenshot, still no. Ask user if she can callback when she's

home, she agrees. Queue a week-long game of phone tag where she didn't
First the global u/minisortaken
Finally, she gets permission from her manager to come in late one day so we can work this out.*
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fwpgw/rshasolchrsnca/>

>*queue receiving call, bringing up ticket, etc.*

On the way to 'long this hunk, first the poster' prefaced. certainly was not. On mobile
>\$Ditz - I'm getting the same error.
blah blah.

Everybody in the tech support industry has had that call that was much more simple
>\$RZ - Can you read the error off to me exactly?
I wanted to explain it to a small business. I did sales and phone support as a

high schooler while I had a job. A small MSP said MSP had a small client (8
>\$Ditz - *still paraphrased, vague message indicating no network connection.*
or so employees, maybe 4 office users) with a handful of computers for accounting,

I had a high end email. Simple stuff. However they did have an application that
>\$RZ - *queue bells, chimes, alarms, flashing lights, rockets firing, etc.* \$Ditz, are
utilized a server, so they had a small server rack. On my first week on the job we
you connected to the internet? To your wifi I mean?

received the call, the internet was down. Another, some guy said they're having too much
from our connection. I said to the software, it's very timely they're doing this on

>\$Ditz - No, I'm trying to connect to the VPN.
with a user login, inputting and performing all the standard checks on IP on the correct
subnet? Check. Computers rebooted? sure, why not. Ping the everything? nope.

>\$RZ - *facepalm* You still have to be connected to the internet...
Nothing was designed to not connect to the server, the NAS, switches, router,

everything was down. Now their server was in the open lunch room in the shop
>\$Ditz - What? Nobody told me I have to be connected to the internet before the
where it was. I had a heavy machine to connect to the internet. I had a machine to a
VPN. So do I disconnect the internet once the VPN connects?

trunk) via fibre link, and I was informed to look for chewed fibre as they had a rat
problem. However, the fibre itself was intact. When I got the server rack, I didn't

>\$RZ -
find anything, and that was the issue. No fans, no lights, nothing. The whole
thing was deadlier than a really dead thing. Even the UPS was dead (and no, I have
*proceed to explain to user how a VPN works, and that an internet connection is
she is trying to get the error on a machine. It would appear that the server rack
still required

the user was put in a locked room. They had a Jack Bauer lock, which apparently
the body of the server rack on to the key. So after disassembling the side of the

>\$RZ - So if you wouldn't mind, could you please connect to your wifi?
rack to get in, I found that all the wires were connected correctly. Everything was

Guiding is a tough job. Strong problems may have been less painful than the journey
>\$Ditz - Sure, *connects to wifi, walk her through connecting to VPN, logs in
to get \$Bambi that auth key. Getting her, first off, to not use Internet Explorer was a
successfully, brings up corporate customer database, loads fine* Thanks. *CLICK*.
Whole story in the part where the server rack was in a lunchroom? It was also

their break room where they had a reversible foosball/pool table. Well, somebody
Tl;dr: User lacks understanding of how a VPN works, complains that it doesn't. I
had a machine that was a good idea to add up the area it had a partish that I had
correct her errant behavior that is preventing a VPN connection, user hangs up as
soon as she gets satisfaction.

object, I guess, was that server rack. The table mangled the [power cord](<http://imgur.com/a/uVgoy>) and killed the server rack. And that, fellow TFTSers, is the
Warp of the Key is Home straight. Input your \$partner login details and we're there.

ELDR Internet login details or key server rack power cable being rekt.

EMET: The title should have been sure First Solo On-Site login details?

All my friends, now eating their lunch, burst out laughing.

I hate this job.

"Get that antique off the road!" - /u/

\$Bambi, who has been pretty passive, is certain they're the correct details.

vbguy77

I tell her I will call her back after speaking to the dev. Shouldn't of bothered. I am reminded by said dev, very very patronisingly, that it's never anything other than get that antique off the road user error.

When I call back, before I can say anything:

Summer sessions have started at \$univ, so things are at a bit of a slower pace in tier 1 support. No complaints from anyone in here about that.

\$Bambi: Oooh don't worry I figured it out.

\$Me: ... did you?

My afternoon ~~Reddit browsing~~ ticket review was interrupted by a call from

\$Bambi: yeh it was the wrong password.

\$Nice professor (\$NP).

\$Me: ...

\$Bambi: but thank you for all your help, you gave me some good tips and calmed

>\$me: How can I help you?

me down.

\$NP: My computer isn't letting me connect to \$eduwireless. I keep putting in my password and it isn't taking it.

\$Me: ... you're welcome. Glad to hear that we could get it working for you today. I am sure I will speak with again soon \$Bambi.

\$me: Hmm. Are you on a Mac or PC?

\$NP: It's a Macbook.

\$me: Oh, okay. Then, it seems like you computer has saved the wrong info, because

I'm showing that you keep trying with you \$univ user name as the user name, when what we need to put in is actually your \$univ email address. \$eduwireless is used by a lot of different schools. We just need to tell it which one you belong to. So, what we need to do is remove that wireless profile and reconnect. When we do that, it *should* ask you for your user name and password.

\$NP: Okay. I think I can do that *talk user through steps* Okay, it's removed.

\$me: Okay, so let's reconnect and see what happens.

\$NP: Huh. It's showing me an IP address error.

record scratch

>\$me: Hmm. That's very strange. Let's try restarting and see what happens.

\$NP: Sure thing. **sounds of Mac rebooting** Okay, I'm back up. Let me try to connect. **some clicks** That's weird. Now, it's not bringing up anything.

\$me: Hmm. Does it show your computer is connected to \$eduwireless?

\$NP: Yeah, I've got a full strength signal, and my phone is connected.

\$me: Very strange. Let me get a ticket over to our network folks about this so they can dig into the issue a bit. **some typing** Okay, I have that ticket sent to them. They should be touching base with you soon about this.

\$NP: Okay, thank you.

end call

That was yesterday afternoon. This morning, her ticket shows back up in my queue. The network folks did some digging and can't find anything except some failed

login attempts (which I already knew about). They do suggest a network connection tool that may help and I set it up. It was a pretty easy fix. So, I reach back out to her to try and get this resolved.

That one time it *was* the network. It still wasn't my fault. Or my department's. - /u/

\$me: So, is it able to connect this morning?

\$me: I was still giving her the same issue, and I've rebooted a couple of times.

\$me: Okay. So, let's try connecting to the guest network. There's something we want to try to see if it will help.
<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/0fuwv/>

that one time it was the network it still wasn't

\$NP: Sure! *connects to guest wireless successfully* Okay, what webpage do I need to go to?

\$me: It's tool group.org

\$me: not my first post here, but I don't post frequently. However, a line at the end of a recent post inspired me to recall this tale. It was the network. I had to admit it. But I

\$me: Okay, click on the download button. It should present you with a download option for your version of OS X.

number.
The cast of characters is as follows:

\$me: Some places do show OS X versions that way. Tell me what version you're

running, and I can tell you its name.

\$me: I'm on there.

\$NP: Oh, yeah, it's 10.6.8.

We have a few thousand times.

@*Q \$vcguy** - The videoconferencing guy

*\$me: Okay, that's known as Snow Leopard. Does it show an installer for that?

*\$BV** (big vendor) - A large multinational corporation whose logo looks like a pair of hands flipping you off and who will go unnamed

\$me: Huh. I'd have been more surprised if it did. That version of OS X is eight

years old. That's like trying to drive a model T down the interstate.

*\$SV** (small vendor) - A small company who was bought up by \$BV many years ago.

\$NP: *chuckles* Wow, I guess so. I don't use this computer very often, so our IT folks have overlooked it when doing upgrades.

\$me: Yeah. I'd talk with them about upgrading you in one way or another. That should solve your issue. Once you do get things figured out, please let me know so

I can let our network folks know. There are a couple that are following this ticket

and are curious about the outcome.

\$NP: Oh, I sure will. And thank you for your help!

\$me: You're quite welcome!

TL;DR: If you use an ancient OS, you're gonna have a bad time.

The platforms was clunky at best. This segregation of video conferencing from networking bites me in the ass 2-3x a month, and I end up having to do \$vcguy's conferencing.

So one day, I get a trouble ticket in, saying that a video conferencing system in another IT department's area isn't working. I get my laptop, head to the room, and start troubleshooting. The system has already been powercycled, and it still isn't

working. \$vcguy is standing there trying the same three troubleshooting steps over and over again, unsurprisingly to the same end. He's **SURE** it's the network.

I log into the switch to check. The port is up, configured correctly, and I can see the mac address of the device in the table. Logs on the switch show no errors of any kind, no port security blocks, nothing. Thus, it's not the network. It clearly can't be the network.

I get access to the video conferencing system, get it's IP address, which is static, and make sure all the configuration is correct. It's fairly simple, just the IP address, gateway, DNS, standard stuff. Even the "advanced" networking tab looks fine, the vlan is correct, all the weird little SIP things like ports, transport mode, etc are correct. Yet I still can't ping out from it or make calls. Nor can I ping it from the very switch it's connected to, so even more clearly, **notmynetwork.png**.

The next step is to go into the management system for these endpoints and do the basic troubleshooting steps that \$vcguy didn't/couldn't. I see that this system lost connection to that management system at a specific time on a specific date. Hmm, weird. I check our monitoring software, we had no outages then, so I decided to go back to the switch logs. I try to match the timestamp, and sure enough, at the time it went down, I see "configured by <networking department automated process>" at <timestamp>. ****oshititwasthenetwork.jpg****.

Fortunately, \$vcguy doesn't have access into these logs, and I was able to contain my horror well enough that he didn't suspect something. I go into our backup configs and pull the relevant ones to compare diffs. Right there, staring me in the face, is a port security mac address lock on the port that's having the issues. Now I know I'm fucked, but still manage to contain my fear by scrunching my brow as if still puzzled by what I'm seeing. Without a word, I remove the restriction, reset port security, and it works. Obviously, this meant having one of "those" conversations.

>****\$vcguy***: "Hey, it's working, so it does look like it was a network issue"

>****\$Tully***: "Not exactly. Was there any work done on this recently?"

>****\$vcguy***: "Yeah, a few weeks ago, we updated the firmware on this. It was almost 3 years out of date".

>****\$Tully***: "Ok, so when you did that, it went from identifying as a regular network device to identifying as a phone. It didn't used to, but I guess \$BV's software team finally got around to updating it. It was trying to get onto our voice vlan and being blocked by the port security."

>****\$vcguy***: "what does that mean?"

It wasn't plugged in after all, was it? - /u/
The Visage

network"

So, I'm no technological savant, but I know enough that I can google things, meaning that I get placed on my favorite position, "surprise tech support".
happening for years. The endpoint is where the change that actually caused the outage was made. In fact, you can see in the latest configuration guide and user manual for this end point that it can now work natively as a phone within our phone system. I'm surprised nobody tested this after the upgrade.
Sometimes, like this case, its a pretty big deal.

My job this was to fix credit card readers. Simple enough. However, the problem is we didn't know if they were even broken. Sometimes they would work perfectly. Sometimes they wouldn't work at all. This seems easy enough to bug test however there was a problem.

These are things that will stop a **fully functioning** reader from working. In order to fix it, you have to fully reset the device in question, restart the app, and log in. Something you can't do in the middle of a sale, and something the system does not appreciate you logging in on multiple devices (it locks and flags your account)

1. It becomes unplugged.
2. The device goes into sleep mode
3. The volume is changed
4. the app is minimized or exited
5. Different software means it will never work at all

And there is no way to tell en mass if the card readers are working. Every test requires you to fully reset the device.

I had arrived early that morning, and was on the phone with the company involved.

>\$Me: Alright so there's no demo mode or testing mode here? That would make it easier to do by a long shot

>\$Support: No, We recommend using a single device and restarting it when

necessary. How many units are defective?

The 2 minutes conference call. - /u/

>\$Me: That's what I'm trying to figure out, I have around 40 to go through before sales begins. I would appreciate any help you can provide.

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fr1xu/>

>\$Support: All I can tell you is that the most common reason is it gets unplugged.
the 2 minutes conference call/
Is the cable plugged in?

>\$Me: Of course its plugged in, that was the first thing I checked
Hello all, FIP LIL ETC.

>\$Support: Alright well could you just push down until you hear the click?

>\$Me: The click?
I'm at network administrator at the company I work for. I'm not going to say exactly what we do, but we are in the service industry, and we are damned near everywhere. And then I noticed the cases we put on the devices were preventing the cables from being fully inserted.

>\$Support: It wasn't plugged in after all, was it?
The players in this story:

>\$Me: Nope
\$Walshman: yours truly.

And that's the story of how I ended up spending an afternoon shaving plastic, and
\$Patience: my coworker with the patience of a saint. She's great.

\$Vendor1 and **\$Vendor2**: They manage point of sale systems for us at various locations.

It's around 9 am, and I'm sipping away on my coffee.

>\$Patience: Hey \$Walshman, I have \$Vendor1 on the phone and they're having an issue with a **DisplayBox**.

The **DisplayBox**s are little NUCs on our network that control LCD displays in our units. Imagine the monitors in fast food joints that tell the kitchen what to make, it controls those things.

>\$Walshman: Sure, what's the issue?

>\$Patience: They say that the **DisplayBox** is plugged into the network, but they can't ping it.

>\$Walshman: Ok, let me remote into the router there and take a look.

>\$Walshman: ...

site?

>\$Patience: Yea, and he said he can ping things from the ****DisplayBox****, they just can't ping the box from other devices.

>\$Walshman: ... Huh? If it can ping out then it's not the network. Everything else appears to be fine on our end, have them check the ****DisplayBox**** again. Sounds like it's being screwy.

>\$Patience: Okie dokie!

Two hours later, I'm now sipping on a different cup of coffee.

>\$Patience: Hey , \$Vendor1 still can't figure out what's going on with the ****DisplayBox****, you're sure it's not our stuff?

>\$Walshman: 100%. If it's able to reach out to other devices on the network, then the network is working fine. Guarantee it.

>\$Patience: ...

>\$Walshman: These things run Windows right? Have them check the firewall rules.

>\$Patience: Okie dokie...

\$Patience looks like she's starting to lose patience.

Now around 2pm, coffee no longer in hand.

>\$Patience: Ok, can I add you to this conference call? No body at ****Vendor**** can figure this out.

>\$Walshman: Alright, but I swear it's not our network.

On this call already were \$Patience, \$Vendor1, \$Vendor2 who was on site, and the manager at this unit.

>\$Walshman: Hello, \$Walshman just joined the call.

>\$Vendor1: Walshman, hi. We're having issues with your network, we can't get **DisplayBox** to work on the network at all.

>\$Vendor2: Like honestly, we've tried everything to get this working here, and \$Patience just keeps telling us "it's not the network". Everything is working on **DisplayBox**, except the network. Please, just fix it.

>\$Walshman: Mmhmm, so what have we done to troubleshoot the **DisplayBox** then? Fill me in on what we've done already.

\$Vendor1 and \$Vendor2 rattle off things they've tried. Reinstalling the server software, reinstalling Ethernet drivers, changing profiles, changing patch cables, etc.

>\$Walshman: I notice you didn't mention disabling the firewall as a test. Can we do that now?

>\$Vendor2: No, we did do that already, it didn't work.

>\$Walshman: Humor me here.

\$Vendor2 disables the firewall

Reply from 192.168.X.X: bytes=32 time<1ms TTL=64

Reply from 192.168.X.X: bytes=32 time<1ms TTL=64

Reply from 192.168.X.X: bytes=32 time<1ms TTL=64

Reply from 192.168.X.X: bytes=32 time<1ms TTL=64

>\$Walshman: Well, looks that did it. Anything else you need from me?

>\$Vendor1: ... um, nope. That's everything.

>\$Walshman: Great! Well, feel free to reach out if there is anything else you need from me. Ciao!

And I wish I could say that was the only time they've done that. That was the only one that took them over 5 hours to fix though.

Best call of the year (so far) - /u/Cryptic-

Panther

because you will use it against me for the rest of my career.

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fsqbs/best_call_of_the_year_so_far/

So usually the posts in here are full of incompetent users, co-workers etc. but i wanted to tell you all about my call last night, and just how enjoyable it was.

A little info about my Help Desk role, I do first level support for a manufacturing company with 95% of calls from users who work onsite (we do not) and the other 5% would be outside vendors / support personnel (3rd party) those users need to use the companies VPN and in the last year we have move to a mobile pass system (app on the phone that provides a string of numbers as extra verification to login) this call is from one of these outside vendors regarding their mobile pass.

M=Me U= User (keeping it simple)

I'll skip over the formalities of the typical opening of a call, and get right into it.

So the mobile pass is installed on your phone and there is a registration process that has to be followed, and if the user upgrades (changes) their phone they have to register the app again with a provided email, this user had recently upgraded her phone. I'll pick up the call after the typical introduction.

M- So you received the registration email correct

U - Yes and i need to setup you companies email on my phone so i can go through the setup.

M - This is your personal device correct (answer was yes)

Well since this is a personal device we do not support setting up email as the phone needs to be encrypted and if there is a 10 password failed attempts the phone gets wiped to factory.

U - Well i don't want that to happen, does that happen very often?

M - Me it isn't a common issue, but i like to warn people to avoid the issue, but if you have personal email on your phone just forward the registration email to that address and we can start the process.

U - OK that will work, I always want to call it Multi-pass, you know from the that movie, Multi pass, Multi pass.

32-bit Emails - /u/TimRichmondAIDS

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fuulp/32bit_emails/
Now from this point on i kept calling the mobile pass, multi pass, it was a real struggle so i just went with it and called it multi pass, as we went through the rest of the call, but by the end i was calling it mobile pass with some difficulty.
Background: I no longer work for the company at which this tale took place. Their IT department consisted of my boss (IT manager/sysadmin role) and myself (helpdesk/desktop support/sysadmin stuff my boss couldn't figure out). This tale happened a couple of months after I started. One of my coworkers and I share the same first name, and sometimes people would mistakenly send him emails meant for me (our last names are completely different and start with different letters).
U - she laughs and says they probably wouldn't notice.

The cast:
pass.

\$Me - myself
There was an issue that we were unable to solve and the user was going to reboot her phone (which would end the call) I told her i didn't have a direct line, but whoever answered the call would be able to help if she needed it.

U - I've got another one for you, lets see how good you are (referring to a movie quote) I'm going to need to see your license & registration right Meow.
Tale:

I was floored Super troopers is also another one of my favourite movies.
>\$SalesDrone2: Did you get that email *\$SalesDrone1* sent 20 minutes ago?

M - I love Super Troopers, (we both use a few right Meow lines from the movie)
>\$Me: No, I didn't. What's going on?
and i proceed to tell her i actually say right Meow all the time.

>\$SalesDrone2: Something about 32 bit emails and *ImportantSalesWebApp* not working. It's really important.
The 2 of us were laughing an even though i wasn't able to sort out her issue she was happy, i was happy and she ended the call by saying you're my new BFF in tech support.

>\$Me: *feels IQ drop a few points* I never heard anything about this until you told me just now. I'll check with \$SalesDrone1.

anyway?

>\$Me: *not sure whether to laugh, cry, or file a workers' comp. claim* There's no such thing. They probably mean 32 bit or 64 bit Outlook. I'll get with \$SalesDrone1 and find out.

>\$SalesDrone2: Oh, okay. I'll forward you that email in a minute. *makes his rounds, talks to other coworkers for 20 minutes about his chicken farm or something unrelated to work, finally forwards important email*

So, I check with \$SalesDrone1 and it turns out *ImportantSalesWebApp* needs specific ranges of IP addresses whitelisted, and our email provider picked up some

of these IP addresses as SPAM/potentially harmful for some reason. After some research and verification, all whitelisting changes were made and everything worked fine. Although my boss received the important email about this issue, he never let me

The Inheritance - The Beta Site Part 1 - /u/ginger_housecat

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fsjw7/>

TL;DR: Reading is hard, inter-office communication skills need improvement, somehow "IP addresses" turned into "32 bit email addresses", *important* people would rather talk about chicken farms and Star Trek rather than performing their job functions.

The Coldstore I was working at, had 4 sites. Central, West, North and ... Beta. Central, West and North were all located in the same town but Beta was located in a city that was a good 3 hours drive away. I received a work ticket to look at their warehouse connection. Here, verbatim, is the ticket.

Priority 1

Raised By: Warehouse Manager (WHMAN)

Subject: Critical Network Issue

Description: Warehouse network is slow. Please investigate.

I looked at my car, realize that it's not going to be an easy trip in that rustbucket, and book a pool car. They have 2 remaining - a mid-range BMW and a small Ford. I opt for the BMW. I also ask finance for a hotel room overnight which they book there and then. It's now 2PM, and I drive home in the pool car, collect my Wife who takes my beat up old Renault home. I've already loaded the pool car with everything I need - spare switch, cables, tools and a test laptop. I'm just about to head out on the road when [Angry Lady](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/636zbl/the_inheritance_the_angry_lady/) confronts me.

>AL: You can't take that car.

>Me: Why not?

>AL: I need it.

>Me: I believe the Ford is available.

>AL: I don't drive trash like that. I always drive this car. It's well known.

>Me: Sorry, but I didn't know when I booked it, and no-one told me. I've fuelled this one and loaded it now, so I can't let you have it, but I'll know for the next time. I've got to go, I have to be at the Beta site urgently.

And with that, I was gone.

I arrived at the hotel, booked in and then headed on to the site, arriving just as the office staff were leaving. There were shift managers and some dedicated office workers still floating about the place with the production operatives, so I wasn't working alone - thankfully.

I hooked up to test laptop to a port in the sales office. It tested ok, with a fast speed. I had expected something similar, with a distinct lack of people on the network there should be a fantastic speed. I did the same at the switch and received similar data. That was then my benchmark. Off I went to the warehouse, which was the other side of the factory. I knocked on the office door and entered.

>WHMan: Who are you?

network?

>WHMan: No.

>Me: Someone called WHMan logged a ticket for me to look at it.

I hand him the print-out of the ticket, and the work order permit.

>WHMan: That's me, but I didn't book this or authorise this.

>Me: Do you mind if I just test something. I simply need to plug in...

>WHMan: Go ahead, just don't crash anything.

Again, I connect to a port on the wall and test. I'm getting a 25% drop rate on the ping, and the performance is bad. Dial-up internet is faster than this. I find the switch and give it the once over. Curiously, there's no fibre module installed. Connecting to the management port, I look at the config to find that port 24 is connected to the sales switch. I run the network diagnostic and find that there are two more switches between here and sales, each one is an 8-port with only two ports live. Someone was using them as repeaters. Each port on the switch is locked to 100Mb.

Now the wiremap device comes out. It can tell me cable runs and all sorts of neat statistics about the cat-5 cables and switches. The switch to switch links run at approx 105m each. Cat 5 limits are about 100m, so there's the problem. I go back to the sales office and write my report, heading back to the hotel at about 11Pm. It was going to be fun explaining this in the morning.

Phantom of the Keyboard - /u/Nik_Tesla

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fph8u/phantom_of_the_keyboard/

We always seem to put in horrific stories that make us cringe or cause us physical pain, but I'd like to share one that I found really funny.

A few years ago, I regularly went to a client that primarily used Macs. One of the users calls me over as I'm walking around, and she says every so often, her keyboard goes nuts and starts putting in 0s or other characters.

I checked on her computer a bit, and it seemed fine. I checked out her keyboard and make sure it wasn't physically busted, and swapped it out anyways. I asked her to let me know when it happened again. I didn't hear anything for a few weeks, but then she says it happened a few more times, but only for like 30 seconds at a time, and then it stops.

Even though she's in her early 30's, smart, and fairly computer literate, at this point I'm thinking that she's doing something herself, or flat out making it up. However, the next time I'm there, I am helping her search for a very specific, old email, and sure enough, it happens while I'm working on the computer! I see it type out:

[illegible]

What?! I'm so confused. At this point I notice the Bluetooth icon in the top right, and that it says that one of the devices batteries are low. I look at it, and it's got her Bluetooth mouse, and a Bluetooth keyboard (the one with the low battery)... except, she's got a USB keyboard... interesting.

So, turns out, she used to have a Bluetooth Keyboard, but about 6 months ago she stopped using it in favor of a wired one with a numpad. They put the keyboard in a drawer, but never turned it off. That drawer was one floor up, and really far away from her laterally. However, pretty recently, they moved that cabinet, and turns out it's basically right on top of her now.

So, the keyboard reconnected, and anytime someone went digging around in that drawer for a cable or whatever, they were pushing keys, thus making it appear as though her computer were haunted.

How funny is that?

Wedder Deputy happened Nickanore_lulz

https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fks0z/the_older_deputy_met/kokoroutasan

<https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6fpka5/>

So I was off to help them build their local area network, working to help them get their phone and their laptops at least one from either a laptop or a phone. I was on site to investigate a support issue where one of the employees (Eldy) was usually pretty good at his job, especially if she was in the 'I should own the IT' team. It's not the kind of job that I do, but I do know a little bit about it. I was in the IT department, and I was the only one who was providing end users with front end support and doing some dev work. I was on site, but I don't have a user base. I was a month ago and today the ticket came in. WHAT did I do? Help Desk!!

me: (puzzled) end-user?

Caller: IS THIS A SOME SORT OF A DEROGATORY TERM, HUH?

End user: help! Our scanner doesn't work. The printer is fine, its just scanning, it

Me: Ma'am, this is the Help Desk, so if you can't get it to work, please call me and I will help you.

no voice of reason. In the end I just ignore her and finish my work. The next day

Caller: Not to me about having received a complaint about my conduct. He

says he's very surprised about the accusation as I'm normally pretty calm and

End user: Hello! What is the problem? What has happened, my scanner is not

laughing and walks away.

Caller: "So later I have the email. Super G.E.D. offering" guy and I were in the middle of imaging 30 desktops for this same agency, to start deploying Thursday.

Me: "No, but the G.E.D. Department would."

Me: I need to go now. User is freaking out.

Supervisor: "Oh, you're sure? Okay, about first thing."

I am on site, reboot MFP, try scanning, error 2101. Quick Google search, shake fine.

Me: "I'm sorry Ma'am, I'm unable to do that, however I can transfer you to the

G.E.D. Department."

Me: it was only partway out. Just push on it to make sure next time.

Caller: "Why don't you just look it up, stop being lazy!"

TL;DR got my first "help its an emergency" only to arrive on site and find a

new Mac cable, I don't have access to that information, I'm unable to do that. The

G.E.D. Department can certainly help you."

Caller: "Put me through to your supervisor, I want to speak to him about you."

Me: "Okay."

Transfers her to the G.E.D. Department

IT Newbie does some training pt2 - /u/ Selben

[https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6foom0/
it_newbie_does_some_training_pt2/](https://reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6foom0/it_newbie_does_some_training_pt2/)

****Do you like to read in Chronological order? Here is the [Index](https://www.reddit.com/r/Selben/comments/60r5ps/timeline_for_tfts_stories/)****

****Did you read [Part 1](https://www.reddit.com/r/talesfromtechsupport/comments/6e9qth/it_newbie_does_some_training/)?****

****\$Selben**** - Tier 1 tech support - earlier on in his career but totally ready to go that extra mile!

****\$Soda**** - Tier 3 tech support / IT Manager and mentor of \$Selben - Extremely knowledgeable IT guru. Was the IT Director for a short time as \$Company grew, but rejoined the ranks as the politics were not for him! Also an amazing friend! Also had a never-ending supplies of 48oz \$Soda's constantly on his desk, in his car, literally everywhere!

****\$Frownie**** - A random Evil Human Resources employee at one of \$Companies Head Quarters.

****\$Trainee**** - A random person being trained.

****\$Doc**** - Tier 2 tech support - at the main corporate office.

****\$Grumpy**** - Tier 1 tech support - at the main corporate office.

****Quick Recap****

The entire IT Department was almost laid off, but thanks to a fierce battle between HR and \$Soda the old staff was saved at least for a few months. New technicians from an external vendor were brought in and it has become the responsibility of the old IT staff to train them up. At every turn it seems that HR is trying to find a

reason to get rid of them - this is that story. \$Soda decided his time with the company was over and after negotiations took the severance and left, refusing to further assist with the training - he did however keep up communication with \$Selben giving him some sound pieces of advice to survive in this brutal time of I.T. history in \$Selbens career, it very well may have molded and shaped him into the technician he is today.

****The points****

In the first week of 'The Great Training' people seemed to mostly fall back into their old ways - taking calls, answering emails and in general getting back to semi normal IT life. \$Selben had been tasked with dismantling the old remote office with the assistance of two trainees - it was a sad time, he must have found at least 15 44oz refillable soda containers hidden all around the office (*Thankfully most were empty*) the process took almost three days, after the final load of equipment was delivered \$Selben was instructed to work the phones alongside the other technicians. Everything felt fairly normal excluding having three to four trainees jammed into the cubicle watching every move you made and taking sometimes frantic notes, they would chatter amongst themselves in another language and would only speak English to interrupt a call when they did not understand what you were doing.

The start of the second week the first old technician was terminated for an old rule which was petty at best, resetting a customers without using the reset tool. It was a person in the same physical office, it was a much faster process just manually resetting it compared to using the clunky password tool - technically he was in the wrong but no tech had ever been fired over it before. He put up almost no fight, no glorious storming out of the office - he simply returned to his desk with security, packed a box of his nicknack's and toy collectibles then walked out, only giving a nod to other techs as he left. Almost immediatly after he left, any items left on his desk were cannibalized and stolen by the Trainees.

The third week \$Grumpy was terminated being told he accrued too many "Points" five points to be exact, he had taken too many smoking brakes. He went not so quietly, and instead yelled and ran to his desk to grab his pack of cigarettes and favorite coffee mug which read "Not now I'm busy." - he hustled out through a

back exit. \$Selben let out a silent cheer when he received a message from \$Doc sent to all the techs saying he made it, they couldn't catch him. Yet again everything on his desk was picked clean before \$Selben even went to lunch.

At the end of the week \$Selben was pulled into HR - he was ready, this was terrible - having those hungry eyes trying to steal all the knowledge you had just to kick you to the curb - the meeting was not what he had anticipated.

> \$Frownie: \$Selben, we want you do some more classes with the Trainees.

> \$Selben: I uh, okay sure. I can ask...

> \$Frownie: We will give you direction on what they need to know.

> \$Selben: Okay then.

> \$Frownie: Also you have two points, you closed several tickets without consulting your team lead.

> \$Selben: I don't have a teamlead...

\$Frownie waved his hand passively - he had already made up his mind.

> \$Frownie: Just be sure it does not happen again, if you'll excuse me...

The training 'material' was a bit of a joke, it had points to hit on systems that \$Selben had not worked in at all. He was familiar with them and when he tried to ask if he was to train from his perspective as a Tier 1 or to go over it completely, he was verbally told to 'Do what you think is best'.

Another tech was let go for collecting too many points.

\$Selben read through manuals in-between calls select trainees had been put on the phones and were causing confusion with the customers, issues ranged from being

unsure they called the correct number to being told just incorrect information. The call volume increased as well since many of the 'Fixes' caused more issues - simple things like resetting a password... For the wrong person... Then giving the login information to a different user altogether, that one took a bit to figure out what the heck had happened.

The first training went shaky at best, \$Selben at first tried to explain how the system worked - it was a data entry point for the customer base. Sometimes they would enter incorrect data so they would contact the helpdesk who would forward the ticket to a data admin who would in-turn remove the entry or replace it. A mass of questions on the programming language used to run the database, why users couldn't just fix the issue themselves and a whole list of other questions were prompted by the trainees which \$Selben did not have the answers to. He started writing down the questions, then got the idea to bring in one of the data admins to help answer questions! He returned with the 'database expert' who was more than willing to help out and they were able to easily deflect and answer all the questions presented - after the questions settled and the 'class' ended \$Selben was packing up paper.

> \$Selben: Did you need something?

> \$Frownie: Please sign here, this is your third point.

> \$Selben: What?! What did I do now?

> \$Frownie: You disturbed one of the database admins to run your class for you.

> \$Selben: You told me to handle it however I wanted!

> \$Frownie: Not at the expense of other necessary team members.

That Friday night \$Selben was actually getting really upset, he went home to play some EverQuest to unwind - an MMO (*Massive Multiplay Online Game*) which had helped him greatly with venting during this stressful time in his life. Unfortunately he wasn't having that great of a time in the game either, another member of his guild - one of the raid leaders had not logged on, so as \$Selben was an officer he was somewhat forced to take command of the raid (*A bunch of people playing the game go and kill a big boss monster, but the term - cat herding

can sometimes be used to describe how smoothly it can go*) After the frantic raid finally ended in defeat, \$Selben logged out and sat frustrated, he noticed his phone's LED indicating he had a text message was flashing, checking he had a message from \$Soda!

> \$Soda-txt: Remember if you need any guidance, just let me know!

After some back and forth \$Soda invited \$Selben over to his place for lunch, normally \$Selben would not accept a social gathering but he missed \$Soda's advice and surprising even to himself he accepted.

Note taken

That Saturday \$Selben went over to \$Soda's house, unfortunately it was not a private lunch but was instead a barbecue with over 40 people jammed into the house and backyard. \$Soda made an appearance but he was a bit intoxicated, making a bit of a spectacle of himself - which did lead \$Selben to meeting several other IT people who were also invited, he spilled his guts in regards to being unsure what to do about his situation at work and was advised to document EVERYTHING regardless of how small the task. One of the IT strangers \$Selben met actually later turned out to be \$Sup2 (*from another story line*) as well as \$Selben finding out at the end of the event that the whole reason for the meeting was in-fact to celebrate the launch of \$Soda's IT consulting firm. Sadly the new responsibilities made it so \$Selben could not reach him easily. Armed with the document everything approach \$Selben returned to work the following week using his new tool with brutal efficiency.

\$Frownie attempted to write \$Selben up for not following the instruction he had been provided in a previous discussion. However \$Selben was able to print out and bring the email communication between them which \$Frownie had replied back to with the simple response of 'Sounds fine'. But that was all \$Selben needed, clarification that he agreed to what was outlined in the email. \$Frownie tried to write him up anyway, but when \$Selben asked for another HR rep to come and confirm - the write up was quickly dismissed on the basis that \$Frownie had said it

'Sounds fine' previously. The CYA approach was highly effective as a shield and helped \$Selben to refocus on work rather than on being worried about being fired. He attempted to get to other techs to do the same but they dwindled away, getting fired for all sorts of crazy reasons.

With one week left and none of the other techs around, they had still managed to get \$Selben up to four points - the Trainees or now the 'other techs' had completely replaced everyone. The TGS (*Technician Grading System*) had been disabled as all technicians excluding \$Selben had 1.5 - 2 points while \$Selben had a 9.7 (*It was a public scale which previously was used to grade technician quality of work, they had used to get techs to be competitive or something*) - No longer was \$Selben trying to make them keep him, he wanted to survive the trials.

Finally on the second to last day of the contract around noon - only 15 hours left and he would have won, he was called into \$Frownie's office. \$Frownie had a smug look on his face, \$Selben sat in the same chair it had become standard at this point - it was clear \$Frownie was trying to fire \$Selben.

> \$Frownie: Your contract is complete, you may go early.

> \$Selben: I uh... Can you please email that to me?

disabled.

> \$Selben: I see. Are you ending my contract early?

> \$Frownie: Here is your final pay-stub, you have been paid for tomorrow as well. Please sign here (*He slid a single paper across the desk*)

> \$Selben: Did you write this up or did legal?

> \$Frownie: I am part of the legal team!

\$Selben felt he was done with this and signed, the document was pretty weak but did not appear to void his contract. Just stated he would leave the company premises without company equipment or data etc.

Security returned him to his cubicle but it was already ransacked, one of the other

techs was already in his seat - he grabbed his phone charger which had evaded their greedy clutches and was lead down the long hall out of the building. One of the office admins held out his final paycheck, he was led out the doors and into the parking-lot - the doors closed. \$Selben pulled out his phone and shot an email using his private email, he had been keeping in touch with the old techs as they had been let go.

> \$Selben: They had me sign some stuff saying I wouldn't steal anything, but I fulfilled the contract - anyone got any job leads? :)

No immediate replies \$Selben walked across the parking-lot passing by 'The Van' which was now caked in dust from sitting. He hopped into his own car and looked down at his phone, no responses yet. The drive home felt good - he deposited the check went to his apartment and logged into EverQuest. This lead to a solid 14 days of gaming, he was stuck in the mode of documenting and keeping track of things now - a useful tactic which was highly effective at making him a murder machine in the game. All raids ran smoothly as he wrote every event, timers, what people to group together and who should be kept apart. He was completely enchanted by the game, finally on the 14th day \$Selben woke up to knocking at his door. He had been playing all night, opening up the door the ~~daystar~~ sun flooded in, making him recoil like an over-dramatic vampire. In the doorway with aviator sunglasses stood \$Soda —

> \$Soda: I heard you needed a job!

> \$Selben: I uh...

> \$Soda: Well? Do you want to work for me or not?

> \$Selben: Yes!

\$Soda sniffs the air...

> \$Soda: Eww - Go take a shower and then we'll talk on the way!

With that \$Selben had joined \$Soda and his independent IT contracting company.