

W02 Vocabulary: Social Engineering

Main Concepts

Term	Definition
identity theft	Crimes in which someone wrongfully obtains and uses someone else's personal data.
social engineering	Persuading or tricking people by using their natural human tendencies or behaviors.
hoax	A falsehood presented as if it were accurate or faithful or something intended to trick or fool someone.
influence	To get others to want to behave in a way you want them to.
manipulate	To force others to behave in a way you want them to.
phishing	Impersonating a legitimate enterprise in an email or web site, in an attempt to trick the recipient into surrendering private information.

Influence Principles

These are psychological means of persuasion. People use these principles to sway or affect someone's behavior, to get them to *want* to act in a desired way. Whether or not you are aware of it, you have almost certainly used these principles yourself in your social interactions with others.

reciprocation (also "reciprocity")	Social pressure to feel the need to respond in kind when you are given a gift or favor.
obligation	Variation of reciprocity: social pressure to gratefully respond after you are relieved of a burden.
concession	Variation of reciprocity: social pressure to concede to a smaller request after having resisted a larger request.
scarcity	Social pressure based on the perception that resources are limited.
urgency (also "rushing")	Variation of scarcity: social pressure based on the perception that time is limited.
authority	Social pressure to obey, defer to, or respect the directions of an expert or a leader.
consistency (also "commitment and consistency")	Social pressure to increase your loyalty to a decision once a choice has been made.
liking (also "familiarity")	Social pressure to emulate or seek approval of people you admire or like.

trust	Variation of liking: social pressure to cooperate with people with whom you have built a rapport.
consensus (also "social proof")	Social pressure to go along with the behavior of people you are with.

Manipulation Principles

These are also often used to try to sway someone's behavior, but are more coercive, contentious, and toxic. Instead of getting someone to want to behave in a desired way, they attempt to force someone's behavior.

increased susceptibility (also "conditioning")	Making a target more receptive to suggestions, such as through escalating subtle hints, or even by sleep or food deprivation.
environmental control (also "censorship" or "gaslighting")	Exerting control over the information that a target receives.
forced reevaluation	Inducing fear, uncertainty, and doubt in a target's mind.
removing power (also "duress")	Removing someone's sense of agency, liberty, and self-determination.
intimidation (also called "bullying")	Threatening a target with hostility, or fear of harm, humiliation, or punishment.
diversion	Distracting a target, or changing a target's attention or focus.

Phishing Attacks

Phishing is a type of communications fraud. A phishing attack is usually an email or web site, which impersonates a legitimate enterprise or individual, and attempts to use social engineering principles to get the reader to divulge passwords or other private information.

spear phishing	A phishing attack which is personalized or focused on particular targets.
smishing	A phishing attack involving texting or short messages services (SMS).
vishing	A phishing attack involving voice mail or voice messages.

Other Social Engineering Tactics

doxxing	<p>Publishing an intended victim's address or other personal information, intending that a like-minded mob will use that information to persecute or harass the victim.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example: a political activist shares the personal phone number of a rival on social media, asking followers to flood the rival with phone calls
dumpster diving	Secretly collecting information about a victim by searching through their discarded documents.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example: a thief rummages through a target's trash looking for account numbers on thrown away bank statements.
eavesdropping	<p>Secretly collecting information about a victim by carefully listening to them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example: a father overhears a private conversation in the next room between his daughter and her boyfriend.
impersonation	<p>Deceptively presenting and acting as someone else.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example: an adult dresses up as Santa Claus to secretly bring surprise gifts to some young children.
tailgating (also "piggybacking")	<p>Accompanying or following someone in order to circumvent a barrier.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example: a visitor cannot get through a locked door, but she sneaks in behind someone who enters with a key.
shoulder surfing	<p>Secretly collecting information about a victim by watching what they are working with.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example: a stalker learns a man's name and email address by peeking over his shoulder while he reads his email on his smart phone.
wiretapping	<p>Secretly collecting information about a victim by spying on their phone or computer transmissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Example: a judge approves a warrant to a police detective for tapping a phone connection in a suspect's home, so that the detective can listen to the suspect's phone calls.