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SUMMARY

“Social Engineering: The Art of Human Hacking 1st edition”

Christopher Hadnagy

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I decided to read the first four chapters of the book “Social Engineering: The Art of Human Hacking 1st edition” by Christopher Hadnagy to learn more about social engineering.

Like any book, the knowledge contained herein is only useful if you put it into practice. The more you practice the more you will succeed at mastering these skills.

In first chapter, author discussed how social engineering is like mastering the art of cooking. By mixing the right ingredients in the right quantity you can have a meal that is full of flavor and excitement. The first time you try to cook a meal it might have too much salt or it might lack flavor altogether, but you don’t immediately throw in the towel—you keep trying until you get it right. The same goes for social engineering. Some of the necessary skills may come more naturally to you and others may be more difficult.

Regardless, keep practicing and make sure to do extra research on topics for which you need clarity. Now let’s start cooking. Your “recipe” starts in the next chapter with the first ingredient, information gathering.

In chapter 2 author discussed how important can be gathering information. Gathering information is like building a house. If you try to start with the roof your house will surely be a failure. A good house will be built using a solid foundation and from there it will be built literally from the ground up. As you gather information you may be overwhelmed with how to organize and then use this data, so starting

a file or an information gathering service to gather this data in is a good idea.

What about elicitation: in chapter 3 covered some of the most powerful points in this whole book—powerful in the sense that applying them can change not only your social engineering abilities but also your abilities as a communicator. Knowing how to ask the right questions in the right tense and the right manner can open so many opportunities. As a social engineer, this is what separates success from failure. First impressions are based initially on sight, but what comes out of your mouth first can make or break the deal. Mastering elicitation can almost guarantee success as a social engineer and can add serious weight to any pretext you decide to use.

Throughout this chapter author mentioned the power of pretexting. This is another topic that every social engineer, both malicious and professional, must master. But how can you ensure you accomplish this goal? To answer this you must learn about pretexting and understand exactly what it is, as discussed in Chapter 4.

In the last read by me chapter author write about pretexting. Pretexting is defined as the act of creating an invented scenario to persuade a targeted victim to release information or perform some action. It is more than just creating a lie; in some cases it can be creating a whole new identity and then using that identity to manipulate the receipt of information. Social engineers can use

pretexting to impersonate people in certain jobs and roles that they never themselves have done. Pretexting is not a one-size-fi ts-all solution. A social engineer must develop many diff erent pretexts over his or her career. All of them will have one thing in common: research. Good information gathering techniques can make or break a good pretext. For example, mimicking the perfect tech support rep is

useless if your target does not use outside support.

To sum up, I would like to say that the information described in these sections is very easy to understand, and everyone, with some effort, will easily learn it. In addition, information about social engineering may be useful not only to programmers, but to all people in general, because the book also describes methods of how not to fall victim to attackers.