Ethical Hacking- Do you know what it is?

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A company can't know if their security system is solid unless they test it. It's hard, though, for a company's IT team to thoroughly ring out the system. Try as they might, the techs can't go at the system with all the malicious or mischievous motives of a true illegal hacker. To thoroughly uncover vulnerabilities, the theory goes; you must examine your security system through the eyes of an illegal hacker.

Ethical hacking is the process of hacking the information that is considered to be confidential. An ethical hacker is usually employed by an organization who trusts him or her to attempt to penetrate networks and/or computer systems, using the same methods as a hacker, for the purpose of finding and fixing computer security vulnerabilities. Unauthorized hacking is a crime in most countries, but penetration testing done by request of the owner of the targeted system(s) or network(s) is not. . Ethical hackers have written authorization to probe a network. Only then is this attempted hack legal, as there is a contract between the ethical hacker and the organization.

The word hacking has strongly negative connotations, and, for the most part, rightly so. But ethical hacking is much different. It takes place with the explicit permission of the company whose system is being attacked. In fact, their "good guy" role is underscored by the nickname "white hat" Ethical Hackers have been given. The nickname is a throwback to old Westerns where the good cowboys could be identified by their white hats.

The information through the ethical hacking does not remain secret at all. The ethical hacking process is also known as the intrusion testing, penetration testing or red teaming. However the ethical hacking also gives s professional certification to the certified ethical hacker where the hacking of the computer system or some other devices takes place. This service had been made available to the people by the international council of e-commerce consultants.

The ethical hacker is an individual who is employed or contracted to undertake an attempted penetration test. These individuals use the same methods employed by hackers. Primarily, ethical hackers are employed in groups to perform penetration tests. These groups are commonly referred to as "Red Teams." These individuals are being paid by the organization to poke, prod, and determine the overall level of security. Penetration testing down into 4 primary stages

1. Planning - Good planning is the key to success. Know where you are going, what your goals are, what the time frame is, and what the limits and boundaries are!

2. Discovery - This stage is broken down into two distinct phases:

o Passive - During this stage, information is gathered in a very covert manner.

o Active - This phase of the test is split between network scanning and host scanning.

3. Attack - At this point, the ethical hacker will attempt to Gain Access, Escalate Privilege, Browse the system, and finally Expand influence.

4. Reporting - This may be the final step listed, but it is not least in importance. Reporting and documentation should be carried out through each step of the process. This documentation will be used to compile the final report.

In order to get the most out of the assessment, a company should decide in advance the nature of the vulnerabilities they're most concerned with. Specifically, the company should determine which information they want to keep protected and what they're concerned would happen if the information was retrieved by an illegal hacker. Companies should thoroughly assess the qualifications and background of any person who know Ethical Hacking. This individual will be privy to highly sensitive information. Total honesty and integrity is of the utmost importance.

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