

7 SIGNS YOU SHOULD BREAK UP WITH YOUR SECURITY AWARENESS TRAINING PROGRAM



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Cyber Security Awareness

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Neil Sedaka had it right: breaking up is hard to do.

But that doesn't mean it can't be worthwhile, especially in the context of your organization's security awareness training program.

Sometimes, the red flags are as clear as they are plentiful – a lack of course participation or completion, not enough internal cyber security prioritization, and so on. Other times, it's a gut instinct that your current training program setup and execution strategy aren't cutting it.

So how do you know it's time to let go? When is it okay to admit a training program may not be suitable for you, your colleagues, and your cyber security goals anymore?

This blog post will take you through the seven most significant signs that the initial spark in your relationship with your security awareness training program has fizzled. While every organization's cyber security reality and culture will differ, fulfilling your overarching wants and goals is the goal here.

If they're accompanied by roses or scented candles, even better.

1. Your Security Awareness Training Program Is Neglecting Your Needs

The biggest warning sign that your security awareness training program may not be compatible is if you feel it's neglecting your organization's cyber security needs. Whether that means educating your end users on a specific topic or reducing phishing simulations by a certain percentage, your awareness program must be a supporting presence instead of one that feels inattentive or insignificant.

Before severing ties with your security awareness training program altogether, it's worth trying to work the kinks out first. Discuss what it would take to fulfill your security leadership's needs and desires and if a little more effort or precision would resolve the issues. If not, you may want to reconsider if your training program is long-term material.

2. Thinking About the Future Freaks You Out

Speaking of long-term ...

Your security awareness training initiatives need to give you a sense of comfort about the future of your organization's information security. Your program must be your rock – a source of consistent stability – in a sea of ever-changing cyber attack complexity. And, with one in five employees clicking on your average phishing email, you also need to have an eye on what the next several years have in store.

Can you count on your awareness training to be evolving as the world's cyber threats do? Are you positive it's a significant part of your organization's future? As valid as living in the moment is, holding on to a training program without any vision or confidence for a future together may be keeping you from your cyber security "happily ever after."

3. You're Constantly Fantasizing About Other Training Programs

Let's get this out of the way first: You can't train your brain to find only your security awareness training program attractive, and that's okay. Having certain thoughts about other training solutions – even in the happiest moments of this type of relationship – is something every organization experiences. But, if you continually catch yourself fantasizing about other, more attractive solutions, it may be a sign. A big one.

Unfortunately, some organizations hold onto training initiatives that aren't working for so long that they eventually imagine themselves with any solution other than their current awareness program. If you find yourself in this position, you may already be checking out of the relationship, especially if an open conversation about what you see in other options doesn't have a positive impact.

4. Your Training Program Doesn't Keep the Fire Burning

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This feeling is often expressed as feeling less “in” the relationship with your awareness training than you used to. The dynamic may have been more satisfying – even electrifying – when you first started getting serious about your current training solution but, as time has worn on, you’ve begun to question how excited you are about this training program in the first place.

Ultimately, you can’t force yourself to maintain a serious relationship with your training program. However, you can be honest if your emotional response about the learning experience has gone from “wow” to “meh.” It’s also crucial to get the truth out in the open – you shouldn’t hold your security awareness training to private, unexpressed standards.

5. You Feel Stuck or Bored in Your Current Situation

And, by stuck or bored, I don’t necessarily mean a routine that’s turned into a rut you can’t get out of. It also encompasses when you’ve tried everything to spice up your security awareness training relationship – from trying new topics to experimenting with a surprise simulation or two. None of it manages to reignite the flame.

When this happens, many organizations may envision how their lifestyle would be different without their current security awareness training setup, and, in a lot of cases, the vision is appealing. If switching up your habits doesn’t enable you to grow closer with your training program, then a fresh start may be what’s best for both sides in the long run.

6. You Rarely Want to Go “All the Way”

Pressure, stress, fatigue, and various internal and external demands can sap your emotional energy regarding your security awareness training. Seeing a dip in your willingness to go all the way with your training initiatives can happen to anyone, but if the lack of any urge becomes prolonged, it could mean something larger is amiss.

If you’re unable to derive any pleasure from either current or past training initiatives, and this includes courses, phishing simulations, and your internal communication efforts, it’s not the rosiest of colored glasses to be looking through. Worse still, if the idea of queuing up another “same old same old” training campaign turns your stomach into knots, alarm bells should be ringing loud and clear.

7. You Keep Hoping Your Training Program Will Change Overnight

Finally, there’s arguably the most common red flag that most organizations ignore when it comes to their training program: they keep waiting for it – or, more accurately, the results – to change. This idea goes beyond situational changes, like resource or executive buy-in fluctuations. Instead, it’s a culmination of silently waiting for your training’s inherent qualities to do a U-turn suddenly.

Many people view change as difficult when, in reality, change happens irrespective of the relationship you have with your training program. Technology evolves. Cyber threats evolve. You evolve, and your campaigns must be fueled by the same level of ambition, commitment, and hard work. If all you’re doing is waiting for the end results to take off, you may be doing so indefinitely.

Recap

Your relationship with your security awareness training program will undoubtedly have ups and downs. Moments where everything is clicking and others where you wonder where it all went south. That said, there are still ways to get your groove back and ensure all your cyber security goals are met.

First, be honest with yourself and your long-term needs and wants regarding awareness training. Then, assess the situation and determine whether the pairing has legs. Working on weaknesses and getting back to what made your training program a great match in the first place can be a solution.

But, if you know you need – and deserve – something better, don’t settle. It’s worth investigating other options and investing in awareness training that fulfills high-quality content and phishing simulations requirements and gives you the flexibility to personalize and grow the relationship over time.

After all, isn’t that in the DNA of all genuine power couples?

Reserve your timeslot for a fun, exciting solution walkthrough

For more information on how Terranova Security can help you hit those all-important awareness training milestones and set you on the path of “together forever,” reserve your timeslot for a fun, exciting solution walkthrough. It’s like speed dating, only without any disappointment or gong noises.



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