



Dealing with

Microaggression

& stress burnout of cybersecurity professionals

Cybersecurity professionals– stressed much?

Cyberteams are overworked, overwhelmed, and undermanned. Globally, according to Nominet, one-quarter of security leaders have physical or mental problems that are the direct result of workplace stress, and 17 percent of those surveyed have even turned to alcohol or medication to cope with job pressures.

The United States stress costs can add up to \$300 billion every year. Professionals are directly impacted from physical and mental health issues to damaged personal relationships. Many struggles arise in a security career; a few reasons for the high level of stress comes from: resource shortages, internal pressures, overwhelming workloads, and on-call requirements.

According to Stahie, 50% of employees will make mistakes when stressed, 43% will make mistakes when tired, and 93% of staff are either stressed or tired at work and a third of all employees rarely or never think of cybersecurity.

In order to solve the cybersecurity career stress begins with surveying and active listening. CISOs need to understand how security career stress is internally tied to bigger issues of skills shortages, technology or culture. Training and automation will assist in decreasing pressures.

Did you know? *

- 75% of respondents say they have more work stress than they did just two years ago.
- 57% of respondents stated their security program lacked proper executive support.
- 93% say they lack the tools they need to detect known security threats.
- 42% say lack of executive accountability is the number one reason they would leave their jobs.

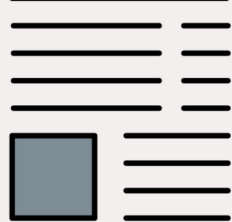


Leadership Article of the Month

Measuring Discrimination Resource



Perceived Discrimination Scale



Click on the article icon to be directed to article

*Sources: Chiu, T. (2020, August). New Study Finds Security Teams Increasingly Stressed. Security Boulevard. Securityboulevard.com
Stahie, S. Study Links Cybersecurity Directly to Employee Stress and Exhaustion. Security Boulevard. Securityboulevard.com

A Letter from Mary N. Chaney, Chairman, CEO & President

Dear MiC Community,

Have you ever been told "You are not technical enough?" or "You are too technical?" for a role? There was a time when interviewing that I was told those two things by too different hiring managers for different companies but for similarly titled roles.

How about this one, you are sitting in a meeting and make a salient point about an activity or nonactivity going on within the team and are completely ignored? No one takes interest or someone else says the same thing and gets a response?

Maybe you've had this, you are denied a request to speak at an event because your bosses boss wants to be the only one speaking for the organization? Or is it just me?

How about my all-time favorite, "You are so articulate." or "You speak so well."

All of these scenarios are enough to drive any sane person crazy, add to that being a member of an underrepresented minority, and you can see over the years how that can pile up and create a lot of unwanted and unneeded stress!

Microaggression is defined as "a statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority."



Mary N. Chaney, Esq., CISSP, CIPP/US
Chairman, CEO & President
Minorities in Cybersecurity, Inc.

Each of the above are examples of real life personal situations. My career experiences are vast, I have been a woman who has had a career in information security, law enforcement, and as an attorney, in private industry, government, academia, and as an entrepreneur and there are always situations that occur that leave me reeling and asking the question, would this happen if I were a man? Or if I was of a different race?

There are ways to deal with these situations, and most of the time the response is just as subtle as the comments made. To be fair there are times that the only way to deal with microaggression is to be aggressive. However, there are other techniques that can be used to effectively deal with the situation. Curious? Join our call this month to see how.

Our mantra for August... "You don't have to change hearts and minds to influence behavior."

Sincerely,

Mary N. Chaney,
Esq., CISSP, CIPP/US