

“Hackers are just looking for easy targets and, sadly, a lot of small businesses fit the bill.”

website or LinkedIn. All the hacker has to do is send an e-mail to everyone at your company.

The e-mail might be disguised as a message addressed from you asking your employees for a gift card, which is becoming an increasingly common scam. Another e-mail tactic is making a message look like it's from a fellow employee, asking everyone else to open an attached file, which is likely malware or ransomware. A third e-mail scam is directing people to a phishing website, which is a website that scammers have designed to look like popular websites in order to get login information to hack accounts. All it takes is a single click from any employee to let the bad guys into your business.

2. THEY ATTACK YOUR NETWORK DIRECTLY.

Some hackers aren't afraid of forced entry. Hackers and cybercriminals have access to black market tools and software that helps them get into networked devices – particularly *unprotected* networked devices.

For example, if you have a PC that's connected to the Internet and your network doesn't use any firewalls, data encryption or other network protection software, a hacker can break in and steal data from that PC and potentially other devices connected to that PC, such as portable hard drives. This method of entry isn't necessarily easy for hackers, but the effort can be worth it, especially if they can walk away with sensitive financial information.

3. THEY HOLD YOUR DATA HOSTAGE.

Hackers are relying on ransomware more and more to get what they want. Hackers rely on e-mail, executable files and fraudulent web ads (such as banner ads and popups) to attack networks with ransomware. It goes back to the first point. All it takes is someone clicking a bad link or file and the next thing you know, you're locked out of your network.

This has happened to dozens of businesses and even city governments in the last year alone. The thing is that even if you pay the

ransom, there is no guarantee the hacker will restore access. They can take the money and delete everything, leaving your business high and dry! This destroys businesses!

All of these points are why you need to take a hard look at IT security solutions *and use them*. For instance, if you had all of your data *securely* backed up to the cloud and a hacker came in and tried to hold your data hostage, you wouldn't have to worry. They don't really have your data. You can tell them “no,” then all you'd have to do is work with an IT team to get your network back up and running while scrubbing it of any malware or ransomware. Then, it would be a simple matter of restoring data from the cloud. Sure, you might be out of commission for a day or two, but in the grand scheme of things, it's *much* better than losing your business to these jokers.

Hackers are just looking for easy targets and, sadly, a lot of small businesses fit the bill. Just because you haven't had any major problems yet doesn't mean you won't in the future. The threats are out there and they're not going to go away. Invest in security, partner with an IT security firm and protect yourself. This is one investment that is truly worth it!

How Does Your Current Computer Guy Stack Up?

How can you tell if you are receiving poor or substandard service? How do you know if your computer guy is doing everything possible to secure your network from downtime, cybercriminals, data loss or other frustrating and expensive disasters? Could your current computer guy actually be jeopardizing your network?

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Cartoon Of The Month

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"Do you mind if I call you back? I can't talk right now."

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3 SIMPLE WAYS INTROVERTS LEVERAGE THEIR STRENGTHS TO THRIVE IN THE WORKPLACE

Introverts can be drained by social interaction and stimulation. They need to recharge regularly, so days off are important in order for them to be at their most productive. Here are three ways introverts can be at their best in the workplace:

- **Manage energy more than your time.** When you feel most energized, that's the right time to focus on creative work that requires more brainpower. Structure your days around your energy.
- **Cultivate the right environment.** Work in a space that calms you and energizes you. Set the right light (such as natural lighting) and invest in noise-canceling headphones.
- **Say what needs to be said.** Introverts constantly think but don't always speak up. Don't let communication fall to the wayside. Remember, we're all working together. *Business Insider, Nov. 19, 2019*



The First Mistake Bad Leaders Make In A New Job

The first mistake bad leaders make in a new job is subtle, common and avoidable: they come into an organization and they don't narrow the priority list.

Coast treat) does in only giving you a menu of burger, fries and a drink.

It looks like what Scott Cook, founder of Intuit, did in making QuickBooks as easy as using your checkbook.

There are so many leaders I see who lack the analytical horsepower, the courage or the decisiveness to prune priorities, so they just let dozens, hundreds or even thousands of priorities live on in their organizations and distract people away from the small set of things that matter most.

If you want a simple way to prune priorities, use this one-page discussion guide straight out of our *Power Score* book (find that at geoffsmart.com/books/power-score-your-formula-for-leadership-success). Have your team rate your priorities 1–10. If you are scoring a nine or 10, keep doing what you are doing. If you score less than a nine, then it's time to get out the weed whacker!

In our research for *Power Score*, we found that only 24% of leaders are good at prioritizing. And when a leader is bad at prioritizing, 90% of the time it's because they let too many priorities stay alive.

In short, great leaders **prune priorities**.

What does priority pruning look like?

It looks like taking a weed whacker to the overgrown mass of useless priorities that grow inside organizations.

It looks like what Steve Jobs did when he returned to Apple and trimmed the number of products from hundreds to under 10.

It looks like what In-N-Out Burger (for those of you who have enjoyed this delicious West

How To Market To Gen Z

Generation Z is quickly becoming a major segment of the consumer space. Businesses must start marketing to this generation. They are tech-savvy, and they grew up with social media, so their phones and social connections mean everything. Here are three things to keep in mind when marketing to Gen Z.

Go to them. They aren't going to seek you out. They respond best to social media and mobile marketing. Don't pander, be personal and speak to what they get out of it.

Don't waste their time. Gen Z has a short attention span and skips walls of text and 30-second videos. Be fast and efficient. What are you selling and what are the benefits?

Avoid labels. Gen Z hates labels (including the label "Gen Z"). They don't want to be grouped with others or generalized. They value individuality immensely, so your marketing must reflect that.



Geoff Smart is chairman and founder of ghSMART. Geoff is co-author, with his colleague Randy Street, of the New York Times best-selling book, *Who: A Method For Hiring*, and the author of the No. 1 Wall Street Journal best seller *Leadocracy: Hiring More Great Leaders (Like You) Into Government*. Geoff co-created the *Topgrading* brand of talent management. He is the founder of two 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations. SMARTKids Leadership Program™ provides 10 years of leadership tutoring, and the Leaders Initiative™ seeks to deploy society's greatest leaders into government. Geoff earned a BA in Economics with honors from Northwestern University, and an MA and PhD in Psychology from Claremont Graduate University.



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Top Ways To Protect Your Remote Employees From Cyberthreats

Allowing employees to work remotely comes with its share of benefits, like increased productivity and employee happiness. But it comes with challenges as well, including staying ahead of cyberthreats. Here are three ways to protect remote employees who work from laptops, tablets and smartphones.

1. Avoid unsecured public WiFi. It may be convenient, but cybercriminals can use unsecured networks to steal data. Instead, remote workers should utilize a virtual private network (VPN). Personal hotspots are another option.

2. Require endpoint security, such as firewalls and malware protection, installed on remote workers' devices. All remote employees should use the same endpoint security so you know everything is up-to-date.

3. Develop 'cyber security best practices' for your business. Everyone, including remote workers, should be on the same page when it comes to cyber security. Make sure your employees know the threats and how to stay vigilant online. *Inc., Feb. 12, 2019*

6 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR BUSINESS MORE EFFICIENT

1. Cut the clutter. Have any outdated systems and processes that are cluttering up your business? Get rid of them. Look for inefficiencies or redundancies you can eliminate, then do it!

2. Block interruptions. When you need to work, it's okay to put up barriers. Block out your calendar when you don't want calls. Turn off all

phone notifications. Only check e-mail twice a day. Set limits!

3. Look to automation. Whether you're scheduling e-mails or social media posts, look at what you can automate to avoid wasting time.

4. Balance tech and traditional. It's okay to rely on texting, e-mail and online chat to communicate with customers, but don't forget the power of real, face-to-face communication.

5. Say no to multitasking. Multitasking is a myth. You can either do several things at once and deliver mediocre results or do one thing right the first time and deliver stellar results.

6. Invest more in cyber security. There are countless threats out there, so don't get caught without good IT security across the whole of your business. Don't risk it! *Small Business Trends, Nov. 4, 2019*

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