

Exercise walk-through

1.1

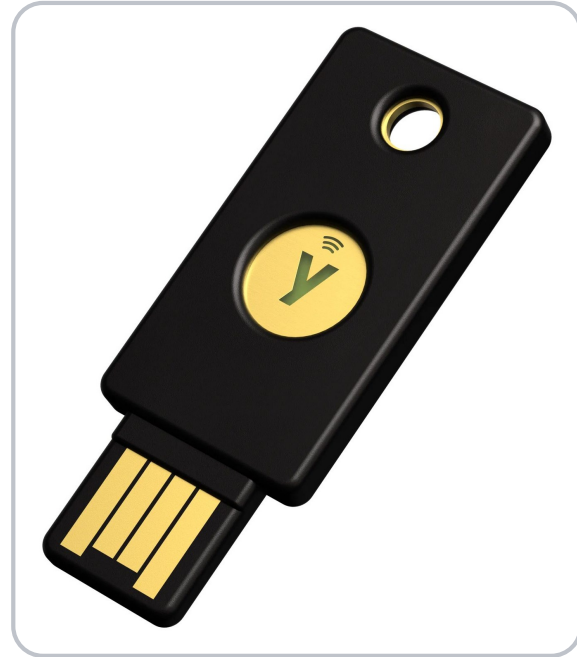
Understanding Social Engineering

AP Cybersecurity

The weakest part is the human

Social engineering tricks people into breaking security. The **adversary** does not break the **code** – only the **person**.

The goal is **elicitation** – getting sensitive information out of someone **without** them realising.



Security key

Two feelings the adversary leans on

Intimidation

a threatened bad result
– fear pushes you to act

Urgency

an invented deadline – when
rushed, we stop thinking



Security token

Worked example – naming the tactics

A phishing email

“Over 90% of staff have already verified their account – confirm yours in the next hour or lose payroll access.” Two tactics are **stacked**: “in the

next hour” → **urgency**

“over 90% of staff have already” → **consensus**

Naming each tactic –
not just calling the email
“suspicious” – is **exactly**
what an exam answer
needs.

The impact on a victim

Personal details

name, address, pet,
birthday – later used
to answer **challenge**
questions
and **imperson-**
ate them

A one-time pass- word

handed over – the ad-
versary logs in as them

Malware

downloaded – it steals
data from the browser

Exercises 2.1-2.2

2.1 Define **social engineering** in one sentence.

[2]

2.2 Name two psychological tactics used in social engineering and describe each briefly.[4]

Exercises 2.1-2.2

2.1 Define **social engineering** in one sentence.

[2]

2.1

- manipulating people (not code) into breaking security by revealing information, clicking a link, or running malware

2.2 Name two psychological tactics used in social engineering and describe each briefly. [4]

2.2

- any two of: intimidation = threatens a bad result; urgency = invents a deadline; authority = borrows a boss's power; consensus = claims everyone else acted

Exercise 2.3 (a)

2.3 An email says: “Confirm your details in the next hour or your account is deleted.”

(a) Identify the main tactic used.

[1]

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(a)

- urgency

Exercise 2.3 (b)

2.3 An email says: “Confirm your details in the next hour or your account is deleted.”

(b) Explain how it pressures the reader.

[2]

Exercise 2.3 (b)

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(b) Explain how it pressures the reader. [2]

(b)

- the 1-hour deadline makes the reader act quickly without stopping to check whether the request is safe

Exercise 3.1

3.1 An adversary threatens to report an employee to the police unless they send a file.
Which tactic is this? [1]

☐

- A** Consensus
- B** Intimidation
- C** Familiarity
- D** Scarcity

Exercise 3.1

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3.1 B

- a threat of a negative consequence is **intimidation**

Exercise 3.2

3.2 A victim gives an adversary their one-time password (OTP). The most likely impact is that the adversary can [1]

☐

A encrypt the network

B log in to a service as the victim

C jam the Wi-Fi

D clone an access card

Exercise 3.2

3.2 A victim gives an adversary their one-time password (OTP). The most likely impact is that the adversary can [1]

- ☐ **A** encrypt the network
- B** log in to a service as the victim
- C** jam the Wi-Fi
- D** clone an access card

3.2 B

- an OTP lets the adversary authenticate as the victim

Exercise 3.3 (a)

3.3 A message reads: “Over 90% of your team has already verified their account.”

(a) Name the tactic being used.

[1]

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[1]

(a)

- consensus

Exercise 3.3 (b)

3.3 A message reads: “Over 90% of your team has already verified their account.”

(b) Explain why this tactic is persuasive.

[2]

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[2]

(b)

- people tend to follow the crowd, so believing others acted pressures the victim to act too