

# Where have all the good hires gone?

Lysa Myers

Security Researcher

ESET Security

**“I believe it is in everyone’s interest that people change, not in order to avoid punishment, but because they see the change as benefiting themselves”**

Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD

Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life

# Security skills gap: a very leaky pipeline

People are dissuaded at all stages

- Primary schools lack curriculum
- Security has an image problem
- Higher Ed bottleneck
- Hiring and retention issues

# Education and outreach

What can we do about education problems?

- Give time or \$\$ to education groups
- Talk to your legislators
- Talk to your local colleges & universities
- Hire (\$\$!!) interns or apprentices
- Reconsider your requirements

# Which are your under-represented groups?

- Gender, race, ethnicity, religion
- Age, family status
- Socio-economic, educational background
- Sexual orientation, gender identity
- Veterans & military personnel
- Hearing, vision, mobility challenges
- Neurodiversity

## Additional notes on neurodiversity

- Neurodivergence is massively under-diagnosed
- Accommodations help other groups too
- Sensory processing issues
- Executive function challenges
- Be literal, explicit

# Accessibility may not be obvious



# Security's image problem

How can we change “bad press”?

- We are not wizards
- Give time or \$\$ to improve diversity
- Improve the community
- Seek candidates with non-traditional backgrounds
- Reconsider your position requirements



# Advocating for diversity

- Develop *and enforce* Codes of Conduct (CoC)
- Promotions & pay
- Seek & destroy “dead ends”
- Improve flexibility
- Amplify diverse voices

# Widening the education bottleneck

- Hire truly entry-level practitioners
- Accept external “portfolios”
- Accept community college credit
- Scholarships
- Improve existing degree programs

# Avoiding false negatives

How can we improve hiring?

- Go to where the people are
- Use standard job-description terms
- Be clear about “need” vs “want”
- “Sell” your organization to candidates

# Secret gems



# Create an enticing job posting

- Include community & cooperation
- How will candidate make a difference?
- Skip superlatives or extreme modifiers
- Describe salary range, advancement
- Use accessible text, wording
- Consider screen readers

# Consider your “requirements”

- Educational background
- Experience in # of years

*e.g. “experience solving [X] kinds of problems”*

- Certification in hand vs. after hire
- Local vs. remote

# Remote work considerations

- Productivity & efficiency
- Boosts morale & engagement
- Lowers cost & turnover
- Increases the pool of applicants
- Benefits for many different groups
- BUT it requires good communication

# What to do with your job listing

- Post to demographic-specific job boards
- Make sure site is secure!!
- Use recruiters with a proven track record
- Recruitment bonuses for employees



# Inviting interviews

- Consider candidate's schedule
- Choose a calm & quiet interview site
- Discuss travel reimbursement

## That's a good question!

- Choose questions & grading criteria in advance
- Review shortly afterwards
- Stick to job tasks & qualities

# Hiring is only half the battle

How do we support employees?

- Time & space
- Continuing education
- Psychological safety
- Sponsorship

# Onboarding new employees

- Code of Conduct
- Performance goals
- Use the buddy system
- Follow up!

## Resources

Code.org

Code Club UK

Remote.co

Project Include

BlackHoodie Workshop

Aspergirlsociety.org

Technology Education and Literacy in Schools

NICE Cybersecurity Workforce Framework

National Center for Women & IT (NCWIT.org)

Int'l Consortium of Minority Cybersecurity Pros  
(ICMCP)

Latinos in Information Sciences & Tech Assn. (LISTA)

Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics &  
Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)

Code 2040

Deaf Kids Code

Operation Code

Mother Coders

Lesbians Who Tech

Trans\*H4CK

# Questions?

Thank you!

@LysaMyers

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