

THE HUMAN FACTOR: THE WEAKEST LINK IN SECURITY

Understanding and mitigating risks associated with employee behavior



What is The Human Factor?

The Human factor is the physical, cognitive, and behavioral characteristics of humans that can affect how technology and humans interact. Some of those characteristics are:

- Fear
- Curiosity
- Urgency
- Admiration
- Loyalty
- Shame
- Guilt
- Ambition
- Greed
- Concern

Exploiting these human characteristics to convince people to do something, even something they know they aren't supposed to, is Social Engineering.


Threat Actors (the Bad Guys) use Social Engineering to get us to do what they want.

Next are some examples of Threat Actors using Social Engineering through email.

Understanding and mitigating risks associated with employee behavior


From: SharePoint Online <no-reply@sharepointonline.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 12, 2024 9:01 AM
To: @sulrossedu
Cc: Lane, Robert C <lane83@purdue.edu>
Subject: Lane, Robert C shared "Document 12" with you


Attention: This message has originated from an **External Source**. Please use proper judgment and caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding to this e-mail.

 What happened as a result
of this email?

Lane, Robert C shared a file with you

FWD: Dr. Carlos Hernandez (President) shared a file with you

 Document 12

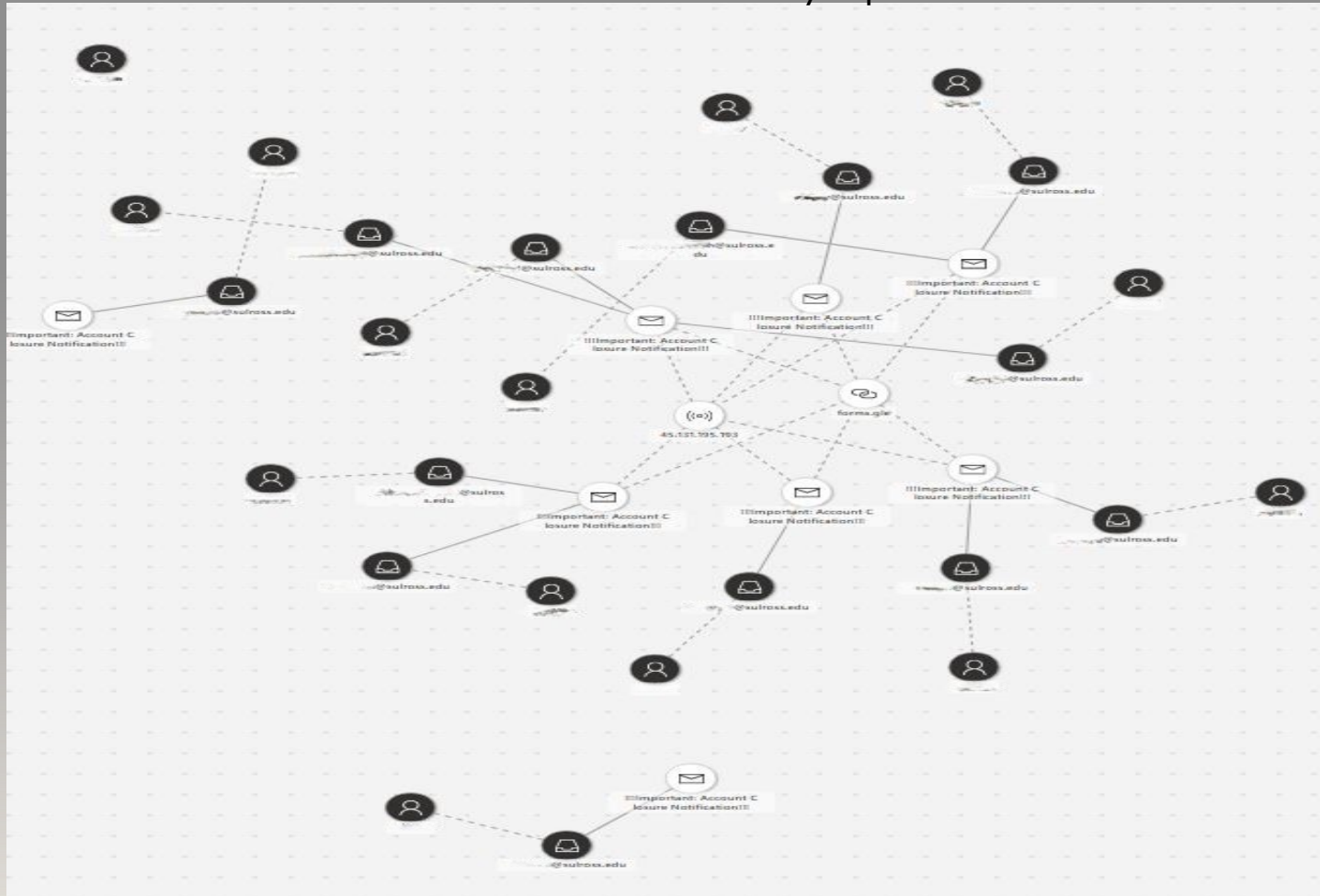
 This link only works for the direct recipients of this message.

Open

This email is generated through purdue.edu's use of Microsoft 365 and may contain content that is controlled by purdue.edu.

- Do I need to open this file from the President? **No**.
- Threat Actors: use urgency, loyalty, and duty as a weapon to deceive and exploit the human factor.
- What is wrong with this image? Conflicting information and “Attention: External Source”

The Human Factor was successfully exploited!



SUL ROSS
OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Human Factor was successfully exploited!

| 1 | Timestamp | ActionType | AccountUpn | UrlChain |
|----|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|--|
| 2 | 12/12/2024 8:53 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3aj3pPgu&at=9"] |
| 3 | 12/12/2024 9:00 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EZHPOFv2q95Io10-BOVOj30BS9rshANB1PEBa33xkZcGKw?e=4%3al6krZ4&at=9"] |
| 4 | 12/12/2024 8:57 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3ap6lcyI&at=9"] |
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| 6 | 12/12/2024 8:58 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aYecI&at=9"] |
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| 11 | 12/12/2024 8:57 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aGZzv58&at=9"] |
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| 13 | 12/12/2024 8:53 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3aj3pPgu&at=9"] |
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| 15 | 12/12/2024 8:55 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3a7BKUCL&at=9"] |
| 16 | 12/12/2024 8:56 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EWtb3YmLjzxGvK3wI0nw2oAB9bUrmI6nk1hrvO4OdKaOeQ?e=4%3aGXaiuv&at=9"] |
| 17 | 12/12/2024 8:58 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EZHPOFv2q95Io10-BOVOj30BS9rshANB1PEBa33xkZcGKw?e=4%3aLxcVLz&at=9"] |
| 18 | 12/12/2024 8:55 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3aQmEdpN&at=9"] |
| 19 | 12/12/2024 9:02 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EWtb3YmLjzxGvK3wI0nw2oAB9bUrmI6nk1hrvO4OdKaOeQ?e=4%3apkqjb1&at=9"] |
| 20 | 12/12/2024 9:17 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3a1xz6yU&at=9"] |
| 21 | 12/12/2024 9:08 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3avOjDzP&at=9"] |
| 22 | 12/12/2024 8:55 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3aqtTw8r&at=9"] |
| 23 | 12/12/2024 9:08 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3a4yOAKw&at=9"] |
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| 25 | 12/12/2024 8:55 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EWtb3YmLjzxGvK3wI0nw2oAB9bUrmI6nk1hrvO4OdKaOeQ?e=4%3aGXaiuv&at=9"] |
| 26 | 12/12/2024 8:59 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EZHPOFv2q95Io10-BOVOj30BS9rshANB1PEBa33xkZcGKw?e=4%3a8AVO2R&at=9"] |
| 27 | 12/12/2024 9:01 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3avOjDzP&at=9"] |
| 28 | 12/12/2024 9:24 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EZHPOFv2q95Io10-BOVOj30BS9rshANB1PEBa33xkZcGKw?e=4%3a2MUSeo&at=9"] |
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| 30 | 12/12/2024 9:13 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/ETxYK245i5GpyUw2i-JMn8BTg3UQHsAEMTKhk9w7LDNjg?e=4%3aO2WvqH&at=9"] |
| 31 | 12/12/2024 9:00 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EZHPOFv2q95Io10-BOVOj30BS9rshANB1PEBa33xkZcGKw?e=4%3aNcuc0P&at=9"] |
| 32 | 12/12/2024 9:08 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aIHEJC1&at=9"] |
| 33 | 12/12/2024 9:02 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3avOjDzP&at=9"] |
| 34 | 12/12/2024 9:05 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EZHPOFv2q95Io10-BOVOj30BS9rshANB1PEBa33xkZcGKw?e=4%3asOYr4&at=9"] |
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| 36 | 12/12/2024 9:04 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aIbmNsu&at=9"] |
| 37 | 12/12/2024 8:57 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EVvO2WPWZjBEqDIPMxqyHUoBwZKsxIK_-xyOhpePdDylsQ?e=4%3aQmEdpN&at=9"] |
| 38 | 12/12/2024 8:56 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aqFJ7vY&at=9"] |
| 39 | 12/12/2024 9:33 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aBthSGg&at=9"] |
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| 41 | 12/12/2024 9:33 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aBthSGg&at=9"] |
| 42 | 12/12/2024 9:35 | ClickAllowed | laneg83@sulross.edu | ["https://purdue0-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/laneg83_purdue_edu/EcnqnLfj-dlPIJmxrl67qnABUSihl4Q0213A7PJH0B71uA?e=4%3aBthSGg&at=9"] |



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From: IT@sulross.edu

Date: Jan 31, 2025 at 3:28 PM

Subject: **!!!Last Chance: Update Your School Portal Before Suspension!!!**

As part of the 2025 academic session requirements, all students are required to update their information on the school portal.

This update is essential to ensure continued access to school services, including course registration, financial aid processing, and other academic resources.

Important Notice: Failure to complete this update will result in the suspension of your account, restricting access to all school-related services. click update now below to complete it

[UPDATE NOW](#)

IT DESK

The Human Factor was successfully exploited!

- If I don't do this right now, will they terminate my account? No.
- Threat Actors: use fear, urgency, and concern as a weapon to deceive and exploit the human factor.
- Has AI assisted in the creation of this email? Yes, proper use of English language, in the past wording was poor.
- What is wrong with this image? !!!Last Chance:!!, Important Notice: Failure.. Suspension.. UPDATE NOW

Fri 1/24/2025 6:42 PM
Elizabeth.HR@engineer.com
Part-Time Customer Service Representative Job Opening – Flexible Hours & Competitive Pay
To @sulross.edu

Dear ~~Elizabeth Huffman~~,

I hope this message finds you well. I am reaching out to inform you of an exciting new job opening for the position of Part-Time Customer Service Representative. We would greatly appreciate it if you could share this opportunity with your students.

Job Title: Part-Time Customer Service Representative
Location: Remote
Pay: \$25.00 per hour / \$500 weekly
Work Schedule: Flexible hours

This position offers the flexibility that many students may find ideal, with competitive compensation. Interested applicants can send their resumes to Elizabeth Huffington at Elizabeth.HR@engineer.com. We encourage your students to apply as soon as possible, as we are eager to find the right candidate to join our team.

Thank you for your support in spreading the word, and we look forward to reviewing your students' applications.

Best regards,
Elizabeth Huffington
HR Coordinator

SCS Technologies LLC
3423 L-20 Frontage Rd, Big Spring, TX 79720
361-289-5273

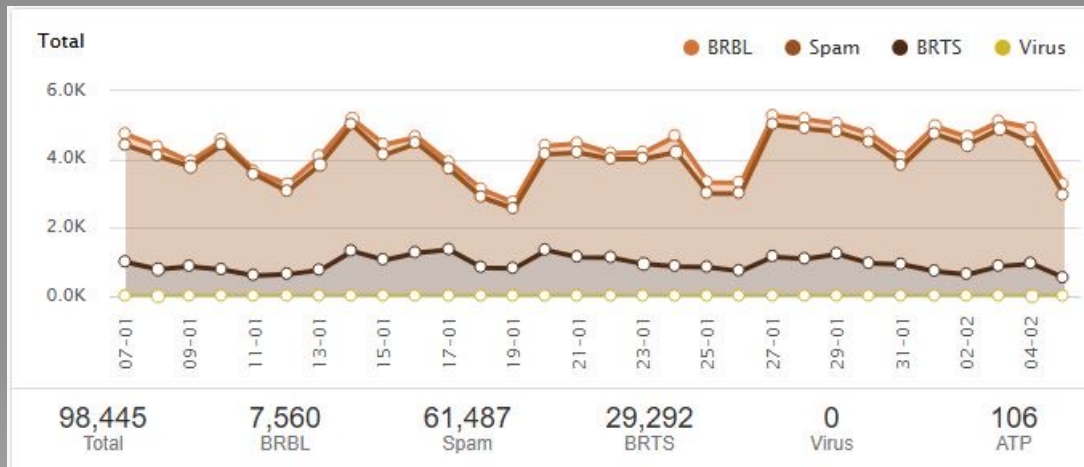
https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.scsstechglobal.com&c=E,1,h4vZuGltmU-DnPgQej38_GDbXICSHKvBsCby2aAl0NXVRZlZMR7p6qp-qzJG9iAtmtOb4r-UdHVD0NmNL-fSMLUuanWVjc08DVVFjjh43Wkqod6_L_o,&typo=1

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."Philippians 4:13

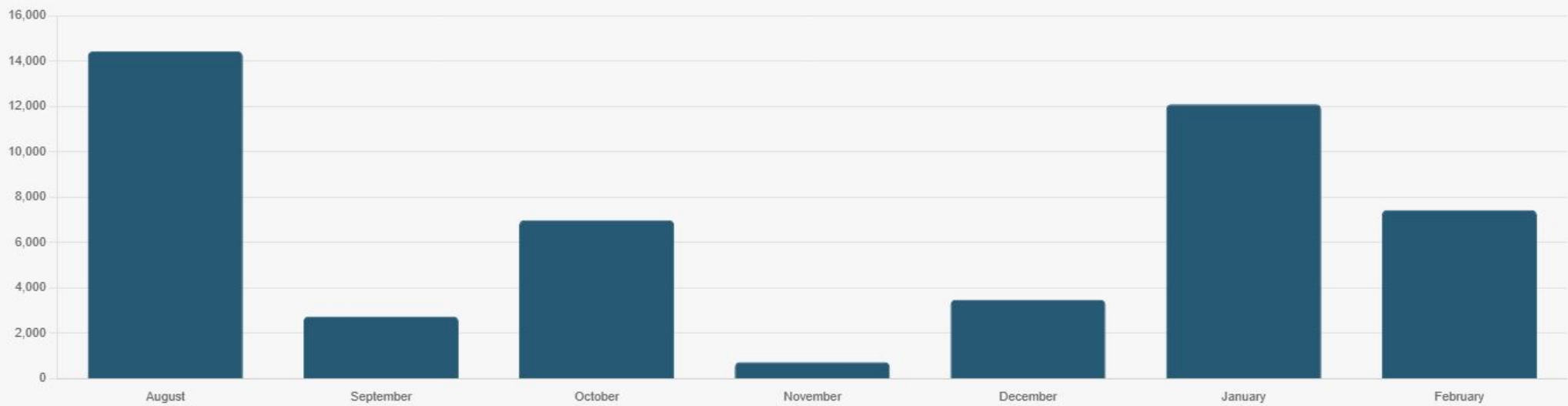
- Oh wow \$25.00 per hour, Flexible hours. This could really help!
- Threat Actors: use loyalty, ambition, and curiosity as a weapon to deceive and exploit the human factor.
- Has AI assisted in the creation of this email? Yes, there was even a real website, and person to answer the phone.
- What is wrong with this image? The area code for Big Spring, Texas is 432, and there is an active link.



OIT can protect
Faculty/Staff/Students
97% of the time.



The other 3% is The Human
Factor:– Secured through
education and continued
training!



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OIT would like each Faculty/Staff member to read each email until a threat is identified or suspected.

If a threat is suspected: email abuse@sulross.edu and attach the suspected email.

If a threat is confirmed: On the web browser version outlook.office.com right click email and report. Otherwise attach email and send to abuse@sulross.edu



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SPECIAL NOTE: OIT helpdesk has moved from ACR 105 to ACR 107
We do accept walk-ins or Call 432-837-8888 or email: ltac@sulross.edu

THE HUMAN FACTOR: THE WEAKEST LINK IN SECURITY

Understanding and mitigating risks associated with employee behavior

SECURING THE HUMAN

Created By: Paedric Rayburn & Sarah Sheffield -- OIT



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