



# How To Make Cyber Security An Ingrained Part Of Your Company Culture

Your employees are your first line of defense when it comes to protecting your business from cyberthreats. Human error is one of the single biggest culprits behind cyber-attacks. It comes down to someone falling for a phishing scam, clicking an unknown link or downloading a file without realizing that it's malicious.

Because your team is so critical to protecting your business from cyberthreats, it's just as critical to keep your team informed and on top of today's dangers. One way to do that is to weave cybersecurity into your existing company culture.

## How Do You Do That?

For many employees, cybersecurity is rarely an engaging topic. In truth, it can be dry at times, especially for people outside of the cybersecurity industry, but it can boil down to presentation. That isn't to say you need to make cybersecurity "fun," but make it interesting or engaging. It should be accessible and a normal part of the workday.

**Bring It Home For Your Team.** One of the reasons why people are often disconnected from topics related to cyber security is simply because they don't have firsthand experience with it. This is also one reason why many small businesses don't invest in cyber security in the first place – it hasn't happened to them, so they don't think it will. Following that logic, why invest in it at all?

The thing is that it will eventually happen. It's never a question of if, but when. Cyberthreats are more common than ever. Of course, this also means it's easier to find examples you can share with your team. Many major companies have been attacked. Millions of people have had their personal data stolen. Look for examples that employees can relate to, names they are familiar with, and discuss the damage that's been done.

If possible, bring in personal examples. Maybe you or someone you know has been the victim of a cyber-attack, such as ransomware or a data breach. The closer you can bring it home to your employees, the more they can relate, which means they're listening.

**Collaborate With Your Employees.** Ask what your team needs from you in terms of cyber security. Maybe they have zero knowledge about data security and they could benefit from training. Or maybe they need access to better tools and resources. Make it a regular conversation with employees and respond to their concerns.

Part of that can include transparency with employees. If Julie in accounting received a phishing e-mail, talk about it. Bring it up in the next weekly huddle or all-company meeting. Talk about what was in the e-mail and point out its identifying features. Do this every time phishing e-mails reach your employees.

Or, maybe Jared received a mysterious e-mail and made the mistake of clicking the link within that e-mail. Talk about that with everyone, as well. It's not about calling out Jared. It's about having a conversation and not placing blame. The focus should be on educating and filling in the gaps. Keep the conversation going and make it a normal part of your company's routine. The more you talk about it and the more open you are, the more it becomes a part of the company culture.

**Keep Things Positive.** Coming from that last point, you want employees to feel safe in bringing their concerns to their supervisors or managers. While there are many cyberthreats that can do serious damage to your business (and this should be stressed to employees), you want to create an environment where employees are willing to ask for help and are encouraged to learn more about these issues.

Basically, employees should know they won't get into trouble if something happens. Now, if an employee is blatantly not following your company's IT rules, that's a different matter. But for the day-to-day activities, creating a positive, educational, collaborative environment is the best way to make cybersecurity a normal part of your company culture.

Plus, taking this approach builds trust, and when you and your team have that trust, it becomes easier to tackle issues of data and network security – and to have necessary conversations.

**Need help creating a cyber security company culture that's positive? Don't hesitate to reach out to ACTSmart at 781-826-9665. We can help you lay the foundation for educating your team and ensure that everyone is on the same page when it comes to today's constant cyberthreats.**

*From the desk of*



Boy, I have had some health challenges over the last month!

We thought it was just bad allergies but I was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia in the middle of April. While on their routine blood thinner regime, I had severe blood loss that necessitated 3 pints of blood. When I had an endoscopy, they found a huge mass in the middle of my esophagus that was the source. Thankfully, the biopsy wasn't cancerous as expected. I have Barrett's Esophagus that will need to be routinely monitored.

Currently, I am recovering at home. Although I will probably be home for about a month, I can monitor what's happening at the office and Justin is doing a great job in my place.

In the office, we have switched from Zoom and Slack to Microsoft Teams. It has more functionality as well as the ability to record every meeting without paying for extra storage in the Cloud or somewhere in the office. We know that it has even more features and we will continue to explore its benefits.



As you read this, our team will be fully vaccinated! We are looking forward to May 24th when we can go maskless in the office! On-site, we will still be following our strict COVID protocols as well as the protocols set by each client. It will be great to see our Team Members' smiles!

If you have any questions or concerns as I recover, Beth and Justin will be able to help you and I am just a phone call away.

Thank you for your support!  
- David

# COVID-19 Questions

## for Dr Lisa Kane of Dental Office Compliance

by Pam Snell, [www.ACTSmartIT.com](http://www.ACTSmartIT.com)

You may remember Dr. Lisa Kane, who has been our go-to expert during the Pandemic. She helped us get our office ready so our Team could come back to work and she gave us training so we'd stay healthy, socially distant and compliant. We recently tracked her down to ask her to help us again. She's been busy initiating new programs, including a Quarterly Compliance Maintenance Program and Monthly Safety Meetings.

Now, we have a few questions for her that may have crossed your mind too.

**1. We don't have visitors here at our office. After we have all had our vaccinations and the two weeks after the 2nd dose, will we still have to wear masks around each other and be socially compliant?**

*If EVERYONE that you are with is completely vaccinated, and no one has a high-risk person in their family or that they live with, then, yes, you can be without masks with each other.*

**2. After family and friends have also completed their doses and two-week period, can we visit without wearing masks?**

*You can visit inside a home or private setting without a mask with other fully vaccinated people of any age. You can also visit inside a home or private setting without a mask with one household of unvaccinated people who are not at risk for severe illness.*

*You do not want to mix households and have any unvaccinated people from different households together without social distancing, masks, proper ventilation, or ideally being outside*

**3. Vacation time is coming. Will we still have to quarantine if we leave the state or visit people who haven't completed their vaccination process?**

*If you are fully vaccinated, you can travel domestically without a pre-or post-travel test and without quarantining after travel.*

*You can also travel internationally without a pre-travel test depending on the destination and without quarantining after travel.*

From the CDC:

*You do NOT need to get tested before leaving the United States unless your destination requires it.*

*You still need to show a negative test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before boarding a flight to the United States.*

*You should still get tested 3-5 days after international travel.*

*You do NOT need to self-quarantine after arriving in the United States.*

**4. Any don'ts?**

*Don't visit indoors without a mask with people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.*

*Don't attend medium or large gatherings.*

Thanks Dr Kane! Although we will be following our strict protocols when on-site or answering our door, we're looking forward to being "liberated" from masks here in the office on May 24th! Hurray!



# Pity the Poor Semicolon

by Susan Rooks, [www.GrammarGoddess.com](http://www.GrammarGoddess.com) | 508-272-5120



Have you noticed how many times semicolons get dragged into the wrong place in a sentence?

Too often, one is used instead of a comma or colon, either of which would be happy to take its place. Too many writers have no idea what to do with it, and I hope this post will help.

Here are the three — yes, only three — basic rules in the American grammar system for using a semicolon in business writing. If you are writing a thesis of some kind, you might find another rule or two, but first — let's all master these three.

**1. Compound Sentences:** Use a semicolon to join two independent clauses (simple sentences) together. Each sentence could stand on its own (each has a subject and predicate and is a finished thought), but you choose to join them because they work better as a complete thought. Simply replace the period of the first sentence with a semicolon, as shown below, and you're good to go!

As separate sentences:

Mary had a sandwich for lunch. John opted for a burger.  
John's running late. Susan will fill in for him until he arrives.

With the semicolon used correctly:

Mary had a sandwich for lunch; John opted for a burger.  
John's running late; Susan will fill in for him until he arrives.

Connect them by using a comma, and one of the seven coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, nor, or, so, yet).  
Mary had a sandwich for lunch, but John opted for a burger.  
John's running late, so Susan will fill in for him until he arrives.

**NOTE:** There is no requirement to join the two independent sentences, but many writers realize that always writing short sentences makes them look as though they never left third grade, which is hardly the impression most writers want to make.

**2. Transitional Expressions:** If you link independent clauses with terms such as for example, however, moreover, namely, nevertheless, or therefore, replace the period of the first sentence with a semicolon. Again, you may always choose to keep the sentences separate.

We'll go to the movie. However, we'll wait until the 9 p.m. show.  
We'll go to the movie; however, we'll wait until the 9 p.m. show.

She's fully qualified for the job. For example, she's had ten years' experience.

She's fully qualified for the job; for example, she's had ten years' experience.

**3. Items in a Complex Series:** Items in a complex series contain required internal commas, so we use semicolons to separate the sections. Think of the semicolon as an "internal traffic cop"; it's not an end mark of punctuation, but within a sentence of this type it indicates a section is finished.

In the example below, it's especially difficult to figure out who is who when the occupations and names are written as shown. Which name goes with which occupation?

Please invite the President, Ann Murphy, the Executive Vice President, Sam Smith, the Director of Investor Relations, and Penny Smith, the Chief Financial Officer.

If you read all the way to the end, the sequence becomes clear: The name comes before the occupation in the sentence. That means that "President" has no name attached to it — in this sentence.

Any easier?

Please invite the President; Ann Murphy, the Executive Vice President; Sam Smith, the Director of Investor Relations; and Penny Smith, the Chief Financial Officer.

Using the semicolon after President is intended to show that the name following it does not belong to it. Will that work with every reader? Nope. Nothing works with everyone, but here we're trying to make it easier to understand for most readers.

Maybe even easier?

Please invite the President; the Executive Vice President, Ann Murphy; the Director of Investor Relations, Sam Smith; and the Chief Financial Officer, Penny Smith.

Now, in the real world, we'd find out that President's name, right? So, I'm just showing this sentence for illustrative purposes.

One more example:

The firm has offices in Boston, Mass.; Cranston, R.I.; Atlanta, Ga.; and San Diego, Calif.

The last example again shows required commas (between the cities and the states) but the state name ends a specific section of the sentence, thus requiring a semicolon after it.

Here are a few common NO-NOs:

- ✗ Mary said to John; "Are we going out tonight?" (Use a comma.)
- ✗ John and Mary went to the show; but they arrived late. (Use a comma.)
- ✗ Dear John; (Use a comma.)
- ✗ Dear Mr. Smith; (Use a colon.)
- ✗ Although they tried to plan; they failed. (Use a comma.)
- ✗ I need just three things to finish; scissors, glue, and tape. (Use a colon.)

In the end, if we can remember that semicolons have a very restricted use, we might write clearer prose. And we'd make our grammar teachers very, very happy.

# Be Effective on LinkedIn by Following Best Practices

By Jeff Young, #TheLinkedInGuru, [www.Linkedin.com/in/jeffyoungralemoi](http://www.Linkedin.com/in/jeffyoungralemoi)

I know that some people are going to disagree with what I have said in this edition.

That's okay. I'm not telling you what to do. I'm just going to relate what works for me. If what you do works for you, well then keep doing it! I'm no expert... I'm a Guru (Teacher). But, I have been on LinkedIn since May of 2004 and I like to be thought of like Farmer's Insurance. "I know a thing or two about LinkedIn because I have seen a thing or two on LinkedIn".

So here are a few things that I regard as "best practices" (for me, anyway) shown in the form of Do's and Don'ts.

## How Often and What Should I Post?

Do - Post when the "muse" strikes you and when you have something meaningful to say.

Don't - Fall into the trap of adding NOISE instead of adding VALUE. If you post too often you are probably not adding much value because you are not giving folks time to engage and make it a two-way conversation.

Do - Be consistent in both content and (to some degree) in timing. Have a "theme" that you come back to often such as "Tip of the Week" or "Monday Motivation", for example.

Don't - Bother people with your deepest personal problems. Most people who don't know you probably don't care to hear them and can't help you solve your issues. Ask for help with personal issues from individuals you know, like and trust, not from the world at large.

## Should I "Like" My Own Stuff?

Do - Like, celebrate, support, love, say it inspires you or makes you curious on OTHER people's stuff. But, when you do that also comment and say what you liked, celebrated, etc. with words that are meaningful

Don't - Indulge in self-love. It may feel good, but it comes across as if you are trying to get the algorithm's attention and only trying to help yourself.

Don't - Include a link to YOUR "stuff" (website, posts, articles, etc.) in OTHER people's posts unless you have asked for their permission. It is bad etiquette to take people away from a person's post unless they have said it is okay!

## Should I Mention Other People in My Posts?

Do - Mention people who have given you permission to tag them and that you KNOW will enjoy engaging on the topic. Mention people to give them credit for an idea or credit for inspiring you. Be brief and keep the number of mentions to a minimum. Don't - "Tag-stuff" (sometimes called "Mention-stuffing"). It's really bad form and can irritate folks if they are not interested in the topic of your post.

## Should I Always Comment Back?

Do - Give folks the common courtesy of a reply. If they actually took the time to join the conversation, make sure you reply and make it a TWO-WAY conversation.

Don't - Ghost someone when they reply to YOUR comment. I find it very annoying when I take the time to reply (and even mention a person so they will see it) and nothing happens... no reaction, no more engagement.

Makes me think that they don't care if I reply or not. Makes me think all they wanted to do was say something, but they aren't interested in what I have to say...

Don't - Be a part of an "engagement pod" whose sole purpose it to "game" the algorithm and requires people to comment whether they have anything to say or not.

Do - Say more than "nice post" or "love it" or the real spam comment "Hi" when you join the conversation. Engage by giving your opinion and experience that is RELEVANT to the conversation.

Don't - Ignore your notifications because if you do, you are ignoring your audience.

As a matter of fact, one "best practice" I have on my activity feed is to check on my last 4 - 5 posts to see if there are any new (Most recent) comments because LinkedIn "forgets" to notify me sometimes. I have replied to comments that are from one week up to over a month old...

And, here is a thought... Do you know what makes a post successful for me? It's not about the number of views. I love it when I do a post and the total number of COMMENTS actually outnumber the total number of REACTIONS. That tells me that people wanted to join the conversation. That's where the real action is... ENGAGEMENT.

## Once I Have Built My Profile I am Done, Right?

Do - Build a profile that would make your momma proud. Tell people what you do, the value you bring and "why" you might be able to help them. Focus on your audience.

Don't - Fall into the "field of dreams" (if I build it they will come) trap. It takes more than just your profile to make a difference on LinkedIn. It takes time, commitment to showing up and you can't do it alone. Don't forget it "takes a village"!

## Summary

As I said before, some folks are going to disagree and that's okay. These are only MY best practices. And, I have always felt that as a teacher...

Namaste and thank you!



# 4 Strategies to Improve Your Customer Service Standards



by Bernie Heine, [www.TheProfessionalBusinessCoaches.com](http://www.TheProfessionalBusinessCoaches.com) | 781-319-9820



No matter what your business is all about, customers are always at the core of it and should be your top priority. If the majority of them are happy, you're much more likely to build credibility and bring in more business. Some research has shown that almost 80% of the customers are very likely to recommend a company to a friend if they had a pleasant experience. So, you can understand how important it is to keep them satisfied. That's exactly why we created this list of the best strategies to improve your customer service standards.

According to some professionals that we've talked to, many customers will value the experience much more than the actual prices and products. Therefore, it makes sense for them to spend more for better customer service. It's as simple as that. Here's what you can do to achieve that.

## Make Your Customer Service Team Stronger

The first of our four strategies to improve your customer service standards is building a strong team to deal with your customers.

Having professionals with the right set of skills is crucial for pretty much any of the strategies to improve your customer service standards.

### Hire and Train Professionals

To be clear right from the start, no artificial intelligence (AI)

can be a substitute for a human when it comes to providing exceptional customer service. However, you need to choose the people with the right skills and personalities for the job.

Organize training sessions for your existing employees, and for the ones that are joining your team. This will help with improving their skills and that's exactly what you need. The things you should work on are:

**Communication Skills** - Every person that works in customer service simply has to have excellent communication skills. They'll have to explain everything in a positive way, and the idea is that the customer never leaves unsatisfied.

**Empathy and Patience** - These people will have to deal with all kinds of customers. Some of them are confused, while others have numerous questions. A customer support rep has to deal with all of them patiently and professionally. Sometimes that's a hard thing to do, so simple ways to increase motivation in the workplace can come in handy here.

**Knowledge** - Your employees that work in the CS need to have great knowledge about your products, plans, and services to be able to do a good job. If they're not sure about something, the best thing to say is "I'll get back to you right after checking with our product team". No incorrect information is allowed.





### Get Feedback from Your Customers

You need to understand your customers and their needs in order to be able to give them the best possible customer support. And the best way to do this is by ensuring that they have multiple ways to give their feedback.

You can use telephone surveys or you can encourage them to send feedback via mail. You can even create a complaint system on your website. This will probably be the best way to enable them to raise their issues. You'll learn all about the both good and bad experiences they had with your company. These are the real insights into the things you couldn't obtain otherwise.

Connecting with your customers in order to get feedback will have one additional benefit. They'll feel that you value them and trust them and their opinions. Your will to resolve their issues can only bring good things. You'll establish trust, and that is very important for running a business.

For example, only if you run a company that has the credibility and the confidence of its customers can you perform a relocation that won't affect your business. So, it pays to invest in customer support as you'll get much more in return.

Talk to your customers and discover their needs, wants and problems regarding your company.

### Use CRM Platforms

One problem that often occurs among companies is that they struggle to establish effective connections and coordination between their teams. What this leads to is customer dissatisfaction. This is where you may start wondering if you are a truly effective business leader. However, the problem is much smaller than it may seem. Luckily, there is a way to easily overcome this issue.

Many companies record success thanks to using smart

CRM platforms. These are the systems that are made to ensure that everyone is on the same page, which is very important for all the strategies to improve your customer service standards.

We'll give you just a few of the benefits of CRM platforms, so you can see how useful they can be. For starters, it provides useful information about your customers. Then, it improves customer interaction and engagement and enables your sales and service teams to work more closely. You'll improve your customer satisfaction and that's exactly what you want.

It's also worth mentioning that most CRM platforms are accessible via desktop, laptop, or mobile devices so they work at any time anywhere in the world.

### Multi-Channel Servicing Is a Must

According to research, around 70% of the US population prefers to buy from brands that offer customer support 24/7 across multiple channels. This is why you as a brand pretty much have to provide omnichannel communication support if you want to be competitive and relevant.

Your customers should be able to switch across your different channels and get consistent quality of service. This is what will boost your brand reputation the most. Here's what channels to focus on if you want to achieve the success trinity that is often mentioned in business circles.

Social media is always the first thing on the list. These websites and applications have become the main source of information and communication. Make sure to utilize their power to bridge the gap between you and your customers.

Mobile devices. People always need good customer service when they're on the go, and you need to provide it. These pages on your website should be optimized for mobile devices so they meet their expectations.

Self-service. And by that, we mean the FAQ page on your website. Often customers want to resolve some minor issues by themselves so be sure to make that possible for them.

You need to cover both mobile devices and social networks to have good quality customer support service.

### Conclusion

Even if you feel like your customer service standards are up to scratch, know that there's no such thing as overdelivering. Therefore, feel free to experiment and be sure to try all of the strategies to improve your customer service standards we have suggested.

*Give us a call if you want to discuss ways to make your organization more agile or help you personally navigate this difficult time; we're only too glad to help. 781-319-9820*

## In This Issue

- **How To Make Cyber Security An Ingrained Part Of Your Company Culture**
- **COVID-19 Questions for Dr Lisa Kane of Dental Office Compliance**
- **Pity the Poor Semicolon**
- **Be Effective on LinkedIn by Following Best Practices**
- **4 Strategies to Improve Your Customer Service Standards**
- **AND MORE!**

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# Half A Billion Facebook Users' Info Posted On Hacking Website

From David's Tech Talk Radio Spot on 95.9 WATD Every Tuesday Morning at 8:10am

The exposed data includes personal information of over 533 million Facebook users from 106 countries, including over 32 million records on users in the US, 11 million on users in the UK, and 6 million on users in India. It includes their phone numbers, Facebook IDs, full names, locations, birthdates, bios, relationship status, and, in some cases, email addresses. All available to hackers, scammers, and spammers for free.

If that 533 million number might sound familiar to you, that's because this information is apparently from the same stolen dataset that people could pay for portions of using a Telegram bot, which was reported on in January. Now it appears that those who want to get their hands on the data won't have to pay anything at all.

Facebook admitted that this data was scraped because of a vulnerability that FB fixed in 2019. The company gave a similar answer in January. "This is old data that was previously reported on in 2019, We found and fixed this issue in August 2019." Facebook has not replied to a request for comment from The Verge.

Troy Hunt, the creator of the Have I Been Pwned database, said on Saturday that "I haven't seen anything yet to suggest this breach isn't legit." In the data, he found only about 2.5 million unique email addresses (which is still a lot!), but apparently, "the greatest impact here is the phone numbers."

Although this data is from 2019 it could still be of value to hackers and cybercriminals like those who engage in identity theft.

The way the data was sorted and posted on the hacking site makes it far more accessible for criminals to exploit.

These are the pieces of data cybercriminals spend time searching for to perform social engineering attacks — now they're all in one place and easily accessible in this leak, which makes social engineering quicker and easier.

Hunt has already loaded the leaked email addresses into Have I Been Pwned, meaning you can check to see if yours was included as part of the dataset. He is still considering whether or not to make the leaked phone numbers available through the service.

You can check to see if your email was included: [www.HaveIBeenPwned.com](http://www.HaveIBeenPwned.com)