

Social Engineering Red Flags

Security Awareness

1 FROM

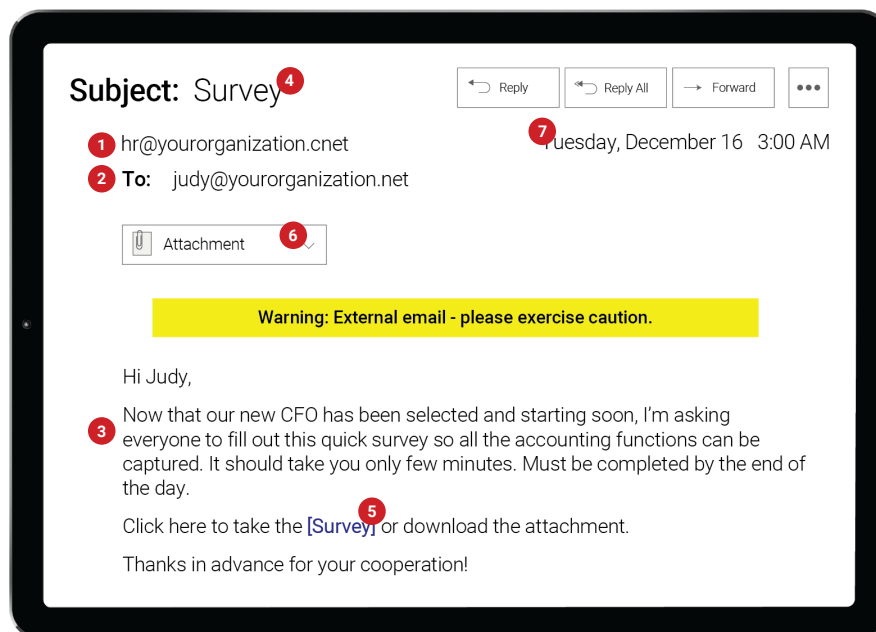
- I don't recognize the sender's email address as someone I ordinarily communicate with.
- This email is from someone outside my organization and it's not related to my job responsibilities.
- This email was sent from someone inside the organization or from a customer, vendor, or partner and is very unusual or out of character.
- Is the sender's email address from a suspicious domain (like micorsoft-support.com)?
- I don't know the sender personally and they were not vouched for by someone I trust.
- I don't have a business relationship nor any past communications with the sender.
- This is an unexpected or unusual email with an embedded hyperlink or an attachment from someone I haven't communicated with recently.

2 TO

- I was cc'd on an email sent to one or more people, but I don't personally know the other people it was sent to.
- I received an email that was also sent to an unusual mix of people. For instance, it might be sent to a random group of people at my organization whose last names start with the same letter, or a whole list of unrelated addresses.

3 CONTENT

- Is the sender asking me to click on a link or open an attachment to avoid a negative consequence or to gain something of value?
- Is the email out of the ordinary, or does it have bad grammar or spelling errors?
- Is the sender asking me to click a link or open up an attachment that seems odd or illogical?
- Do I have an uncomfortable gut feeling about the sender's request to open an attachment or click a link?
- Is the email asking me to look at a compromising or embarrassing picture of myself or someone I know?



4 SUBJECT

- Did I get an email with a subject line that is irrelevant or does not match the message content?
- Is the email message a reply to something I never sent or requested?

5 HYPERLINKS

- I hover my mouse over a hyperlink that's displayed in the email message, but the link-to address is for a different website. (This is a big red flag.)
- I received an email that only has long hyperlinks with no further information and the rest of the email is completely blank.
- I received an email with a hyperlink that is a misspelling of a known website. For instance, www.bankofarnerica.com — the "m" is really two characters — "r" and "n."

6 ATTACHMENTS

- The sender included an email attachment that I was not expecting or that makes no sense in relation to the email message. (This sender doesn't ordinarily send me this type of attachment.)
- I see an attachment with a possibly dangerous file type.

7 DATE

- Did I receive an email that I normally would get during regular business hours, but it was sent at an unusual time like 3:00 a.m.?

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