



L.E.T.S TALK!

HELPFUL TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

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This newsletter aims to help you find better and more effective ways of using technology.

This issue's topic: Network Security - Importance of Good Passwords

There are many ways of securing our network/workstations but one of the most important elements is authentication. Authentication is a method by which a user tells the system three things:

1. Who are you? → Your username
2. What rights do you have? → Predefined security/policy settings
3. How do I know who you are? → Password

Passwords were used in the ancient times where Sentries guarding a location would ask for a password and only then a person would be able to enter the compounds.

Common misconception is that passwords are just a hindrance instead of a benefit. Passwords are our first line of defense against intruders and therefore must be protected. Here are some guidelines:

1. Never give your password to anyone.
2. Writing down your password is not recommended - especially on your computer, or near it.
3. Make sure no one is watching while you type your password.
4. Never email your password.
5. Passwords should be changed on a regular basis.

Following are some hints for picking a good password. **Your password should:**

- a) Not contain significant portions of the user's account name or full name.
- b) Be at least six characters in length.
- c) Not be a dictionary word.
- d) Contain characters from three of the following four categories:
 1. English uppercase characters (A through Z).
 2. English lowercase characters (a through z).
 3. Base 10 digits (0 through 9).
 4. Non-alphabetic characters (e.g.!,\$,#,%,&).

An easy way to create a new password is to use a sentence in your everyday life and replace letters to numbers and other characters. For example: I ate cranberry salmon and potatoes today → I8cs&p2d (This is a good password meeting the above guidelines).



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