

Key Findings from THE INFLUENCE OF SECURITY RISK MANAGEMENT

Understanding Security’s Corporate Sphere of Risk Influence

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FINDING EIGHT: INFLUENCE IS IMPACTED BY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Security, as an area of technical specialized activity, does not exert the degree of corporate influence experienced by other business areas of technical specialization such as law or accounting. However, individuals themselves can achieve very high levels of influence through personal leadership, where influence is best considered on a continuum and is a convergence of an individual’s education and experience, personality facets including communication skills, and the organizational risk context in which they operate.

The study found that the influence of security professionals is limited by a number of factors including:

- Organizational hierarchy (security sits in the supporting technostructure and has limited strategic relevance)
- Risk hierarchy (security is operational and therefore less strategically important)
- Appropriate engagement with the decision maker
- Poor comprehension of and engagement within a broader risk context
- Professional disrespect

- Language clarity issues in the risk management industry

However the study found that many of these limitations could be overcome and security’s sphere of risk influence was a factor of an individual’s personal attributes, rather than something tied to the corporate security sector function. The initial analysis of the standards found limited evidence of personal and managerial attributes, however, individual leadership qualities—rather than managerial skills—featured heavily in the focus group discourse.

Appearances that the security function lacks deeper respect, is narrowly focused, and operates in a silo, however, are not so established that they

cannot be changed. In our study, several individual security professionals achieve the necessary degree of risk influence through their personal attributes, which included: charisma, personability, empathy, foresight, business communication acumen, education coupled with a deep understanding of the security body of knowledge and theory, personal connections and networking

capability, flexibility, and the ability to make and leverage C-suite relationships. As one participant stated, “influence is achieved through personal networks... through constant tests and adjustments...through representing the problem to the people and speaking to the right ones. It’s about gaining their trust, with a degree of panache along the way.”



This is part of a series of nine short synopses, this paper explores the findings of an ASIS Foundation study conducted by Dr. Michael Coole, Nicola Lockhart and Jennifer Medbury of Edith Cowan University in Australia in 2022.

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