

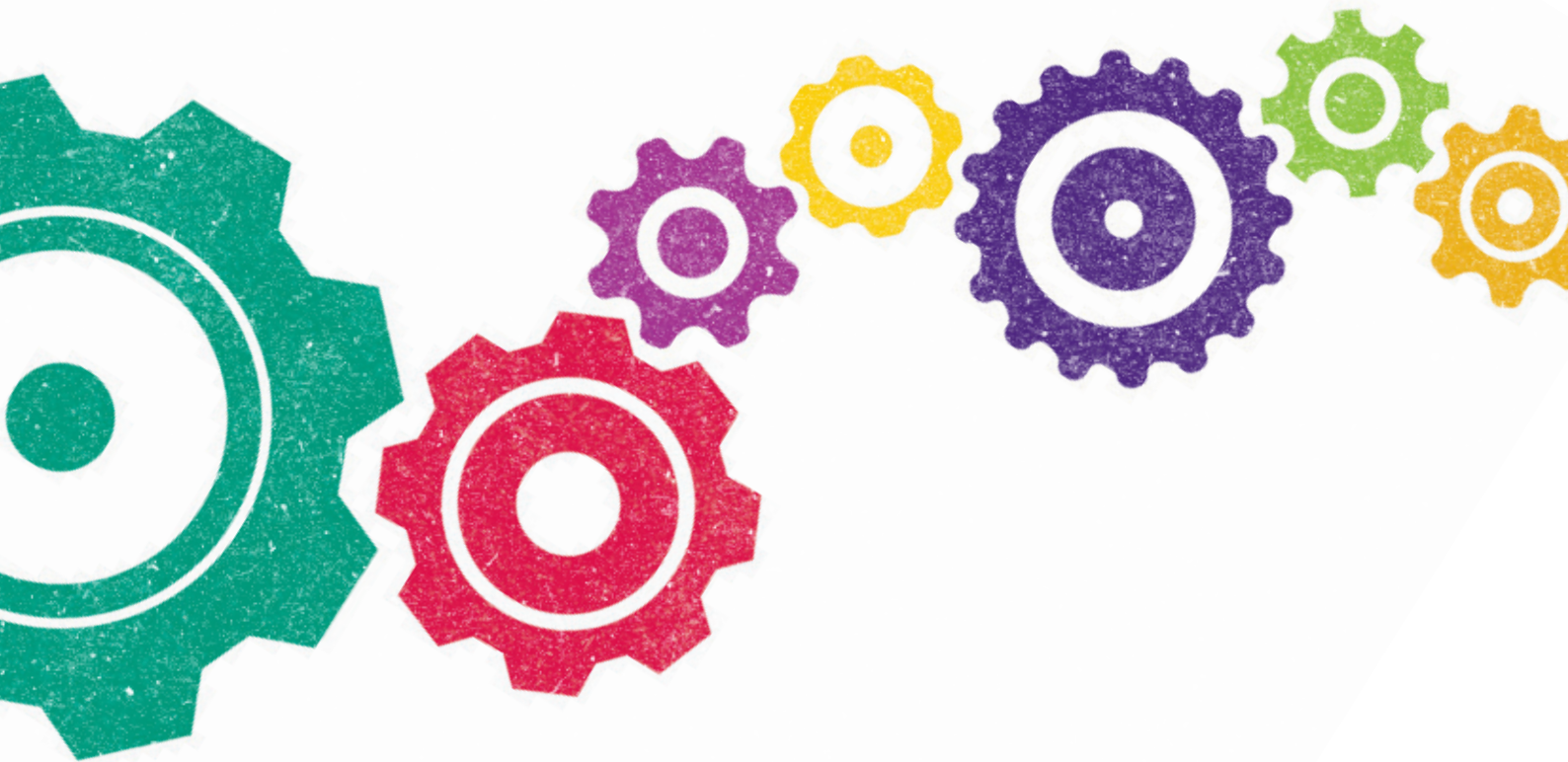


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# Cyber Security Top Tip 2

Risk Assessments



Risk is an inherent part of doing business. For any organisation to operate successfully and succeed in meeting its objectives it needs to address risk and respond proportionately and appropriately to a level which is consistent with its risk appetite. Failure to identify and manage risk can lead to business failure.

Risk assessments are very broad and usually quite subjective in their nature. In our experience of assisting companies, Boards tend to have a well-established risk register which covers the obvious and significant risks to the organisation. But what of Cyber risks?

► **The same risk assessment processes need to be applied to identify the Cyber risks and how they are to be treated. But where to start?**

- Firstly, identify your key assets. What are your ‘Crown Jewels’ of data and where are they located? This assessment should consider the nature, sensitivity and location of the information that your business collects, processes and/or stores together with the technology systems used.
- Now consider the threats and vulnerabilities to those assets and the information systems. Both internal and external threats need to be considered e.g. disgruntled employee or rogue IT administrator, an external hacker seeking to hold you to ransom like TalkTalk
- What safeguards do you currently have in place to meet those threats and vulnerabilities? Who has access? What could they do with those assets? Could they be accessed from over the internet?
- Assess the safeguards to understand what is missing. What needs to be implemented and what are the costs of doing so?
- Now forecast the impact of a threat being successful, what is the potential financial impact? What is the likely reputational damage associated with that issue?

This should provide the board with enough detail, coupled with the gap analysis from top tip 1 – Security Framework, to be able to agree to any required investment or indeed transfer of some risks perhaps with Cyber Insurance. This should then form the basis of the Cyber Security strategy and plan.

To undertake this risk assessment effectively, your board needs to satisfy themselves that they have access to the right resources as this is a relatively specialist area, and research has shown many Boards lack adequate expertise and understanding of Cyber risk.

Remember too, continual reassessment is important to ensure the right areas of your business are always protected as effective Cyber Security is a journey not a destination.

**Minimise the threat of cyber attacks to your organisation.**

Call Matthew Parker for a consultation.



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