How Hiring Baby Boomers Can Assist with the Global Cybersecurity Employee Shortage

Darrell Norman Burrell, The Florida Institute of Technology, Melbourne, USA

ABSTRACT

There is a global cyber employee talent shortage that is significant. Despite increases in tech spending, this imbalance between supply and demand of skilled information security professionals continues to leave companies vulnerable security breaches and cybercrime. Unfortunately, the pipeline of cyber and information security employees lacks numbers and innovation on how to address the shortage. This article attempts to provide innovative solutions that can assist in addressing this global shortage.

KEYWORDS

Cyber Talent Management, Cybersecurity Employee Shortages, Diversity In Hiring, Technical Recruiting

OVERVIEW

According to 2018-2019 research by the Enterprise Strategy Group that asked organizations to identify areas where their organization has a problematic shortage of skills, and 53 percent of survey respondents reported a problematic lack of cybersecurity skills at their organization. According to 2015-2016 research, the number was lower at 42 percent (Oltsik, 2019). These numbers represent a rise in the shortage of cybersecurity expertise and skills (figure 1). According to (ISC)², an international, nonprofit membership association for information security leaders, the job estimate shortage of globally of under 3 million with roughly 500,000 of these open positions in North American and 142,000 in Europe, The Middle East, and Africa (ISC2, 2018).

According to Tay (2019), the average data breach cost organizations from $3.86 million to $350 million. Having enough trained staff is critical in an organization’s ability to deploy protections and countermeasures against cyber threats (Burrell, 2018). The issue becomes more complicated when considering potential organizational cultural impacts that the shortage of staff has on employees that are in the job around employee morale, job satisfaction, and work/life balance (Tsado, 2016). Companies need to broaden their range of potential candidates to seek smart, motivated, and dedicated individuals who work well as part of a team (Burrell, 2018). Meeting the shortage requires new approaches to talent management and hiring including considering potential applicants pools that have been previously overlooked or ignored including hiring and retraining older employees from the Baby Boomer Generation with technology savvy skills and significant levels of valuable work experience.

WHY HIRING BABY BOOMERS MAKES SENSE

In 2016, the leading edge of Boomers turned 70 (Newcott, 2016). Research has suggested fewer wired Boomers will be taking early retirement and many will delay retirement until an age past traditional retirement age, later than previous generations, either by choice or because of economic necessity.

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Figure 1. Numbers showing a rise in the shortage of cybersecurity

(Flynn, 2010). The retirement age in the United States is on an incremental scale, increasing the number of years in age an individual must attain before full retirement benefits are available from the Social Security Administration (SSA). Ultimately, the revised traditional retirement age is 67 for individuals born after 1959 (SSA, 2018). Table 1 represents the full retirement age according to the SSA for wired Boomers.

The retirement age in the U.S. was established at a time when life expectancy was much lower than today (Lutz, 2009). The workforce is aging, as a collective, due to the decline in fertility rates coupled with increased longevity (Jenkins, 2016). In 2015, the United States (U.S.) labor force was composed of over 44 million baby Boomers, over 52 million gen Xers and over 53 million millennials (Colby & Orman, 2015; Fry, 2015). By 2035, 75 percent of the workforce will be millennials (Fry, 2015) and in 2050, one-third of the population will be over the age of 50 (Brough et al., 2011). By the year 2030, the number of Americans over the age of 64 is expected to double, reaching an average of one out of five Americans being over the age of 64 (Colby & Orman, 2015). According to Cooper (2013), by 2030, there will be half as many individuals aged 20-29 as those aged 55-75.

The growth of the workforce is expected to continue the slow growth pattern in the coming years as wired Boomers age, and many choose to retire from work altogether (Bjelland et al., 2010). Firms now implementing plans for retaining wired Boomers recognize the financial value brought to the business in the validation of human capital resources (Ployhart, Nyberg, Reilly & Malartic, 2014).

A wired Boomer was born from 1956-1964 (Furlong, 2007). The wired Boomer is the younger age group at the end of the Baby Boomer generation and is named such because they were the first generation to develop, be introduced to, and extensively use computers and related technology (Furlong, 2007). The growing vacancies in the workplace being created by the early Boomers

Table 1. Age of full retirement eligibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth Year</th>
<th>Full Retirement Eligible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>66 years, 4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>66 years, 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>66 years, 8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>66 years, 10 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 and later</td>
<td>67 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Social Security Administration, 2018)
Protecting Data Confidentiality in the Cloud of Things
www.igi-global.com/article/protecting-data-confidentiality-in-the-cloud-of-things/179896?camid=4v1a

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