

Strengthening Data Security Through Human Resources and Information Technology Teamwork

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Human Resources (“HR”) and information technology (“IT”) departments play unique and important roles within an organization. With instances of data breaches on the rise, however, companies should be mindful of the importance of regular communication and collaboration between employees in these departments with respect to issues of data security. Addressing such issues should not be tasked only to HR employees or IT departments but, rather, employees from both departments should work in collaboration toward creating and maintaining data protection processes.

Among other things, employees in HR and IT departments should work together with respect to creating data security policies and procedures to help ensure they are aligned and effective. In addition to partnering in the formation of data security policies and practices, HR and IT departments should join forces to provide practical training to employees on issues such as avoidance of data breaches brought about by phishing emails, ransomware attacks, or other scams that place data security at risk. Teamwork among HR and IT departments also is important with respect to identifying and responding to potential and actual data breaches, as well as consistently and appropriately addressing data security policy violations with employees whose conduct has or might put the security of a company’s data at risk.

Collaboration between HR and IT professionals builds a more fortified defense against potential data breaches or other data security issues and makes a company better prepared to respond in the event of a breach. Employees in IT departments can provide valuable insight to HR employees, who have varying degrees of knowledge about IT and its many attendant risks. In turn, HR employees can work with IT employees toward implementation and enforcement of policies geared toward best practices in protecting data.

Working alone, HR and IT departments can make strides in furtherance of data protection. But working together hand-in-hand, they can provide an organization with greater protection from the risk of a data breach and place a company on stronger footing with respect to identifying and responding to the risks and consequences of a potential or actual data breach.

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