Group Project 4: Cybersecurity Crisis Training- Snowden

Purpose: This debate style exercise aims to help students understand how to form a policy response to a technical threat or attack to their organization. Students will work in teams to present an argument outlining their stakes and debate positions, and backing those positions.

Exercise Description: Prepare a five minute statement as a group based on your assigned team role. Your statement (delivered by three members of your group) should describe the problem as well as your organization’s response and solutions to the problem (ex. potential policy changes as a result of an attack). Following your presentation, the opposition team will conduct a short cross-examination with a small set of questions. They will then present their 5-minute counter statements, after which your team will conduct the cross-examination. When both teams have been cross-examined, the first team will have 3 minutes for a rebuttal and audience questioning, directly followed by the second team’s 3 minute rebuttal and audience questioning. Please note that all group members will be expected to participate in presenting, whether during the 5-minute statement or Q&A session.

Team 1 Presentation (3 members) - 5 min.
Cross Examination - 2 min.
Team 2 Presentation (3 members) - 5 min.
Cross Examination - 2 min.
Team 1 Rebuttal (2 members) - 3 min.
Audience Questioning - 2 min.
Team 2 Rebuttal (2 members) - 3 min.
Audience Questioning - 2 min.

Note: Page limits below are double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point standard font.

Deliverables: In addition to your verbal presentation, you will prepare a debate packet to turn in to your instructor and TAs. The debate packet should include the following items:

- Debate Statement (2 pages)
- Short technical background sheet (2-4 pages)
  - This section should describe in more detail the technical issues of the problem at hand. It may also include pictures and diagrams, but these will not count towards the 2-4 page limit.
- Frequently Asked Questions (2 pages)
  - This section should anticipate questions the other debate team or audience members would ask in response to the problem and should provide your organization’s answers.

Preparation: Read the material found via the links below. Additional research on debate positions is strongly suggested as well. You may use any accredited resource you find to prepare your statement, press kit, and for Q&A.

When you present, or enter the debate chamber, enter in character. Be sure to identify yourself using your full name and spell your name if it is not spelled phonetically. Also mention your title and role in the organization (it is okay to be creative!).

Extra Credit: Strong dedication to playing up and maintaining your team’s characters throughout the presentation can be rewarded with extra credit points.
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Potential Roles:
There are two important debate roles in this cybersecurity crisis situation. You will be assigned one of the two roles:

- Edward Snowden's Legal Team/Advocates
- United States National Security Agency

Scenario:
Edward Snowden’s fascination with technology began in high school in Anne Arundel County, Maryland—just outside of Baltimore. Snowden and his friends built personal computers from parts ordered over the Internet. Although Snowden dropped out of high school during his sophomore year, Snowden obtained a GED. Despite his lack of formal educational credentials, Snowden was an autodidact “computer wizard,” and leveraged his programming skills at information technology job with the Central Intelligence Agency in mid-2006. Snowden secured a Top Secret clearance and a coveted posting under State Department cover in Geneva. A good friend claimed that Snowden “was already experiencing a crisis of conscience” at the CIA.

In 2009, Snowden left the CIA and joined the National Security Agency as a contract employee for Dell. Snowden became concerned that the NSA was gathering data that exceeded its Constitutional limits. Snowden claims that he tried to use “internal channels of dissent” but that no one was willing to risk his/her career or family by reporting misconduct. Snowden remained at Dell until early 2013, when he took a job as a systems administrator for the consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton. Snowden allegedly used a USB drive, his Top Secret clearance, and his privileges as a systems administrator to expropriate government documents.


In late May 2013, after working at Booz Allen for less than three months, Snowden took a leave of absence from his work; Snowden claimed that he needed epilepsy treatment, but he instead left Hawaii for Hong Kong. Snowden was in Hong Kong when The Guardian broke his story. On June 6th, The Guardian and Post published slides that suggest the NSA has direct access to the servers of some of the biggest U.S. tech companies through a clandestine data surveillance program known as PRISM. On June 7th, The Guardian revealed “Presidential Policy Directive 20,” a policy that orders government officials to draw up a list of potential targets for US cyberattacks. On June 8th, The Guardian exposed “Boundless Informant,” a big data analysis and visualization tool that allows the NSA to track intelligence around the globe. On June 9th, Edward Snowden officially revealed his identity to the public by meeting reporters at a hotel room in Hong Kong. Snowden claimed the motive behind his leaks was to expose a “surveillance state.” In late June, Snowden flew from Hong Kong to Moscow. On June 21st, the U.S. charged Snowden with theft of government property and violations of the Espionage Act.

On August 1st, Snowden received a one-year temporary asylum from the Russian government. In the ensuing months, The Guardian and other newspapers continued to file additional reports based on Snowden’s leaks, including documents that detail the United States’ surveillance of foreign nationals. By November 2013, The Guardian had only published one percent of the documents with the “worst yet to come.”

Your assignment is to explore this incident further, using your research to present it from the perspective of your assigned debate position. Your goal is to participate in a debate that explains the controversy and your organization’s future plans or suggested policy changes in response to it.

Note: For the timing of the exercise, we will assume its November 2013, a few days after The Guardian had published one percent of the documents, indicating, “The worst is yet to come.”
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Links:
http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/edward-snowden