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Introduction

A law firm in the Midwest contacted Avalon to test their physical security infrastructure, so they could compare it to previous assessments. Additionally, an internal penetration test was requested to evaluate the efficiency of their currently deployed security resources and identify any vulnerabilities in their network.

To be able to conduct physical assessments for clients, an organization must reach a certain level of maturity and experience. Avalon is one of only a few mid-size security companies with penetration testers who possess the certifications and experience required to administer these tests.

The Challenge

The client's multi-floor office space is connected by several elevators and stairwells, and an employee badge is required everywhere except public spaces. All employees are familiar with physical security tests and have received training on how to respond to a possible breach by an unauthorized person. Avalon's objective was to infiltrate the firm's headquarters in any way we could.

The Strategy

Our team approached the challenge with a single tenet in mind: Keep it simple.

While physical security tests can be highly complex – involving disguises, covers, teams of operatives, gadgets, and more – often, the simplest solution is the best. Rather than attempting some grand strategy, which would have been immediately discarded if any changes were needed (no plan survives contact with the enemy!), we opted for a straightforward solution: informal interviewing and tailgating.

Informal interviewing – basically, “asking around” – involved the two Avalon operatives taking a break from reconnaissance and having lunch at a restaurant near the firm. They questioned the bartender about the firm's office site, employees, and employee schedules, i.e., when employees arrived for lunch, went back to the office, etc. Our team now had the information they needed to “break into” headquarters.

“Tailgating” is the act of following a person into a secure area – and that's exactly what our two operatives did. They trailed behind the



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firm's employees into as many secure areas as they could to gain access. Sure enough, with the right attitude and a little stealth, their attempts bore fruit after the first hour. After several hours of tailgating, one of the operators was discovered and the assessment concluded.

The Results

Out of five floors (one public), two private floors were successfully infiltrated, with operatives leaving behind business cards in a few of the offices as evidence of the breach. While one of our team members was eventually caught, the overall assessment was considered a success. We also managed to compromise the client's full internal network via our penetration testing, which gave the firm the information needed to safeguard their data, as well as that of their customers.

To learn more or to schedule a physical security assessment or penetration test, [contact the experts](#) at Avalon today.

QUESTIONS?

For more information on any of our services, please contact:

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