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How training helps MSSPs attract and retain clients



Why the availability of ongoing training is an essential part of maturing an MSSP business

Cybercriminals are relentless in their efforts to exploit businesses, and some of their favorite targets are smaller organizations that do not have the internal resources necessary to protect themselves. This is the very reason why the demand for MSSPs has boomed in recent years, with many regular MSPs also migrating their business models to more security-centric ones.

Training is an essential part of the process, especially in an area marked by constant change, where new threats arise all the time. No longer can companies expect to safeguard their digital assets against data breaches if they are solely reliant on years-old knowledge and technical solutions. That is why an MSSP's job is to lead by example with a robust training program that keeps themselves, and their clients, ahead of the curve.

Building trust and authority with a knowledgeable team

MSSPs build their entire business models on trust and accountability through a combination of expertise and cutting-edge technology. Both of these critical factors must work together to give clients the means to protect themselves against the constantly evolving threat landscape. As such, education plays a central role in the entire process, whereby MSSPs not only provide the tools necessary for clients to safeguard their business data, but also educate them on the best security practices. Naturally, this is something that can only happen when the MSSP itself has implemented its own culture of learning by investing in employee training.

Given that clients place an enormous amount of trust in their cybersecurity partners, it is critical that every interaction between them is built on trust, authority, and knowledge. While the need for security expertise is obvious for MSSPs, it is important that it also extends to the marketing, sales, and support teams, as well as anyone else who interacts with clients. Ongoing training enhances trust and credibility, making it all the more likely the MSSP will be able to retain their existing clients, as well as attract new ones. After all, clients are not likely to renew contracts if they feel they are not getting the up-to-date knowledge and solutions they are paying for.

● **Guaranteeing comprehensive protection against new threats**

The risk of failing to protect clients against new attack vectors poses an existential threat to any MSSP. In many ways, the entire MSSP business model is a race, where the primary goal is to always be a step ahead of cybercriminals. To do this, they need to constantly adapt their approaches and offer comprehensive protection against threats both old and new. On top of that, they must ensure alignment with an increasingly large and disparate range of technology environments, since no two clients' technology portfolios look the same.

To continue providing the level of protection that clients expect and require, MSSPs must be informed about the latest trends and aligned with the latest best practices and regulations. An ongoing training program is essential for making this happen. Employees across the company must be well versed not only in matters of security, but also in various ancillary areas, such as security orchestration across specific cloud environments like AWS and Azure. Being armed with a comprehensive knowledge of security alone is not enough – MSSPs and their teams also need to demonstrate their abilities to align with a practically limitless range of business goals, technology infrastructures, and data environments. That is something that only a flexible training program can enable.

● **Ensuring alignment with service level agreements**

An SLA is far more than just a contract between an MSSP and a client. A well-crafted SLA is also a competitive differentiator, and it should be able to adapt to the evolving needs of both the client and the cybersecurity environment as a whole. It should be easy for clients to keep up with any changes, and there must be complete transparency for both parties. That said, an SLA should also align with the abilities of the MSSP, lest it end up being worthless.

Keeping up with the obligations outlined in an SLA is no easy task, simply because there are so many variables at play. However, ongoing training, in which the company's SLA serves as a key driver of the MSSP's broader security posture, will help ensure alignment. Training helps ensure all those responsibilities can be met, thus validating the SLA and adding true value to it. If clients can be confident that the SLAs they sign with MSSPs can be delivered upon, they will be in a far better position to renew their contacts.

● Expanding and differentiating your service portfolio

One of the most common reasons for clients to terminate their contacts is because they feel the partnership has outgrown their needs. Digital transformation is a journey without a specific end point and, as such, its nature is often unpredictable. For example, a client might decide to migrate to a new platform or implement other new technologies, such as edge computing and IoT. If an MSSP does not have the necessary skills and expertise to accommodate and adapt to these changes, then it is only reasonable to expect clients to start looking for an alternative security partnership.

A comprehensive training program backed up by multiple career paths and areas of expertise helps MSSPs expand and differentiate their service portfolios. This makes it possible for them to onboard new clients across a wider range of needs, as well as hold onto existing ones who might otherwise feel their future needs are not going to be met.

While there is a lot to be said for focusing on a select few industries and platforms to build upon existing core competencies, there are many other situations where meaningful growth can only happen by expanding the variety of skills and knowledge available to the team. At the very least, a growing MSSP should leverage training across all the core platforms and technologies their existing clients are currently using, or are likely to adopt in the foreseeable future. This approach will help MSSPs mature their operations and position them to become industry leaders in their respective disciplines.

Cybrary for Teams provides a cost-effective solution to help MSSPs prepare their employees for earning and maintaining critical certifications. Schedule your [interactive walkthrough](#) today.

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