

The Perils of a Cluttered Desk

Learn what clues an unattended work space can leave for spies, bad actors and social engineers.



- 1 If stolen and shared with a competitor, a new product specifications folder could compromise a competitive advantage.
- 2 Diplomas, certificates and other achievements provide personal details that can be used in sophisticated spear phishing attacks.
- 3 Quarterly reports, financial charts and other sensitive data can be easily compromised and exploited if lost or stolen.
- 4 Pictures of spouses, significant others, children, friends and family members provide personal insights that can be used in social engineering scams.
- 5 A napkin from a favorite coffee shop can reveal where social engineers should camp out to shoulder surf for login credentials.
- 6 A USB drive can be stolen and mined for data and trade secrets. It can also be loaded with malware and returned to deploy a cyber attack.

- 7 Even a book can provide insights into interests or hobbies that social engineers can use to manipulate targets or craft spear phishing or catfishing attacks.
- 8 An unlocked computer or device is an invitation to anyone with malicious intentions to access networks, emails and sensitive data.
- 9 Details of a senior manager's schedule let scammers know when to send emails impersonating them while they're unavailable to confirm if they're legitimate.
- 10 A password or password hint left out in the open can easily be stolen and used by bad actors to gain access to email accounts and sensitive networks.
- 11 An unattended smart phone can be stolen and compromised by thieves and social engineers putting your personal and professional data at risk.