

# Breaking into Cybersecurity Leadership with Greg Edwards

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[00:00:23] **Christophe Foulon:** Welcome to another episode of Breaking into Cybersecurity Leadership. Today we have Greg Edwards, who's sharing his background in leadership in cybersecurity, as well as someone that creates, that he finds important. Greg, before we begin, would you mind sharing a little bit about yourself?

[00:00:46] **Greg Edwards:** Sure. So I'm the CEO of cybersecurity startup called canari.

[00:00:50] **Greg Edwards:** We're an anti ransomware tool and I've been in the IT space since the mid nineties and transition purely to [00:01:00] cybersecurity around 2014.

[00:01:05] **Christophe Foulon:** And as you think about your transition, more so to leader. What made you decide to focus on leadership versus being an individual contributor? I know now as a CEO it's different, but as you grew along that phase.

[00:01:21] **Greg Edwards:** Yeah. So that's something that I had always been, had always put myself in a leadership role, so I started my first company when I was 24 and leadership by default, and really, so rather than transitioning. To leadership. I started out as a business owner and then this actually is the third technology company that I have started. And so really have been in that leadership role and mainly because I think I would be a terrible employee, so it was by default.

[00:01:56] **Christophe Foulon:** Okay. As you think about the skills that are [00:02:00] critical for a leader, what are some of those skills?

[00:02:04] **Greg Edwards:** Yeah, so in cyber security, I really think, and this may sound odd, but I think patience is something that is really critical. So patience being number one, and then also persistence and sticking to it. And then finally that.

[00:02:20] **Greg Edwards:** Ability and agility to adapt and grow quickly. So those sound counterintuitive. But really starting with that patience and being able to not get frustrated, but then also the ability to grow quickly and change rapidly. Okay.

[00:02:38] **Christophe Foulon:** And some of the other skills that I've heard from other leaders, Include delegation, collaboration, and communication.

[00:02:48] **Christophe Foulon:** How would you rate yourself on a scale of one to 10, a one to five on delegation?

[00:02:54] **Greg Edwards:** So delegation's, something I've always felt that I've been very good at, so I would give myself a five on that. [00:03:00] Collaboration, also a five. And communication's probably where I lack, where I'm not as thorough as I need to be.

[00:03:06] **Greg Edwards:** I would give myself a three, 3.5 on.

[00:03:11] **Christophe Foulon:** And for your employees, how, why is that such a critical, Why are those such a critical skill to have?

[00:03:20] **Greg Edwards:** So from the delegation standpoint, a leader that cries to do everything themselves is certainly going to fail. And then the collaboration you have to be able to work with your team and get everyone rowing in the same direction.

[00:03:33] **Greg Edwards:** And then the communication that's. I gave myself the worst on that, but probably the highest of all of those and the most difficult. Being able to keep everyone on the same page and communicate effectively across the entire team is really difficult

[00:03:54] **Christophe Foulon:** and another skill that has come up. Is the term [00:04:00] influence, how critical would you rate that capability for someone who wants to become a leader?

[00:04:06] **Greg Edwards:** So I, that, that's something, and in the IT industry that we're not typically good at. But something that I think is absolutely critical. You have to be able to influence and really what that comes down to is not.

[00:04:22] **Greg Edwards:** Sales, but it is sales. It's a, it's the ability to convince others and in obviously influence others, that the direction that you're going or a specific product that you're choosing or project that you're gonna

start on is the most important thing to, to work on right now. And that's, you've gotta have everybody on board and influenced to to get it.

[00:04:51] **Christophe Foulon:** And when you think about influence, do you also think about networking when it comes to that aspect? And [00:05:00] how critical would you say networking with people and influence is?

[00:05:05] **Greg Edwards:** Yeah, so I would separate those two to some degree. So the way that I look at networking is beyond. Beyond the current scope of influence that I have.

[00:05:17] **Greg Edwards:** So going out and meeting new people and then being able to influence them. So that ability, and again, not something that's native necessarily to. To US geeks and a little bit difficult to cultivate and be able to go out and do, but I think something that's is very important to do. And on the networking side, it's really about interacting with your peers and learning from your peers that are out there because we can't know everything.

[00:05:45] **Greg Edwards:** We can't be can't be. Up, up to speed on everything, and that really helps to get out and meet with other folks and network.

[00:05:58] **Christophe Foulon:** As you think about [00:06:00] future cybersecurity leaders, any tips or tricks that you would share with them based on your years of experience?

[00:06:07] **Greg Edwards:** So the big thing is taking massive action. And what I mean by that is to go take the steps that you need to become a leader, and what that means in your current position depends on.

[00:06:21] **Greg Edwards:** Where you are. But you, even if you are in a, even if you're in a cyber security role as an analyst, you can be a leader in that role and it will be noticed and you will be moved up. So you've gotta take action at whatever level you're at right now to be a leader and develop those. Skills and the, all of the things that we've talked about today.

[00:06:45] **Greg Edwards:** You may not, delegation may not be one that you can easily do if you're in a, in an analyst role right now. And may not be looked positively upon, so be careful. But definitely take action and start becoming a leader now at [00:07:00] whatever role you're in.

[00:07:03] **Christophe Foulon:** A surprise question, just to wrap things up, What three technology areas do you think future leaders should focus on?

[00:07:11] **Greg Edwards:** So the three things that I see coming up, we all talk about ai. I really like to see that more as machine learning as opposed to ai. But I do think machine learning is going to be very important in cybersecurity. I, this isn't exactly a technology, but the maybe the technology around SOAR and integrating that human side.

[00:07:37] **Greg Edwards:** To the machine learning side, That's a second critical one. And then the third is probably the quantum computing. That if we can ever get over that hurdle, that's gonna be a massive change to our industry.

[00:07:51] **Christophe Foulon:** It sounds like those are almost complimentary or built upon each other. You need the machine learning for the so to function properly.[00:08:00]

[00:08:00] **Christophe Foulon:** Otherwise the so is really just a set of if then instruc instructions, which we've done before, but just haven't had the best results that we're looking for. But yet the Quantum definitely seems like one of those technologies to keep an eye out for.

[00:08:15] **Greg Edwards:** Yep. Absolutely.

[00:08:16] **Christophe Foulon:** Greg, thank you for joining the show and sharing your advice with.

[00:08:21] **Greg Edwards:** You bet. Thanks for having me, Christophe.