

Powerful Questions

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[00:00:00] **G Mark Hardy:** Hello, and welcome to another episode of CISO Tradecraft, the podcast that provides you with the information, knowledge, and wisdom to be a more effective cybersecurity leader. My name is G Mark Hardy. I'm your host for today, and greetings from Hacker Summer Camp. So, this is when all the cybersecurity community gets together out here in the desert of Las Vegas, and we hang out and we hear from vendors, we look at tools, we talk through talks and presentations.

Here's my black hat badge, my DEF CON badge. This is where it is. So if you hadn't had a chance to come here, you ought to do it sometime. I was thinking of doing this episode and calling it a book report from Hacker Summer Camp, but I'd probably have to wait until about Sunday evening to put it all together.

And then we published our episodes by midnight Pacific time on Sunday. So it's not enough time to do the engineering. [00:01:00] So instead of doing all that, what we're going to do is we're going to talk about something that could hopefully help you in your job, in your career, and even in your life, but first take a moment and let's listen to a word from our sponsor.

As a security leader, it's your job to provide advice and leadership on cyber risks and concerns. How do you answer your board when they ask, is the software we use safe? How do you measure cybersecurity performance and what type of risks? Does AI create? Now, if you missed it on our last episode, number 141, I had a great conversation with Chertoff Group experts, David London and Adam Isles.

The Chertoff Group helps organizations achieve their business and security objectives in a complex risk environment. Learn more at ChertoffGroup.com. Well, this week... I spent a lot of time talking to vendors on the Black Hat show floor. Now, I had been at Black Hat One way back at the beginning, because Jeff Moss and I used to work together at Secure Computing in the 90s.

And after a few DEF CONs, I [00:02:00] thought, well, you know, maybe the suits, we business people, would spend more money to listen to the same talks than the hackers do when we go ahead and just show up at DEF CON. So back then, DEF CON, it was \$40 and \$35 if you mailed a check in advance to a P. O. box up in Seattle.

Today DEF CON is \$440. So put that in your inflation engine. In any case, slapped together some of the same speakers, similar presentations, went over to Caesars Palace and figured, I don't know, charge a thousand bucks, and if we get. I don't know what the breakeven number was, 60, 70 or whatever, then it worked out.

We had over 300 people the first year and Jeff was like, woohoo. And of course you're onto something and now Black Hat has become sort of the show that you need to go to if you're out here on the West Coast at this time of year in the summer. Also in the, have RSA is up in San Francisco and those are kind of the two big vendor showcases.

So, why do I bring all that up? Because when you talk to a lot of vendors, what are they trying to do? Well, have you ever worked at booths, or in [00:03:00] sales, or in marketing, or all of that stuff, which I've done before? One of the things you're trying to do is gather leads, and then gather leads, and you follow through when you're trying to get sales.

I mean, this is how businesses work. But the thing is, is that if we can change the type of questions that people ask, And the way that we do information back and forth, you do better. Because the typical booth says what? Well, you got a booth badge? Yeah, there it is. Come to the barcode and can we scan your badge?

Okay, we scan your badge and then they have demonstrations and lots of tchotchkes and you see people walking around like trick or treaters shoving them into their bag. And I don't know if they're qualified buyers or not. One of the nice things about CISO Tradecraft. Oh, by the way, I say thank you to everybody.

So this past month, we surpassed 10,000 downloads in the month. We've got over 15,000 followers on LinkedIn. If you're not one of them, come on, join us. It's a great group of people to be with and a great set of professionals. But in any case, what we want to talk about is vendors [00:04:00] and how they approach us.

I'm going to get into other conversations as well, such as things that you can do. As a person working your way up toward a CISO position or even in your personal life, but let's start with the vendors because well, that's kind of what's First on my mind. So if you either go to a show or you're on LinkedIn and you've got connections or anything else like that what happens you get lit up with hundreds of sales pitches or ask you attend this demo or come listen to this

or read this white paper or do something like that because basically they want you to see their product, hear the sales pitch, and then ultimately do what break out your wallet and buy the tools. So they can make some money.

Well, hey, watch my show, or hey, hold my beer. It's Vegas. But whatever it is, that's kind of the wrong question to ask. Because you see, this is the perspective of the sales team, but it really does nothing to answer the questions that the CISO wants to know about any prospective company. So what are the right questions that cyber companies should be asking to get the [00:05:00] perspective of a CISO? Now, first, whether you like it or not, the most important question you need to ask and answer is not, will you buy my product, but what problem are we solving to create value for the CISO customer? Now, if you cannot clearly articulate that problem that you solve, then you're not going to be considered important. You're not going to get through all of that noise that's bewildering to all of us in a security leadership position, particularly if we have the authority to buy or even kind of recommend to buy. Now, if a CISO knows the problem you solve and they're going to categorize you and then map you into a Gartner Magic Quadrant comparison.

Now Gartner has, for better or worse, really set out the categories of industry through their Magic Quadrant. And if you're not familiar with it, you can look up at Gartner.com, but ability to execute and completeness of vision. And if you're in the high right corner, you're in the Magic Quadrant because you can do everything.

Now it doesn't mean, by the way, if a vendor is [00:06:00] not in the Magic Quadrant, that they're not any good. Because you may not need a company ability to execute on the order of a Microsoft, for example, because you're not a large enterprise and you don't need galactic coverage for your stuff. And you may not need this massively complete vision if your requirements are fairly basic.

So be very careful when you look at the Gartner Magic Quadrant, in that you don't just gravitate to the upper right. That's what vendors would love you to do. Oh, by the way, if you ever go to Gartner.com and you want to buy one of those reports, \$1,995. Seriously. It's like, are you kidding me? So if you finish high end, right, what happens?

Gartner cuts the deal with you. You said, Hey, we'll give you reprint rights for X amount of dollars. And then almost every time you ever get a Gartner report, it's going to be through somebody else who's paid the deal, paid the freight, so they can use that as part of the marketing message. OK, so this is how we think.

We think about Gartner quadrants and startups might say, Hey, you know, we're unique, we're brand new. And so we don't fit into any of these magic quadrants because [00:07:00] we're special. I got a word for you guys. Get over it. Just because you do something differently to protect endpoints from ransomware compared to existing antivirus or EDR companies, it doesn't mean you're a ransomware endpoint tool.

It's just not a thing. You're an antivirus tool or an EDR tool in the mind of a CISO. And so embrace it and move on. Now remember, the thing that matters is getting the CISO or the customer who's really we're talking about the CISO here to buy your tool and it's okay to be in a category and you can differentiate yourself from the other companies that are in the category with the questions you ask and the way you communicate.

See, once a CISO understands the category you're in, you get to move on to the question number two. Why do I care about the problem you're solving compared to all the other problems I need to solve because if a CISO has a million things to do and you solve a problem It's not on that top five [00:08:00] list or top whatever list not gonna get around to it. You'd never solve everything a CISO has a ton of problems to solve.

Let's say I'm a CISO right now I need to provide attestations to my regulators that we're doing all the things a good company would do. What the problem is, I don't really know if we're compliant, and if I'm kind of worried that I gotta sign this statement saying, yeah, we're all good and we're not, then...

I'm in a little bit of a trouble and a difficulty. So that's, what's going to keep me up at night. But a vendor comes in there and says, well, I got antivirus or EDR software right now, let's come look at it. You want a free trial? It's like, no, I'm focused on automated compliance solutions that will fix the problem for me.

So if you're in sales or if you're in communicating the value of your product or business or whatever, then what you need to do is educate your prospective CISO clients. That the problem you solve is important enough and impactful enough so it's going to get prioritized by that CISO to actually get the funds and the resources behind it.

Now, that may not be the case. You might have a [00:09:00] buyer who's really worried about something and their mind is not on your problem. Now you might have a great idea. I remember at a cartoon I saw many years ago, it was like a medieval battlefield and there's a king up there and suit of armor and all the people sword fighting out there in the background.

And a guy comes on and says you know, you're leige. We've got a person who wants to talk to you. It's a salesman with a Gatling gun, you know, generations ahead of the technology. He's like, Oh, I'm too busy fighting this sword battle. So you might have a great idea, but if that's not top of mind, you're not going anywhere as a prospective customer.

So let's look at this a little bit deeper. Let's say you're a data security company. You're trying to sell to a security. Customer, CISO, and you come in and say, Our tool can watch all your endpoints, and categorize your data, and provide alerts to help you know when people are trying to move data to places it shouldn't be.

Hmm, I want to CISO things. Okay, I got to deploy [00:10:00] an agent everywhere in my organization. That's going to suck. And I got a lot of noisy alerts for the SOC, and then we got to spend all this time tuning the things so we don't get false positives. And, and then it really kind of solves the problem that no one's asking me to solve right now.

Now compare that with this line of questions. Are you a publicly traded company that uses cloud services like AWS? Well, yes. I mean, it's kind of Socratic, right? You got to get some yeses out there. Well, then what we do is help ensure companies like you can meet important Sarbanes Oxley controls that require you to know who has access to your data so you can remove that access in a timely manner when someone leaves the company.

Our solution helps ensure when you put your signature on those attestations to the regulators, You can sleep well because you have evidence that that control is being met. Would you like to see how our solution works to better help you as a CISO? Now guess what? If I'm a CISO and I hear that pitch, [00:11:00] I'll give you another 10 minutes of my time.

I want to see a demo. I give you my time because you as a salesperson ask the right questions so that I realize you actually help solve a priority problem for me that I need to address. Now, many years ago, I used to teach a course called Solution Selling. Michael Bosworth came up with it. It was kind of a great idea.

And the concept of solution selling was, when you're selling something that's abstract, not like a washing machine, okay? A washing machine, you plug it in, turn it on, throw clothes in there, throw soap, bing, bing, bing, a little bit while, you get clean clothes. What's an EDR? What is a compliance tool? That's a little bit more abstract.

You can't really go ahead and point to it and say, you see that over there? And so the idea of solution selling was to try to get the customer to come up with a solution in her own mindset. Now you didn't do that by just saying feature, feature, feature, or whatever. What you do is you'd say, ask questions.

Oh, what is the issue that you have? And what is the problem? And is it this? And is it this? And you try to [00:12:00] explore what we call latent pain. Something that says, do you have requirements for compliance? Well, yes. Do you have to do reporting? Yes. Do you have to attest to those reports? Yes. Is there a personal or professional risk that you take by attesting to a report?

If the information isn't really there, yeah. And so if you did it wrong, could bad things happen to you? Yes. Is that what you want? No. So, what are you doing about it?

I don't know. Well, what if you had a tool that could provide evidence of each requirement they had for compliance? Would that help you solve your problem? Well, yeah. What if you had a tool that could automatically scan your endpoints and then determine where the vulnerabilities are and then identify them so you could close them so when your attestation comes through, you know that you're correct.

Would that help you solve your problem? Yeah, it sure would. You're starting to see where I'm going with this thing? And then we can go on through that list and then you say, okay, so if you had this, this, and [00:13:00] this, you could solve your problem. And now you're ready to pitch your solution. Well, where are you going to find all that stuff?

Well, guess what? We've got it in our box and here it is. Notice what I said, by the way, in all of that. How to solve your problem. I never took that on, did I? I never offered to solve your problem. And there's a reason for that. Because if I offer to solve your problem and it doesn't quite work out, then you've got someone to blame.

But if I give you the tools to enable you to effectively solve your problem, then you own it. And because you own it, you feel a sense of I'm going to make this happen and it's mine. And then you're really going to fight to make sure that solution works. So there's a little bit of subtlety in there. It was, I don't know, like a three day course.

So that's a three minute summary of it, but you kind of get the idea. If you go back to the problem of vendors solving, and now we know why it's a priority

problem, then what's the last question maybe vendors should ask to help the CISO? How about this? We've got to ask ourselves, why are we better [00:14:00] than all of our competition in this product category?

You see, even if you've convinced the CISO that you are an antivirus company and your tool solves an urgent priority, why would they want to add your solution to their existing environment or spend the time to rip and replace existing solutions and deploy yours? Fair questions. What differentiation do you have in the market that helps you make that decision?

If you can't overcome that question, what makes us different? What makes us better? And by the way, that's the purpose of marketing is differentiation. I learned that in my business school. Then every CISO is going to stay with their existing vendor, right? When you meet a cybersecurity leader, you should show them one or two money shots of your tool or service.

Wow. Look at this. It ought to be pretty spectacular. A lot of solutions have been purchased because really pretty graphical user interface. Remember the old Norris Pew Pew map? Everybody really loved that thing. They disappeared overnight, but you can still find it on YouTube if you look for the Norris thing.

But that was a really, really cool GUI. And people looked at that and they said, wow, this is neat. So, for example, if you have a data [00:15:00] loss prevention solutions allow you this helpful view, where you can see all the third party SaaS applications to which you're uploading data. For example, on this page, we see the organization actually has 25 different AWS environments.

Now, if you only knew about 20 of those, and the organization only documented them, what's happening? Five of those are shadow IT AWS environments, and they probably don't have the security controls and the tools to protect your organization. In addition, we can see how users are uploading data, which might be an example of fraud or exfiltration if it's an insider or maybe a bad actor who went ahead and compromised something.

And you can spot these unapproved transactions. Wow, that's pretty cool. And I can see this stuff and it's graphic and visual. Now when CISO hears these pitches and sees like a couple slick GUIs, you think, Wow, I can't do that today, or, but this is a whole lot better than what I'm doing today. I get it. And now I can build something in my organization that is really going to help us be safe against the problem that I have.

You get to [00:16:00] see the value. You see, if you ask and answer the right questions, you can allow the sales folks to solve CISO problems and make some sales. If you're not in sales, put for your sales management team or you're dealing with sales folks, these are things you can look for because they make a more persuasive case.

But it doesn't have to be just in sales. Let's think about other powerful questions that you can think about in your life. Let's say you're a senior director and you want to get your first CISO role. Well, what's the right question to ask if you want to get a CISO job? If you know the right questions to ask, you can probably find the right answers.

They're going to help you out. See, the problem is most cybersecurity leaders and people in general tend to ask the wrong questions. For example, your senior director, you ask the question, well, how do I achieve this particular goal? You're looking for tasks and activities and maybe this education. I need a certification. I need to go read this stuff. I need to do this stuff. And if I used to learn more and more about this XYZ cybersecurity stuff or whatever, then everybody will pick me when I interview for a CISO role because I'm knowledgeable. [00:17:00] But let's analyze that question just a little bit further. Now it's true. That every good company would want to hire a competent CISO. You need to know your stuff. With that being said, there's a difference between knowing how to get a SOC 2, Type 2 report completed versus having done 20 of them. It's probably not going to be the deciding factor on whom they pick to be a CISO.

The better question you should be asking yourself is, who can help me achieve my goal? If instead of thinking of your own skills, focus on learning who can influence the decision makers. Who can help give you a job. That's going to give you better results. Now, how do we go straight to finding those people?

And then who knows those people so you can get referred? There's a great book by Dan Sullivan. It's called, Who Not How, The Formula to Achieve Bigger Goals Through Accelerating Teamwork. And it addresses this question in detail. It's a great shift in mindset. People generally want to help others. And if I [00:18:00] get the question, how do I become a CISO?

There's a lot of things I have to explain to someone. I could talk about answers to this question for hours, which is why we have so many episodes of CISO Tradecraft that we've written and put out for you. Now, if you ask me, whom do I know that could help you find a CISO role? That's a completely different question.

And I could think of a few folks and probably provide you with a meaningful answer. See, asking that question gives you an opportunity to take some real answers. And action, because you can make a connection, you can build your network, and you can start to include people who can help reach your goals.

Let me pause for a moment and share with you a message from our sponsor. See, today's CISO Tradecraft is sponsored by C Prime, offering advanced tech training for exceptional teams. Experience hands on, lab driven classes in just two days, enhancing your skills for immediate on the job impact. Discover our sought after 3 day Microsoft Power BI training, empowering you to craft [00:19:00] dashboards, integrate data, and perform swift statistical analysis.

Visit CPRIME, CPRIME.com/train, and then use the code CPRIMEPOD for 15% off and elevate your experience. Thank you, folks, for that sponsorship. So let's come back and ask another powerful question. Now, after you meet someone, What's a great question you could ask that would really make a wonderful impression on them and allow you to generate value for them?

Consider this one. What's the biggest problem that you're currently facing that if I could help you solve would make a big difference in your life? I just ask that question and listen. I mean actively listening like it were someone telling you where to find buried treasure. Now if you do that, then you'll hear people open up and tell you how to generate value for them.

And once you have heard their problem and actually listened to it, Ask them [00:20:00] open ended questions to get an even deeper understanding of their problem. For example, tell me more about what you mean by that. That's very interesting. Is that all the problem or is there more to it than that? Then you listen again.

See, once you've heard their reply, you can reply with a clarifying statement. It's called active listening, right? Something like, okay, let me just make sure I got this correct in my head. It sounds to me like you're having an issue with... X, Y, and Z. Now, if I, or somebody I know could help you with this specific problem, what difference would that make for you?

Again, open ended. It's not, can I help you? Yes. No. What difference would that make for you? See, if you correctly articulated the problem that this person is facing and you understand their purpose and what's important to them, you've got that connection. And now you can go a step further and say, if we readdress this problem, What would the ideal outcome look like?

And now they're getting hooked and they're getting excited and you can start to [00:21:00] explore solutions to their problems. And this line of powerful questions is something that creates values for others. And it allows them to think this person's different from everyone else that I've met at the conference or at the presentation, or even just interacting with them.

I definitely want to talk to this person again. And just like that, you have created intrigue and interest, and you have a way to say, I just gave a couple ideas off the top of my head, but. I think after I talk to a couple of experts that I know, I'll have something for you in a couple of days. May sync up with you then and show you some specific actions that you could take, which would help you successfully solve the problem you're currently facing.

No one's going to say no to that! This is a great start to a new relationship.

Let's shift topics again. There's a great quote from Dan Sullivan. He said, If you have enough money to solve a problem, then you don't have a problem. Now the next question to ask is, who can help you get more money? Whether it's getting additional budget or headcount in the cyber [00:22:00] organizations, focus on the who, not the how.

As Tony Robbins likes to say, success leaves clues. Look for successful people and learn from them. It's a message in Robert Kiyosaki's book, Rich Dad, Poor Dad. If you want to end up like the rich dad, you need to understand how a rich dad solves money problems, and differently from a poor dad. I've also heard it say, find out what rich people do and do more of it.

Find out what poor people do and do less of it. I know we just had a billion dollar lottery, but... I don't buy lottery tickets, plus I got a degree in mathematics. I kind of think of lotteries as a regressive tax on people who are bad at math. But let's go back to, to this. And let's, let's say, for example, we'll take a small business owner owns a single gas station and you want to buy a second one so you can double your income.

Now the problem is you don't have enough money to buy the second gas station from a competitor. Now the old poor dad mentality would say, what? Well, I just got to save as much money and I'm going to scrimp and I'm going to save it. And then one day I'm going to be able to buy it. But that could be [00:23:00] years in the future and you may never get there.

Is there any other way to do it? No, the rich dad mentality might say, Hey, let me create an opportunity, not just for myself, but for others. See, gas stations

make their profits from the items in the store, not from selling gasoline. You did know that, right? That's why they all have convenience stores. You make a tiny, tiny margin on the gas and then with the credit card charges and things like that, it's just, it almost gets wiped out.

It's almost a break even business. It's a bag of chips. It's a cup of coffee you get or whatever that's expensive. Actually helps them make their money. So the convenience store is stocked with merchandise from all kinds of vendors. And all those... Folks who like to make more money as well. Now, what if you went as a store owner to all your vendors and say, I'd like to double my order from you in the future, because I'm going to open up a second store.

I'd like to give you an exclusive contract that you will be the only vendor for your product class from whom I'm going to buy for the next three years. We can set guaranteed prices. You'll be able to ensure you have future revenue for me, and it's going to be double of what you have today. Would you be willing to invest in that?

If you can get them to buy into [00:24:00] your vision, you might round up enough investment money to have your suppliers pay for an expansion on a second location. You've created value out of an opportunity, but for others as well as yourself, but didn't cost you anything other than the time and the thought to come up with a mutually beneficial deal.

So start thinking about how do I not just get stuff for myself, but how do I create value for others? And in doing so, You're able to be much more successful in business. See, powerful questions have the ability to change lives. They have the ability to build trust with others, to connect with others, and even to build happiness.

One question you might ponder is, how can I help other people? I mean, it's human nature for folks to be self interested. And if you can provide value for others, then you become valuable to them. Now, if you don't provide value towards them, then, well, you're a taker, let's face it. And you waste their time and become undesirable.

Ah, here this person comes again. They're always looking for something. When you reach out to people. [00:25:00] Make sure you can provide something meaningful for them. Now, we talked about this before on the show when we brought in Andy Ellis, the author of the 1% Leadership, on episode number 137. And we asked him about the three questions he always asks executives when he first comes on a job.

Remember, he's doing CISO work. So imagine if you come in as a CISO, as a director, whatever, and you ask these three questions. Number one, what is a stupidest risk that we're not taking care of that no one has dealt with? Well, I bet no one's ever asked that before. I asked you to say, who's the stupidest risk that we've not taken care of?

This or that, right? Write it down. Number two, what's the dumbest security control that gets in your way? What is it that we're doing from a security perspective that is acting as so much friction that it's damaging the business? Incredibly important question, isn't it? Because if you can go fix that, people are going to appreciate you.

And number three, what is something that you wish we did better in security? It's open ended, isn't it? And now, armed with those [00:26:00] answers to those powerful questions, you can start to formulate an approach toward delivering. On answers to that, didn't say they're gonna be easy answers to answer come up with, but at least you know what to focus on.

And when you execute on that, you're gonna become a hero. You see these powerful questions allow an inquiry for you to understand how to provide meaningful value to the others that are in your organization. Remember, if you can provide value and you show others that you appreciate them. Magic happens.

Don't forget the second step. Show others that you appreciate them and do it frequently. It can be just sincerely thanking them in big ways or small ways. I mean, take 10 minutes out of your day, do it today and put some up for an award in your organization. A recognition. Watch how that person's perspective of you changes when they see that not only do you appreciate them, but you're looking out for them in their careers and you're providing recognition for them.

They're going to love you for it. It's huge. Don't forget to share that recognition, maybe with their boss and their boss's boss. I mean, think about [00:27:00] it. If a VP of a business unit wrote, To the CEO of the organization and the CIO is often the CISO's boss about how much they appreciated what the CISO did for them and why things are better, what kind of impact they had, what kind of reaction would that create?

I mean, it's great, has the ability to make a big impact during performance reviews. Now, one of the things about credit, giving people credit for things, sort of the loaves and fishes of business, credit is infinitely divisible. If you try to own everything. It doesn't work. I think it was Lao Tse who had said a poor

leader takes credit, a good leader shares the credit with his people, and the great leader, the people say, we did it ourselves.

Might be off a little bit on the quote, but you kind of get the idea. Credit is infinitely divisible. And then, share it with recognition. When I served as a military officer, I spent a lot of time working with people who worked incredibly hard. And, they delivered on some amazing things. And I couldn't give them stock options.

I couldn't give them [00:28:00] bonuses. Couldn't give them extra days vacation off. I didn't get the opportunity to say, Hey, let's take you out and go to a corporate retreat or buy you a trip. All I could do is give them recognition and then more hard work. And so when you find somebody, if you've ever served in the military and you see people with wearing all the ribbons and things like that, that's sort of their collection of appreciation they've been shown.

It's not only where have you been, but what have you done? And if you spend enough time in the military, you know how to crack that code pretty quickly. And you look at someone and go, whoa, this person got some juice and they're going places or one's just along for the ride. We don't have that necessarily in business.

We don't have that visible sign of accomplishment. We don't have this. Fixed rank structure that you would say, okay, let's look at somebody's collar or somebody's sleeve and then we know where they are in the organization. But who you are and what you do is going to impact that and pretty quickly people will figure things out and leadership is not in a position.

It's not in the title. Leadership is who you are and how you influence the [00:29:00] people around you and there are people who do not have authority, who are not given positions of rank. That are some of the best leaders out there because they know how to support and encourage the people around them to give them credit, to encourage them, to get them going and excited, and that can be your role.

Now think about whom can you help now in your organization and watch them become your best allies. During the rest of your time there.

Let me change topics again. Different powerful question you can ask folks as a CISO is during a risk committee meeting. Now imagine if you heard the business saying they want to deploy a new solution to help sales and marketing

and since it's risky they're trying to ensure alignment among all the business units.

Now you might ask, what's the biggest risk with this solution going forward? Not technical, not implementation, not money. What's the biggest risk? You can ask, does anybody have any concerns with this approach? You see, these are open ended questions that allow you as a CISO to understand the perspectives of other business [00:30:00] leaders in your organization, and you can resolve important issues or concerns before you share your opinion on how best to proceed.

Think about it. Remember Mark Twain? He wrote, it's better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you're a fool than to open it and remove all doubt. Ask the right questions up front. Listen, and then you can provide your answer because you're much more likely to move the business toward the right solution that works for the organization.

Okay, one last powerful question. Let's take it down personal. When you first meet someone, what do you ask them? Hey, how you doing? Nice to meet you. Hi, I'm G Mark Hardy. What do you do? What do you got? Things like that. But have you ever had anybody ask you this? What do you like to do for fun on the weekends?

Any hobbies? This type of question is going to get people talking about something they love. Unless they're crazy workaholics and they don't have hobbies and they work weekends. Yeah, I got beat up by my partner here when I used to say, weekends are for getting ahead of the competition. And he said, you need to slow down a little bit, G Mark.

[00:31:00] Okay. Point taken, but usually people want to talk about the stuff that they enjoy, whether it's gardening or making homemade pasta, cooking barbecue, fishing, hiking, it doesn't matter what it is. What matters is you create a connection question that allows someone to share a piece of what brings them happiness in life.

Now, if you actively listen and you can learn some really interesting things, perhaps someone says, I love to make homemade pizza. You respond, Oh really? That's cool. I'd love to learn how to do that. Can you tell me about the process and how do you make it? And getting them to talk about that and they'll teach you what they know.

Ask for the recipe and nine times out of 10, they'll give it to you. They'll give you all the details and you can make something amazing. See true value in a relationship comes from my expressing genuine curiosity in the other person, creating a rapport based on their interests and persuading their emotional line to build a connection back to you.

And if [00:32:00] you can do this on a repeated basis, You're going to build more friends in life, you're going to have better allies at work, and you're going to find people who can open doors for you. They'll flock to, family people come to people, they flock around, people are fun to be around. And if you're a person that people want to be with, you're going to be happier, you're going to become important in other people's lives, and all those people will be happier for having met you.

Okay, so normally you go a little bit longer, but... Hey, I'm a DEF CON and I want to go to some, do some stuff. So that's going to be it for today's show for now. But we hope you've enjoyed learning about powerful questions. Now, remember to focus on the who, not always the how. And it makes all the difference.

Now, if you want to learn more, you can check out the book, Who Not How, by Dan Sullivan and Dr. Benjamin Hardy. No relation. We've got a link to it in our show notes. And we also hope you've enjoyed the show. Because it's brought to you by our sponsors, who help keep the show free for you. And so please support them.

Visit their links in the show notes. And finally, don't forget to share this with [00:33:00] others. We love seeing our followers post things on LinkedIn, sharing it in emails with their teams. We get new people who come in. Subscribe, if you will, if you're watching us on YouTube, we're trying to get that number. Once we get over that magic number, you don't get the ads thrown in your face.

So help us out a little bit there. And it's rewarding. Also, when you go to a conference, people walk up to me and said, Hey, I love your podcast. It's really helped my job and my career. Well, thank you very much. People love the show and it's kind of great and it's very gratifying to know that all the time and energy and effort we put into this is making a difference.

So if we're making a difference for you, you know, let us know. Everybody kind of needs a little bit of positive feedback every now and then. And don't forget to, of course, give the positive feedback to the people who need it the most.

Members of your family and coworkers that you have and the people who help support you at work to get things done.

So thanks again for following us and listening to CISO Tradecraft. I'm your host, G Mark Hardy. And until next time, ask powerful questions. And stay safe out there.