

# 5 EXAMPLES OF SOCIAL ENGINEERING

## PHISHING

Your account has been compromised and needs to be updated ASAP. Please click the link below to update your credentials!

**WHY IT WORKS:** phishing emails prey on stoking the victim's emotional reaction with urgent or threatening language.

## VISHING

Hello, Mrs. Smith. This is Jenny from Trust One Bank, we noticed fraudulent activity on your account and need to update it immediately. Before we proceed, can you please verify your account number and password?

**WHY IT WORKS:** vishing uses the exact same techniques as phishing, and sometimes is more successful because the victim is talking to a real person.

## DUMPSTER DIVING

**WHY IT WORKS:** a lot of people wouldn't expect someone to dig through their dumpster, so sensitive information is often discarded intact.

## TAILGATING

**WHY IT WORKS:** it's easy to be distracted on busy work days, so it's possible for an unsuspecting employee to not notice when someone slips in behind them after accessing a secure area.

## PIGGYBACKING

Thanks, Lance, for letting me use your account. I'm not even supposed to be in the office today, but I just need to login to the server and make a couple fast changes.

**WHY IT WORKS:** people don't want to be rude so they forget about security and policy in favor of courtesy, allowing social engineers to piggyback into secure areas, both physical and cyber.

## AMYGDALA HIJACK

Have you ever felt an immediate and overwhelming emotional response to something? If so, then you've experienced what author and psychologist Daniel Goleman refers to as an amygdala hijack. **The amygdala is a part of the brain that is largely responsible for generating emotional responses.** When humans are presented with something that is threatening or overwhelming, the amygdala hijacks the rational brain, often leading to irrational decision making.

Social engineers love your amygdala. They set emotional traps that result in individuals overreacting to a situation, like the classic tax scam where a fraudster calls the victim and threatens them with extensive fines if payment is not made immediately. **Don't let them get to your amygdala! Use common sense, think before you click, and keep your emotions in check as best you can.**