# The Tech Chronicle

## What's New

Ahh the warm days of summer are upon us! Pandemic restrictions are lifting and normal activities are returning to Michigan. Here are some great events happening around our beautiful state this month.

Midland- Double your fun on June 5th-and 6th. The Summer Art Fair and the Midland Antique Festival are both happening on this weekend. The Art Fair is held outdoors on Main street in downtown Midland while the Antique Festival is setup at the Midland County Fairgrounds. Over a thousand dealers will be set up with a vast array of vintage goods and collectibles.

Pinckney – Pinckney's Art in the Park, June 5th and 6th located in Putnam Township Square. This event has over 100 fine artists and crafters, shopping, entertainment, food and fun for the whole family

Mackinac Island- Mackinac Island Lilac Festival runs June 4th through 13th. This incredible 10- day celebration is the first and largest summer event on the Island. Festivities include the coronation of the Lilac Festival Queen and Court, a 10K run, horse drawn carriage tours, numerous concerts, wine tastings, Mackinac Island Dog and Pony Show, the Grande Parade and so much more!

Howell- Michigan Challenge Balloon Fest June 25th-27th. The Balloonfest is the state championship of hot-air ballooning and a family event held on the Howell High School grounds.

## June 2021

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### Did You Know?

The city of Novi was named from its designation as Stagecoach Stop # 6 or No.VI.

# Don't Let Your Employees Become Your Biggest Vulnerability

A couple years ago, *TechRepublic* ran a story with the following headline: "Employees Are Almost As Dangerous To Business As Hackers And Cybercriminals." From the perspective of the business, you might think that's simply inaccurate. Your company strives to hire the best people it can find – people who are good at their jobs and would never dream of putting their own employer at risk.

And yet, many employees do, and it's almost always unintentional. Your employees aren't thinking of ways to compromise your network or trying to put malware or ransomware on company computers, but it happens. One Kaspersky study found that 52% of businesses recognize that their employees are "their biggest weakness in IT security."

Where does this weakness come from? It stems from several different things and varies from business to business,

but a big chunk of it comes down to employee behavior.

**Human Error**

We all make mistakes. Unfortunately, some mistakes can have serious consequences. Here's an example: an employee receives an e-mail from their boss. The boss wants the employee to buy several gift cards and then send the gift card codes to them as soon as possible. The message may say, "I trust you with this," and work to build urgency within the employee.

The problem is that it's fake. A scammer is using an e-mail address similar to what the manager, supervisor or other company leader might use. It's a phishing scam, and it works. While it doesn't necessarily compromise your IT security internally, it showcases gaps in employee knowledge.

Another common example, also through e-mail, is for cybercriminals to send files or links that install malware on company computers. The criminals once again disguise the e-mail as a legitimate message from someone within the company, a vendor, a bank or another company the employee may be familiar with.

It's that familiarity that can trip up employees. All criminals have to do is add a sense of urgency, and the employee may click the link without giving more thought.

**Carelessness**

This happens when an employee clicks a link without thinking. It could be because the employee doesn't have training to identify fraudulent e-mails or the company might not have a comprehensive IT security policy in place.

Another form of carelessness is unsafe browsing habits. When employees browse the web, whether it's for research or anything related to their job or for personal use, they should always do so in the safest way possible. Tell

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employees to avoid navigating to "bad" websites and to not click any link they can't verify (such as ads).

Bad websites are fairly subjective, but one thing any web user should look for is "https" at the beginning of any web address. The "s" tells you the site is secure. If that "s" is not there, the website lacks proper security. If you input sensitive data into that website, such as your name, e-mail address, contact information or financial information, you cannot verify the security of that information and it may end up in the hands of cybercriminals.

Another example of carelessness is poor password management. It's common for people to use simple passwords and to use the same passwords across multiple websites. If your employees are doing this, it can put your business at a huge risk. If hackers get ahold of any of those passwords, who knows what they might be able to access. A strict password policy is a must for every business.

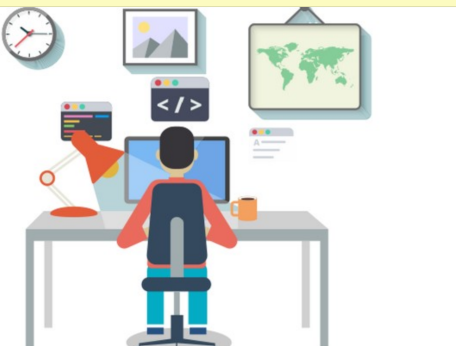**Turn Weakness Into Strength**

The best way to overcome the human weakness in your IT security is education. An IT security policy is a good start, but it must be enforced and understood. Employees need to know what behaviors are unacceptable, but they also need to be aware of the threats that exist. They need resources they can count on as threats arise so they may be dealt with properly. Working with an MSP or IT services firm may be the answer – they can help you lay the foundation to turn this weakness into a strength.

## Six Leadership Tips From Winston Churchill
### Courtesy: Leadership Excellence, LTD.

Failure stings. There is no way around it. And the more time, energy, and resources you put into a deflated attempt, the more painful it is. Many leaders throughout history struggled with failure and how to adequately deal with it. Winston Churchill, the tenacious former British prime minister who suffered from several failures and subsequent bouts of severe depression, was once quoted as saying, "Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts." Churchill endured numerous failures on his path to becoming a leader who would be pivotal in defeating the Nazis in World War II. Churchill's words and actions reveal many valuable leadership qualities that we can carry with us today. Here are some of them along with quotes by Winston Churchill himself:

**1. A Positive Attitude**
 *"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."*

*"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."*

*"I am an optimist. It does not seem too much use being anything else."*

**2. Enthusiasm**
 *"Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm."*

**3. Effort**
 *"Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential."*

*"I never worry about action, but only inaction."*

**4. Willingness to Change**
 *"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often."*

**5. Courage**
 *"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."*

*"Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities... because it is the quality which guarantees all others."*

**6. Endurance**
 *"Sure I am of this, that you have only to endure to conquer."*

*"If you're going through hell, keep going."*

*"This is no time for ease and comfort. It is time to dare and endure."*

Well, there you have it from the 'bulldog' himself. By focusing on these six leadership qualities, you can channel your inner Churchill and be the kind of leader that makes a positive impact in your family, your workplace, and your community.

# From Start-Ups To Best Places To Work: How Culture Changes Everything

There are two parts to culture: people and systems. On the people side, consider the "Empathy Accountability Continuum." Empathy is at one end of the spectrum and accountability at the other.

Then, based on who you are dealing with and the context of the conversation, figure out where you need to be on that continuum. The more you get to know someone, the easier it becomes to choose the right moment in time to lean toward either empathy or accountability.

How do you know where to land on the scale? Be curious about the people on your team as well as people in the world around you. Ask what they are doing and how they are doing it.

A big part of maintaining curiosity and understanding also comes from being calm and connected. You can't have a connection with your people unless you are calm. It's part of being a leader within your organization.

To that effect, you need to be able to lead yourself and know where you are on the Empathy Accountability Continuum. We can't lead others unless we can lead ourselves. So, we have to understand our own fears and concerns. Then it becomes easier to make those connections.

On the systems side of things, you have to "discover the core": your core purpose and core values, which tell you what is important to you and your business.

As part of that, you also need to document the future. Plan, strategize and put it into writing. Where are you going? What is your vision?

What is your BHAG (big, hairy, audacious goal)? What is your 10-year obsession?

Once you plan and put your future into writing, you have to execute relentlessly. This is how you make sure you get there. Live your system – use daily rituals like huddles and make sure they are useful. You should be constantly talking about your core values and goals.

Of course, as part of building a strong culture, you need a robust recruiting process. Find the right people and keep them engaged. Have a multistep and multiperson process when hiring and use a scorecard (a very detailed job description) when recruiting.

When you bring it all together – people and systems – be sure to show more love. Make sure there is peer recognition and recognition from leadership on a regular basis. Send them cards on their anniversary or birthday. Even have a budget for when bad stuff happens in people's lives.

But don't rush your culture. Take it one piece at a time – do something every day to work at it and build something great.

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## ▮ Are You Stuck In The Self-Employment Trap?

Many people go the self-employment route in order to have more control over their days, in search of a better work/life balance. But reality soon becomes very different: long hours while you pour everything into the business. This leads to burnout. What actions can you take to avoid or escape this trap?

**Delegate More Tasks.** This is hard to do, especially when you want things to go just right. Turn your attention to hiring one or more employees who are up to the challenge and can meet your needs. It might take a while to find the ideal match, but it's worth it to find someone who can take on crucial tasks and help you achieve your goals.

**Inspect Your Systems And Processes.** Across the board, you need systems and processes in place. When you have a framework to follow, it makes it much easier to reclaim your time and energy. *Inc., Feb. 18, 2021*

## ▮ Make The Most Of Your Remote Workforce

More people are working at home. With a spread-out workforce, businesses face new challenges that they didn't face with the traditional in-office model. Now, as businesses adapt, they are looking for ways to get more out of their remote workforce.

### 1. They're Reorganizing.
Businesses are taking a hard look at their internal structure, along with systems and processes. They're shifting the way they hire by raising their expectations. Along with that, they're redoing the way they onboard and train. They're relearning to do everything remotely, and tools like Slack and Zoom are taking center stage.

### 2. They're Investing In Technology.
Businesses are bringing new tools and tech into the mix. They're investing in communication and collaboration tools. They're relying heavily on the cloud and VPNs. They're also buying devices like laptops and PCs for their remote workforce to ensure everyone is using the same, approved technology – which makes support and security more efficient. *Inc., Feb. 27, 2021*

## ▮ Use Technology To Make Your Business Stand Out

Today's workforce is more tech-savvy than ever before. This means your business should be as well. You want to attract good talent, and leveraging your own tech prowess can be a way to do just that.

Think about how you engage with social media. Is it something that's just there or is it something you're using to actively reach out and connect with customers, potential customers and your community? TikTok, for example, relies on a powerful algorithm to reach specific audiences. Businesses can take advantage of that to get content, including ads, to relevant eyes. According to Hootsuite, TikTok pushes for five million daily impressions for certain ads.

Taking it a step further, you can mix AI with human communication. Chatbots are more advanced than ever and can seriously impact lead generation. Chatbots also direct users to real people to continue the conversation on specific terms. Basically, there are more ways to customize how you communicate, and it's worth investing in. *Forbes, March 12, 2021*