WHO ARE WE?
WE ARE FEDEX
WHAT IS FEDEX?

don’t forget
Scot Fackler, Cyber Security Advisor
Matthew House, Cyber Security Advisor

Stock image – not actually FedEx
WHAT ARE ESCAPE ROOMS?
An **escape room** is a physical adventure game in which players solve a series of puzzles using clues, hints and strategy to complete the objectives at hand. Players are given a set time limit to unveil the secret plot which is hidden within the rooms. Escape rooms are inspired by "escape-the-room"–style video games. Games are set in a variety of fictional locations, such as prison cells, dungeons and space stations, and are popular as team building exercises.

- FROM WIKIPEDIA

And they’re getting more and more popular!
THE GREAT FED EX MATRYOSHKA BOX EXPERIMENT
LET’S RECAP!
TELL ME, AND I’LL FORGET. SHOW ME, AND I’LL REMEMBER. INVOLVE ME, AND I’LL UNDERSTAND.

Benjamin Franklin? Native American Proverb? Confucius?
不闻不若闻之，闻之不若见之，见之不若知之，知之不若行之

The quote comes from the Xunzi.

Xun Kuang was a Chinese Confucian philosopher that lived from 312-230 BC. His works were collected into a set of 32 books called the Xunzi, by Liu Xiang in about 818 AD. There are woodblock copies of these books that are almost 1100 years old.

Source: quora.com
“Not having heard something is not as good as having heard it; having heard it is not as good as having seen it; having seen it is not as good as knowing it; knowing it is not as good as putting it into practice.”

From Book 8, Chapter 11, John Knoblock translation
TELL ME, AND I’LL FORGET.
SHOW ME, AND I’LL REMEMBER.
INVOLVE ME, AND I’LL UNDERSTAND.

-Matt House
Escape rooms are intended to foster team-building, critical thinking and problem solving skills for groups of all kinds.

We build on that by designing puzzles and themes that reflect and reinforce beginner, intermediate and sometimes advanced Information Security principles.
Other options...

- Red Team / Blue Team exercises
- Hackathons
- Tabletop drills
HOW WE DO WHAT WE DO
Budget

Audience

Environment

Puzzles

Theme

Flow

Teachable Moments
CONTRACTS

BUDGET
- How much money to buy props, puzzles and other bells and whistles?

AUDIENCE
- Who is attending?
- What is their general IT exposure?
- How many are attending?
- Anything relevant to the group that can be used for a theme?

ENVIRONMENT
- What kind of space is available?
- Does the room have anything unique that can be leveraged?
- How much prep time is available?
- Will the room be dedicated or shared from prep to finish?

We strongly recommend dividing up into groups of no more than 10, for management and user experience.
THEME

This is where the fun in planning begins. Be creative but work within your constraints. The more relevant, the more engrossing, the better the escape room. And of course, something to drive the clock (usually some threat of impending doom).

Examples:

Cyberattack, crime scene investigation, heist, jailbreak
PUZZLES

• be creative
• do some research
• make puzzles/challenges that are FUN but also build skills and reinforce best practices.
• don’t be afraid to fail

Puzzles are the core of the escape room, so make them memorable!
• Locks of all kinds
• Logins
• Scrambled / encrypted data
• Hidden objects
• Physical manipulation of objects
• Pre-staged computer issues
• Shredded documents
• External media devices
• Communication breakdowns

• Any ideas of your own? Start thinking!
FLOW

In other words, how the puzzles will chain together. Environment, puzzles chosen, and theme should all be considered. Rules and boundaries of the exercise should also be determined at this point.

Some tips...

• Keep a cheat sheet of all puzzles and solutions handy
• Fully test your puzzles in sequence multiple times
• Consider inserting red herrings in between puzzles to increase difficulty
• Have a mechanism to provide groups with helps or hints
Crack the Code (Logic / Fun)

Email Anomalies (Awareness, Steganography, Phishing)

Hidden Key + Red Herring (Security by obscurity, ransomware)

Boxception (Fun/Evil)

Final Riddle (Social Engineering)
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RECOMMENDATIONS & TIPS:

• Know your audience!
• PUBLICIZE, PUBLICIZE, PUBLICIZE
• Keep a timer visible
• Stay OUT of the room as much as possible (if possible)
• Start small and evolve over time
• Make sure your puzzles cannot be skipped
• Visit your local escape room(s) for some hands-on inspiration
Now that you’ve heard our story...

Let’s see what a room full of talented professionals can come up with!