

EMAIL HACKING

PROBLEM

At least 2 members of our class have been the target of email hacks in the past month. Bad people are hacking into email accounts and using the target's address book to email those contacts to extort money from the target's friends and relatives, not only PACE people.

IMPACT

These attacks have consequences for both the target and the target's contacts. The target will be embarrassed about emails having their name and address being sent and received by bad people. The target's contacts can suffer monetary loss if they take the bait.

What actions should you take?

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR THE TARGET

If you are the target, you will probably find out that your email account has been hacked from someone you know calling you on the phone. They will probably ask you if you really sent a certain email, giving date, time and contents. You need to contact your email provider, which might be the same as your internet service provider (Verizon, SBC Global, ATT, etc.) or might be a separate email service (Yahoo, Gmail, etc.) and tell them your email account has been hacked, giving them the details of dates, times and contents. In the worst case, you might have to close that email account.

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOR THE TARGET'S CONTACTS

If you are one of the target's contacts, you will probably receive a series of emails, apparently from the target, but really sent by the bad people. The first will just ask something like "Haven't heard from you in a while" or "I have a simple request to ask of you". Succeeding emails will likely ask you to purchase a gift card or similar. PLEASE phone the target and ask if they have actually sent these emails. Quite likely, this would be the first notification the target will get that their email has been hacked.