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How to do network security audit

SearchUnifiedCommunications SearchMobileComputing SearchDataCenter SearchITChannel CC0/stevepb/Pixabay You've gotten the dreaded notice from the IRS. The government has chosen your file for an audit. Now what? Audits are most people's worst nightmare. It's a giant hassle and you have to produce a ton of documentation to prove your various income and deduction entries.Don't panic, though. Many people have been audited and have made it through just fine. Here's what to do if you're in that situation yourself. Read Your Audit Notice CarefullyNot every audit request is a full in-person comprehensive process. Sometimes, the IRS simply wants confirmation of one or more elements of your tax return.It's possible that what you reported does not match the records the IRS has from other sources. There's no reason to overreact. Simply provide the documentation you have to support your filing.If you did make a mistake, the IRS will propose an adjustment. You can accept the adjustment and move forward from there.Get the Documentation You Need Depending on what lines you need to confirm, you might need specific forms. Items like your W-2, 1099 income forms and investment reports will help you make your case.Remember, the IRS isn't always correct. Sometimes it makes assumptions that are incorrect, or it misconstrues specific documentation. Sometimes an audit actually helps; you might uncover additional deductions you forgot to report, and your return may be more favorable.Get Professional Backup If you are being audited in person, or you have questions or concerns about the IRS' approach, consult a tax professional. You don't want to face the IRS alone and feel intimidated. Find a CPA or accountant who has experience with audits.When you have a professional on your side, you'll feel a lot more confident. Between that and your documentation, you can get the best possible outcome from your audit.Handling a Business Audit A business audit is similar to a personal audit, but it can have some different complexities. You definitely want professional help, such as audit consulting firms.Having regular internal audits can help prevent an IRS audit. You'll need internal audit training for your staff, and you might want a sample internal audit checklist so people know what to expect.If the IRS comes knocking, expect to spend a lot of time producing the documentation you need. The tips for personal audits apply to you as well. You just might have additional resources, such as specialized audit tools for healthcare if you run a health-related business.Don't Make Silly Mistakes An IRS agent is responsible for making sure that every dollar of taxes you owe is paid to the government. That includes in situations outside the actual audit request.As a result, it's important to stay focused. Don't volunteer additional information. There's no reason to hand over previous tax returns and open up additional questions. Instead, provide exactly what's needed for the concern at hand.If you feel that the IRS agent didn't give you a fair hearing, you have the right to appeal. Appeals officers may be more favorable and less rigid as they review your case.Avoid Audits With Thorough Tax ReturnsMany people do their own taxes to save money, not realizing that mistakes can be terribly expensive. An audit almost always ends in the IRS' favor, with 75 percent of audited taxpayers owing more than their original filing.Hiring an accountant or using a computerized tax return program can help you provide a thorough tax return without any red flags. This can help you avoid being audited in the first place, which is always the best outcome. MORE FROM QUESTIONSANSWERED.NET Network Security Audit Checklist - Process Street This Process Street network security audit checklist is engineered to be used to assist a risk manager or equivalent IT professional in assessing a network for security vulnerabilities. This specific process is designed for use by large organizations to do their own audits in-house as part of an ongoing risk management strategy. However, the process could also be used by IT consultancy companies or similar in order to provide client services and perform audits externally. This Process Street network security audit checklist is completely editable allowing you to add or remove steps and the content of steps in order to suit the specific needs of your business. Throughout the checklist, you will find form fields where you can record your data as you go. All information entered within the form fields on a Process Street checklist is then stored in a drag-and-drop spreadsheet view found within the template overview tab. This spreadsheet allows you to record information over time for future reference or analysis and can also be downloaded as a CSV file. This security audit is engineered to provide a global overview of the needs of the network, yet you might find that within certain tasks there is space for a further process or need for a process. If you wish to add a further series of steps within a task, you can use our sub-checklist widget to provide a run through of how to tackle a specific overall task. Alternatively, if you require an independent process, you can simply make one within Process Street and link back to it within this template. If you want a short introduction to network security audits you can watch the video below: What is an IT Security Audit - Connect4 Growth Cristian Dina/Shutterstock Network security is the combination of policies and procedures implemented by a network administrator to avoid and keep track of unauthorized access, exploitation, modification or denial of the network and network resources. The primary purpose of network security is to prevent a network security attack which means any method, process, or means that can be used to attempt to compromise network security maliciously. Network security attacks can either be active or passive. Active attacks involve a network exploit in which an attacker attempts to change data transmitted to a specified target while a passive attack is unauthorized monitoring of a network system. How Does Network Security Work?A network security system combines multiple layers to address network security across an organization. The first layer enforces network security through a username/password mechanism allowing only authenticated users with customized privileges to access the network. When a user is granted access into the network system, the network policies are enforced by the network's configured firewall which restricts a user to particular services. The configuration software, however, cannot detect or prevent viruses and malware which is harmful to the network leading to loss of data. Antivirus software or an intrusion prevention system (IPS) is therefore integrated into the network security as the second layer to prevent viruses and other harmful malware from attacking the network.Access Control and Application Security Access control is a network security method that recognizes each user device enforced on security policy and helps keep out potential network attackers. It employs Network Access Control (NAC) to block noncompliant endpoint devices or limit their access. Application security is also important since any application may contain vulnerabilities that can be used by attackers to gain unauthorized access to the network. Application security includes the hardware, software and processes that are employed to limit these vulnerabilities. Behavioral analytics are tools used to monitor a network user's behavior to detect abnormal behavior. These tools automatically discern network activities that deviate from the norm. In turn they identify indicators of a potential network compromise and quickly remediate threats. Antivirus Software and FirewallsAntiviruses and firewalls are the most commonly known network security methods. Malicious software including viruses, worms, Trojans, ransomware and spyware are dangerous to network systems as they often lead to loss of data. Antivirus and antimalware software detect malware upon entry and also analyze files afterward to establish anomalies, remove malware and fix the damage. Firewalls can either be hardware, software or both and function as a barrier between a trusted internal network and an untrusted outside network such as the internet using a defined set of policies that can either allow or prevent traffic. Intrusion Prevention Systems and VPNs Intrusion Prevention Systems (IPS) are employed to block network attacks by actively scanning network traffic. These systems not only block malicious attacks but also continuously track suspicious files and malware that may have gained entry into the network to prevent the spread of outbreaks and reinfection. Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) allow communication between two systems. Data between these two points is encrypted, and users would need to authenticate themselves to enable communication between their devices and the network. Other network security types include Data loss prevention, email security, mobile device security, web security, security information, event management and wireless security.Benefits of Network SecurityWith almost every organization having an online presence, network security has to keep out malicious attacks that could compromise an organization's data. Only a few minutes of downtime is capable of causing widespread damage to an organization's operations. There are multiple methods, applications, tools and utilities companies and individuals can use to successfully secure their network systems, to prevent avoidable attacks and unnecessary downtime. Network security consists of several layers designed to implement policies and controls thus allowing only authorized users to gain access to network resources and at the same time block malicious attackers from gaining entry into the network. MORE FROM BLOGLINES

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