

This article was downloaded by: [Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam]

On: 28 September 2012, At: 05:51

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House,  
37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



## Organization Management Journal

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/uomj20>

### Leadership and Awareness as Key Issues in Information Security Management

Kees Boersma<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Organization Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, VU University  
Amsterdam, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Version of record first published: 19 Apr 2012.

To cite this article: Kees Boersma (2012): Leadership and Awareness as Key Issues in Information Security Management, Organization Management Journal, 9:1, 63-63

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15416518.2012.666951>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

## LINKING THEORY & PRACTICE

# Leadership and Awareness as Key Issues in Information Security Management

Kees Boersma<sup>1</sup>

*Co-Editor*

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Organization Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, VU University Amsterdam,  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands*

In “Leadership and the Psychology of Awareness: Three Theoretical Approaches to Information Security Management,” Robert Holmberg and Mikael Sundström offer interesting and valuable insights on the way information security management would benefit from studies that examine the social, psychological, and organizational mechanisms that can generate employee awareness. Arguably, managing awareness of information security is a growing task for managers because organizations in which information systems are implemented contain increasingly nonbureaucratic elements and become more and more networked. In such organizational forms the traditional information security techniques and models fall short. Innovative, boundary-crossing approaches are needed to overcome problems with mechanistic safety guidelines in information security management.

What makes this article in particular interesting to *OMJ* readers is that the authors offer a layered approach to information security management. As they argue, awareness is needed at the micro level of the individual employee (cognition and behavior:

mindfulness), but equally important are the meso level (learning communities) and the macro level (organization-wide systems design) of the organization. The authors prove this framework to be useful by applying it to an in-depth empirical study. This part of the article reveals, among other things, that in more complex, networked organizations, traditional information security management models are less useful indeed. Instead, information security managers must operate on all three levels of the organization simultaneously in order to successfully facilitate the implementation of information security rules. Skilled leadership in this respect is not just about the implementation of these rules, but about the development of a layered, organizational policy in which employee awareness of information security can prosper.

This article has much to offer to readers who are interested in information systems management. The authors transcend traditional notions of security and security awareness and help both scholars and managers to better understand these issues in the context of information systems management.

---

Address correspondence to Kees Boersma, VU University Amsterdam, Department of Organization Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, De Boelelaan 1081c, Amsterdam 1081 HV, The Netherlands.  
E-mail: f.k.boersma@vu.nl