# Information Technology Services

## Information and Cybersecurity Awareness

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## Trust must be earned – a little scepticism can save a lot later

*"Small actions, big difference – welcome to the digital neighbourhood"*

How do you know with whom you are talking online? How do you know that what you are sharing will not be used against you? Are you certain you can trust this person, website or company?

### Introduction

Trust is a belief that someone or something is reliable, good, honest, effective, etc. Why is it that we trust so easily in the digital neighbourhood, where we communicate with people we have never met and visit places we have never been before? Why do we so easily believe everything we read and see on the Internet? Somehow, our perception of the Internet is that it is safe, while the opposite is closer to the truth.

### How to protect yourself

Trust comes with a level of certainty that makes us feel safe. Social engineering misuses this feeling of safety to make us trust someone or something even though that trust was never earned. An example is phishing attacks



that succeed mainly due to unearned trust. Targeted media campaigns also make use of this tactic. Being a little sceptical in everyday situations is not that hard and will protect you.

### Always remember:

- Do not trust blindly: Trust is a two-way street. Ever had a call from your bank and a person asked you questions to confirm that it is you they are talking to? Have you ever asked them questions to confirm whether the call really is from your bank? Be careful when receiving email or friend requests from people you don't know. They may not have good intentions. Do some research to find out who they are before responding. If in doubt, ask advice or ignore the request.

- Use evidence and experience to measure trustworthiness: If you have never used an online service, how do you know it is safe? Ask questions, read reviews, do a little background checking before blindly trusting anything online. Using trusted sources is a great way to find information about trustworthiness of someone or something.

- Trust in proportion to the risk: Think about what the information you are sharing will and can potentially be used for. Understand the difference between security, private and public information. Do not take for granted that private information will remain private on the platform where it was shared. Never share security information like passwords and pins with anybody.

### SEE MORE

▶ WATCH: My online neighbourhood

### READ MORE

📖 Who can you trust on social media

Be careful who you trust online

Risks of accepting strangers' Facebook friend requests

### DO MORE

Take care to protect your privacy and identity online