



Brainbench/ITAA Global Cyber Security Survey 2003

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Brainbench/ITAA Global Cyber Security Survey 2003

In May 2003, Brainbench, the global leader in online skills assessment, and the Information Technology Association of America (ITAA), the leading association for the information technology industry, conducted a joint worldwide cyber security survey to explore what people think about their cyber security preparedness. The survey reveals alarming gaps in the readiness of computer users to navigate safely through cyber space, and it sheds new light on the issues surrounding cyber security awareness and practices.

Almost 800 people worldwide were surveyed on a variety of topics deemed critical to information security, with more than half of the responses received from individuals in the U.S. The findings are compelling and represent a call-to-action if current and future cyber security threats are to be addressed successfully. Specifically, findings point to significant cyber defense concerns caused by the human factor:

- Two-thirds of all respondents indicate that they are aware of cyber security issues and proactive in addressing them—indicating a high level of confidence in their own abilities to deal with cyber security threats
- However, these same respondents rank their co-workers' and companies' cyber security skills as low
- At the same time, most individuals indicate that the information security knowledge they possess has been acquired informally—either at home or on the job
- Attitudes of non-U.S. and U.S. respondents are closely aligned, indicating that perceptions about cyber security cut across national and cultural divides

Thus, a central theme and message emerges from this study: Individuals overwhelmingly believe that cyber security is someone else's problem, not their own.

This attitude—cutting across national and cultural boundaries—underscores a major component to cyber security that heretofore has been largely ignored: the human factor. It indicates clearly that any plan of action to increase cyber security defenses must assess the security threat posed by people lacking sufficient information security awareness.

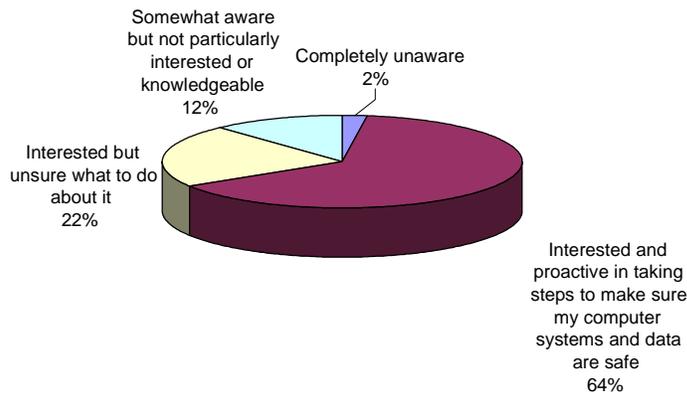


In the following pages the main results of the cyber security survey are presented. Results are broken down into two categories: U.S. and Non-U.S.

U.S. Responses:

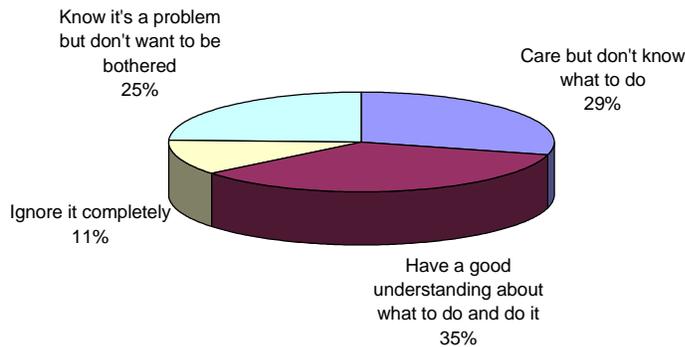
Most American workers rate their level of cyber security competence highly. Almost two-thirds give themselves high marks for their information security awareness. Sixty-four percent of respondents said they are both “interested and proactive” when it comes to computer systems and data safety.

When it comes to protecting my home and office computer and company network from hackers, I would say that I am:



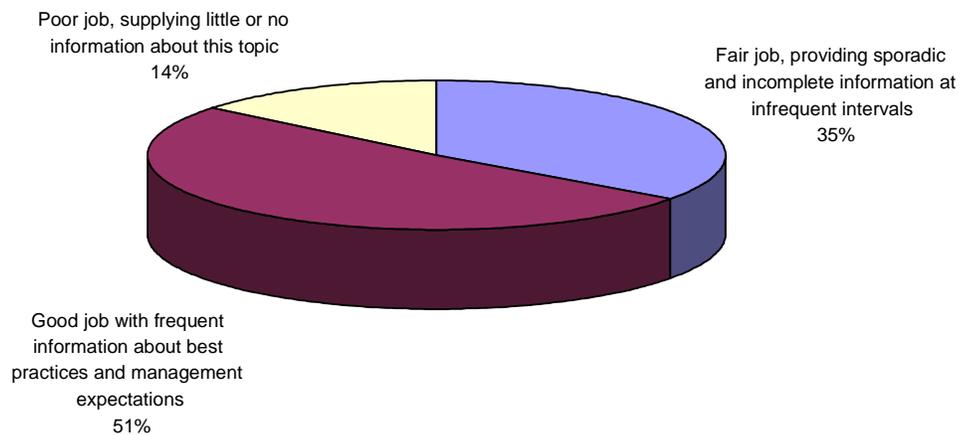
Most American workers feel their *co-workers* are the problem. While survey respondents tend to rate themselves highly, they tend to give their co-workers low-to-failing grades with respect to cyber security. Sixty-five percent of respondents said their co-workers ignored it, didn't want to be bothered or just didn't know what to do.

In generally characterizing how my fellow workers feel about cyber security, I would say that most people in my office:



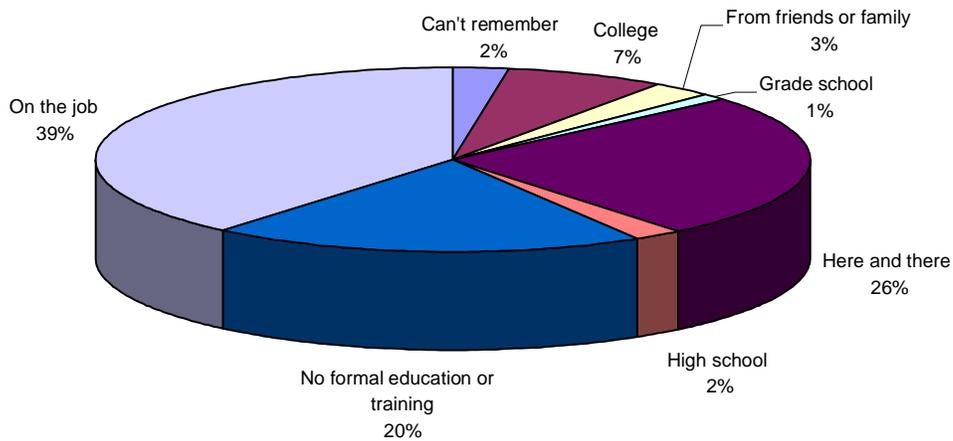
Many American workers feel their company is *not* doing a good job communicating about cyber security. Forty-nine percent say that their company is doing a poor to fair job of giving them information about cyber security practices.

When it comes to communicating about the importance of cyber awareness, I would say my company has done a:



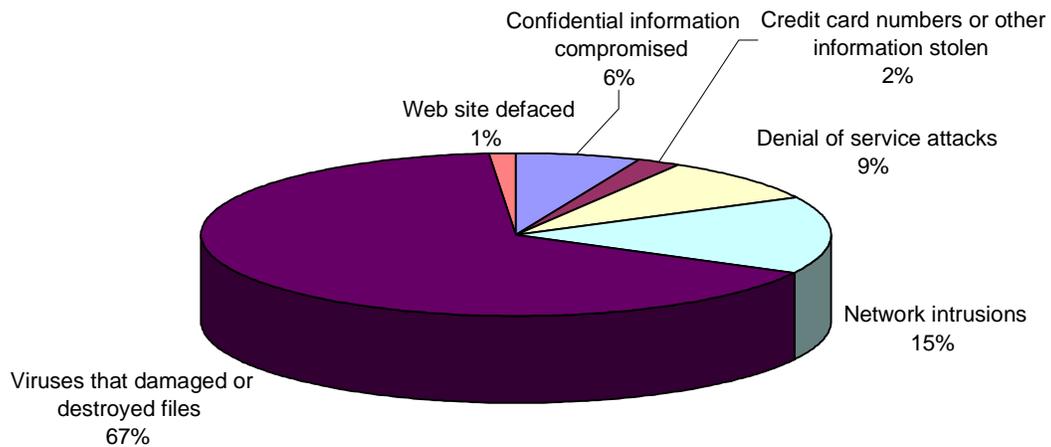
American workers generally get little formal cyber security training. Nearly 40% of workers say that they learned cyber security informally on the job, with another 20% indicating that they have *no* formal training. Over a quarter, or 26%, say that they learned about cyber security “here and there.”

Cyber Security is something I learned:



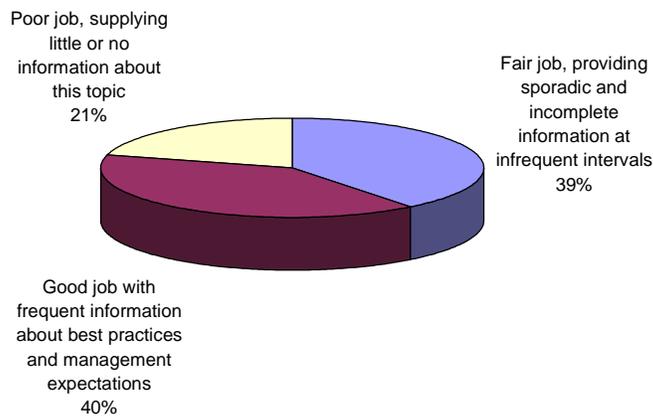
American workers cite viruses as the most common security attack on their organization. Over two-thirds, or 67%, of survey respondents identified viruses as the leading source of cyber attacks on their companies. Another 15% cite network intrusions, 9% denial of service attacks, and 6% say that confidential information has been compromised.

I know that my company has been the victim of a cyber security attack following:

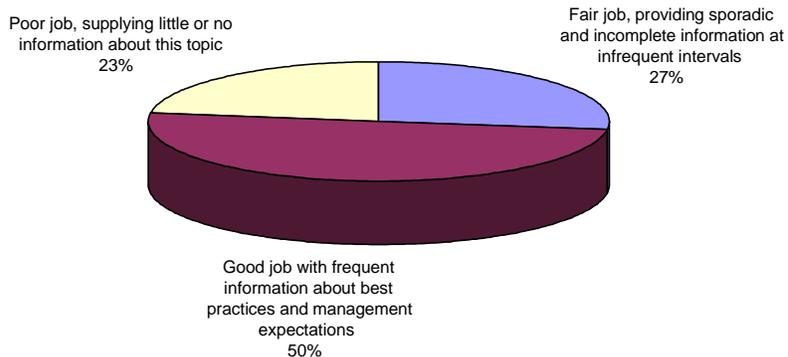


Workers in major industry segments appear to be in agreement regarding the job their companies do in communicating cyber security awareness. When results are analyzed by industry there is little variation in the main thrust of the message workers convey among four leading segments— half or more believe their businesses are doing only a fair to poor job:

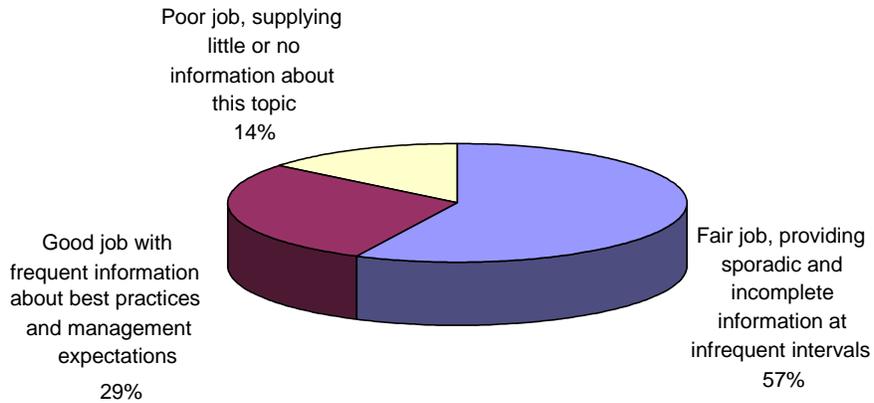
Medical, Dental, Health



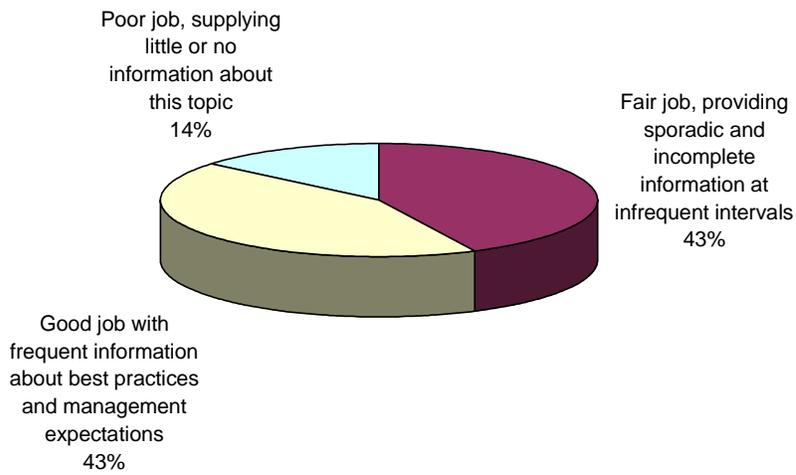
Manufacturing



Insurance, Real Estate, Legal



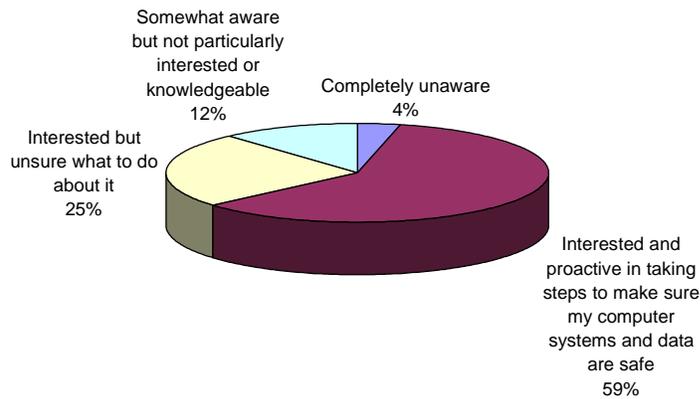
Computer/Network Consultant



Non-U.S. Respondents:

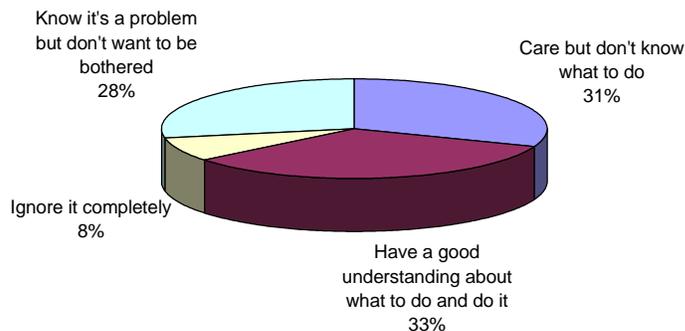
Workers outside of the U.S. also rate their cyber security skills highly.
 As with their American counterparts, almost 60% of international respondents rate their cyber security skills/awareness quite highly.

When it comes to protecting my home and office computer and company network from hackers, I would say I am:



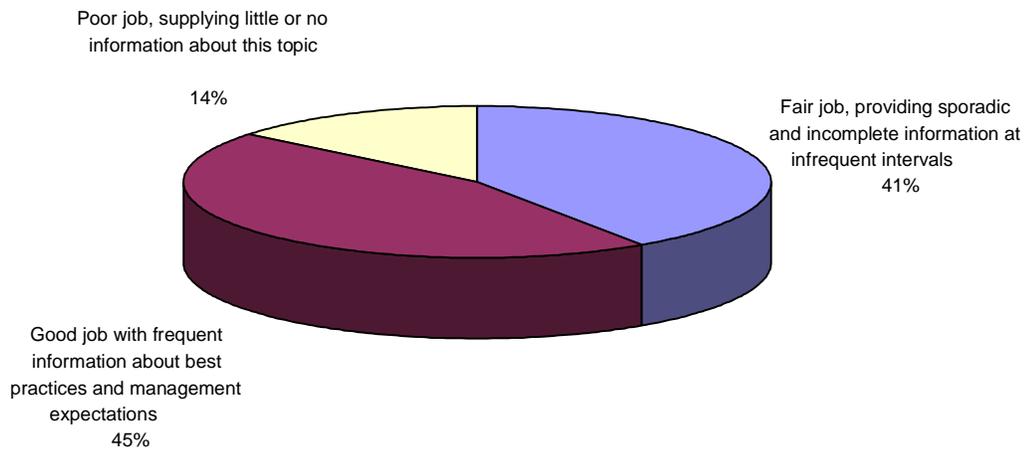
And they too point fingers at their co-workers as a part of the problem. Two thirds say that their co-workers are generally unawares, unsure of what to do, or simply don't care.

In generally characterizing how my fellow workers feel about cyber security, I would say that most people in my office:



International workers echo American workers sentiments about their company's efforts at cyber security. Slightly fewer, or 45% of International workers, compared to 49% of their American counterparts, believe their company is doing a good job in communicating about cyber security.

When it comes to communicating about the importance of cyber security awareness, I would say my company has done a:





Survey Demographics

The survey was conducted between May 5th and May 30th, 2003. Respondents were solicited from among Brainbench users throughout the world using an online survey tool. Information was aggregated and separated by U.S. and the International.

A total of 762 individuals responded, with 403, or 52%, indicating that they reside in the U.S. International respondents reside throughout the world on virtually every continent.

Participants hail from a wide variety of industries, providing insights across industry segments.