

CISO EXECUTIVE NETWORK ADVISORY COUNCIL

NAME

Karla Thomas

POSITION AND COMPANY

Global IT Director, Cyber Security & Audit, Tower International

EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATIONS

Professional Development Academy, Cyber Security Leader
SANS Security Mgmt., Employee Awareness and Legal courses - GIAC GLEG
Certified Business Resilience Information Technology Professional - CBRITP
ITIL certification
PMI training



EXPERIENCE IN INFORMATION SECURITY

After many years in IT Support, Training and Infrastructure Management, I took all of those experiences and skills and moved to Infosec. As our CIO neared retirement, he asked each of his direct reports if they were interested in being his successor. When I was asked, my answer was add an S and the answer is yes, otherwise it's no. From that point forward my role slowly transformed to be that of a CISO, answering to the Audit Committee and ultimately the Board.

INFORMATION SECURITY GOVERNING PHILOSOPHY

Information Security is part of several elements of risk management. I have broken cyber security into seven elements, encompassing system access, network & perimeter, endpoint, application & data security, e-mail and web, along with colleague awareness and governance. Additionally, information risk management includes disaster recovery and IT audit.

MOST IMPORTANT PROJECT OR PROGRAM

Security awareness program which has matured dramatically over the past six years.

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO INFORMATION SECURITY?

The alignment with the business and business objectives and risk.

BEST ADVICE YOU HAVE RECEIVED AND WHO PROVIDED IT

This may sound cheesy, but the best advice I have received came early on in my life and it was from my father. He told me that whatever I wanted to do I could do successfully if I put in the effort. With that said, this certainly held true when I moved into Information Security - I took the experiences from other areas of IT and my experience in translating IT into Business speak and built upon that an understanding and knowledge of the information security world - I didn't come into this field with training focused on it, rather I put in the effort to learn and have become successful.

WHY DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE CISO EXECUTIVE NETWORK?

I find the networking invaluable, discussing common issues and understanding how others have solved them. Getting that frequent inspiration and encouragement makes the task of protecting our companies less of a daunting task.