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As the world celebrates womanhood and women’s contribution to society on International Women’s Day, we at CISO MAG decided to devote this issue to the holiday as well. The purpose of this issue is to highlight the role of women in cybersecurity and address several issues they face. This was in the light of the revelation that women representation in cybersecurity has stagnated for nearly half a decade. Most of the problems faced by women can be traced back to the earliest days of their education, where stereotypes begin. This issue aims to break stereotypes and shine the light on women influencers who speak up and tell the world what it desperately needs to hear. We have Tammy Moskites, Managing Director of Accenture Security, taking her stance on the issue. In our Under the Spotlight section, we have Dr. Maria Milosavljevic, Chief Information Security Officer to the New South Wales Government, talking about how we are not properly communicating that cybersecurity is a great field for women. In our Insight section, we have six women security leaders weighing in to change the general perception of women in this domain.

Move to our Kickstarters section where we have profiled four startups that were founded or co-founded by women. We want to highlight the fact women are riding the wave of infosec and all we need to do is make sure they are supported.

Tell us what you think of this issue. If you have any suggestions, comments or queries, please reach us at editorial@cisomag.com.

Jay Bavisi
Editor-in-Chief
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Marlon Marschalek
Reverse Engineer / Low-Level Security Researcher, Intel

Amber Baldet
Executive Director, Blockchain Program Lead, J.P. Morgan

Michel van Eeten
Professor of Cybersecurity, Delft University of Technology
If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change. As a man changes his own nature, so does the attitude of the world changes towards him. [...] We need not wait to see what others do.

This won’t hurt for long, but it’s for your own good.

Chris Roberts
Chief Security Architect, Acalvio Technologies
Read it, and then read it again. It’s not Hallmark-worthy, but it is the message that needs to be heard by everyone. The irony is it’s the real version of the phrase: “Be the change you want to see…..” It’s looking at us as humans, our surroundings, our environments, enterprises, and the worlds we live in. The concept of a single person being able to change anything is minimal at best, but if we band together we all can effect change. This is something we can apply to an entire industry, but it’s going to take all of us to make a change.

So, now we’ve covered one of the more infamous quotes that never was. The quote at the top has, in part, been attributed to Gandhi and was said during a time of uprising when the desire to change conflicted with the philosophy of non-violence. Why are we quoting Gandhi? And what does this have to do with CISOs and technology? Well, sit back, grab a glass of something, and let’s discuss.

First off, the logic for change:

1. Arguably, this industry has to change for many reasons – mainly because we have spectacularly failed the very charges that rely upon us to protect them. We have spent the last 25+ years talking about security, yet, we still lose more data, more systems, and more companies on an ever-increasing array of attack vectors. It’s time for a very different philosophy to take charge.

2. Change happens across the board, but is arguably most effective when a top-down approach is instigated. Change from the bottom up takes way more effort, is more disruptive, and can eventually lead to conflict (especially if management is asleep at the wheel). So, if we can move toward a top-down approach, then less folks are going to end up hurt.

3. Change from within is going to be more effective than change forced upon us. The fact that every time a breach happens in a new vertical market the government gets involved and sends us into another tail spin of audits and red tape does little to nothing to fix the problem. It simply means more folks are spending more time writing more reports that sit on the shelf gathering dust. We are great at creating audit jobs for the Big 4 accounting firms, but little else changes.

4. Change is not a bad thing; change happens for one of several reasons and many of them are good. We, as an industry, need to recognize that and accept it. The change here is not chasing the next blinking light, next-generation technology, AI/ML, or anything like that. It is a fundamental change in how we look at the problem, how we address it, and ultimately who addresses it.