Scam Stories brought to you by Sister Joanne Poehlman
Cybersecurity Awareness Month – Week 2

No, I made that up.

It was a Friday afternoon a year ago. I was in a hurry to scan something I needed for the weekend. I clicked on "scan" – and nothing happened, again, and again. Being a "you can fix this" type of person, I chose to "chat" with the HP chatter on duty – just a click away. I typed in my concern and was assured they'd work with me.

The next thing I knew I was "chatting" with Roy. He checked and informed me that many users other than myself had been online with my information. I wanted this fixed! Early in the process when I was instructed to give a simple numerical reply, he asked if I was a teacher or a nurse. Yes, a teacher. "I could tell. You did very well in responding." (First clue: a compliment might help me trust him.) Later when my response did not lead to the correct action, Roy got upset and challenged my ability to follow directions. "I told you …I told you twice!" (Second clue: His response was putting me in my place – the one who needed help-- I should just follow directions.)

After an hour of back and forth, the problem was solved or so I thought. Roy indicated that the job wasn't finished; he couldn't let me have the results until I paid for them. "Before I can sign off and finish the job, you will have to pay the initial fee of $49.99." I needed to use my credit card to move on and receive the results that I had spent the last hour waiting for. (Third clue: He asked for money.) He sent me several sheets outlining the process and the company he worked for with their web link – it was not HP. However, it seemed legit, and I did have my scan function back. So, I paid him.

As I continued to think about this later, I realized that if I had submitted my concern to SSND IT they would have resolved the problem without charge. I also knew in my heart that

they should know what I had done. So, I submitted a "request" which in this case was not for help but for forgiveness for not following procedure.

It was a Friday, but IT *did* read the concern and responded quickly.   Since I had another appointment, I didn't learn until later that our Financial Director had canceled my credit card. IT asked me to bring in the computer tower so they could check the "fix." That took a week; the new credit card arrived eventually. Saving time didn't save time.   "Live and learn," I told myself.

Fast forward to a few months ago. As I was absorbed working on something, a loud, insistent message came up on the computer, seemingly from Microsoft: "Don't turn off your computer! Call this number immediately!" There was nothing I could do to lower the noise level nor get the message to disappear. And then a softer message came up in my mind: "Don't call. Notify SSND IT." I used my cell phone to send a "I really need help now" message to the Help Desk. Soon Amber called, told me this was a scam, and I should turn off the computer. Then she rebooted it. That did it. After a sigh of relief, I realized I did "Live and Learn." I wouldn't have to take the computer in for a week of scrubbing. I could continue working where I left off.

There is so much to learn in our technological world today -- every day. The best things I've learned from these two computer experiences is that "do it yourself" doesn't always do it; and that **SSND IT will be my first, not last, resort.**

Our SSNDCP IT Help Desk Contact Information

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