

RUN-YOUR-OWN TABLETOP

A 60-minute cyber incident rehearsal you can run yourself.
No experience needed.

BEFORE YOU START

What this is. A tabletop exercise: your team sits round a table and talks through a cyber incident as it unfolds, deciding what you'd actually do. No computers, no tech skills, no right answers. Just your team, a story, and the awkward questions most organisations never ask until it's too late.

Why bother. You don't rise to the occasion in a real incident. You fall to the level of your preparation. An hour spent arguing about who authorises pulling systems offline, in a room with coffee, is an hour you won't spend discovering the answer at 3am mid-breach.

What you need.

- 4 to 10 people, ideally from different teams (not just IT, you want finance, comms, ops and someone who can make a decision).
- A room, an hour, and this pack.
- Two volunteers: a Facilitator (you) and a Scribe.

Time. 60 minutes. The run sheet on page 3 keeps you on the clock.

THE TWO JOBS

The Facilitator (you)

You read each inject aloud, ask the questions on the slide, and keep the clock moving. Your single most important skill is this: **ask a question, then say nothing.** Let the silence stretch. The discomfort is where the learning happens. Do not answer your own questions or rescue the room. There are no wrong answers, so there is nothing to correct. There are only decisions to draw out.

The Scribe

Fills in the Decision Log as the team decides. This log is the whole souvenir of the session. It's what turns "that was interesting" into "here are the five things we're fixing." Capture the decision, who made it, and anything the room got stuck on.

THE THREE GROUND RULES, READ ALOUD

- 01** **There are no wrong answers, only decisions and consequences.** Say what you'd genuinely do, not the textbook answer you think you're supposed to give.
- 02** **This is about decisions, not technology.** "IT would handle that" is not a decision. Who tells IT? Who tells everyone else? Who decides?
- 03** **Stay in the timebox.** When the clock moves, we move, ready or not. A real attacker will not wait for you to feel ready.

One more, for you: make it safe to be honest. If someone admits "I wouldn't have known who to call," that's a win, not an embarrassment. The whole point is to find the gaps here, where they're free.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Read the ground rules aloud.
2. Read the Scenario Brief below to set the scene.
3. Work through the 11 injects in order. For each: read it out, ask the questions, let the team talk, and have the Scribe log the decision. Watch the run sheet for timings.
4. Stop at the 50-minute mark no matter where you are, and run the Debrief Sheet.
5. Send everyone the completed Decision Log and the one thing you each committed to change.

SCENARIO BRIEF · READ ALOUD

It's a normal Monday. Last Friday afternoon, someone in finance opened an email attachment labelled "outstanding invoice." Nothing seemed to happen. You're about to find out that something did. As we go, map this onto our real organisation: our systems, our people, our customers. When I ask "who decides," I mean who actually, by name.

60-MINUTE RUN SHEET

Keep this page in front of you. The injects are on the slides; the timings are yours to hold.

TIME	MINS	WHAT'S HAPPENING
00:00	5	Welcome. Read the three ground rules. Read the Scenario Brief.
00:05	5	Injects 1-2. Detection. Something's wrong.
00:10	10	Injects 3-4. It's real, it's ransomware, the note lands.
00:20	10	Injects 5-6. Isolate-or-not, and the press come knocking.
00:30	10	Injects 7-8. The backup gut-punch, and comms leaking out.
00:40	10	Injects 9-11. Data breach, pay-or-not, customers calling.
00:50	10	Debrief. The six questions. Fill in the three gaps.
01:00	0	Close. Send round the Decision Log and everyone's one change.

If you're running behind, it's fine to skip an inject, but never skip the debrief. The debrief is where the hour turns into something you keep.

WHAT NEXT

You just found the gaps in a made-up incident, at your own pace, with coffee. Useful. But you controlled the clock, and nobody's phone was actually ringing.

CMD is this, for real. Live, facilitated crisis simulation where AI phone calls land on your leadership team's actual phones, decisions branch in real time, and the pressure isn't imagined. It's the difference between reading the map and driving the road.

When you want to see how your people really hold up, not how they say they would, that's the conversation to have.

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