An Interview with
William F. Slater, III

M.S. in Cybersecurity Program

Bellevue University, Bellevue, NE

January 19, 2013

Q. How was your article selected for publication by Hakin9?

Answer:

I was identified as a Cybersecurity professional who is also a writer back in October 2012. They contacted me via e-mail and asked me to start writing articles for Hakin9 magazine. I think that they found me either on LinkedIn.com or via a Google search. The January 2013 article was my fourth article with the magazine. The editors and publishers at Hackin9 magazine are also fun to work with and they seem to appreciate working with Cybersecurity professionals who can write and deliver articles that meet their quality standards as well as their publication submission deadlines.

Article Title:

Applying a Security Compliance Framework to Prepare Your Organization for Cyberwarfare and Cyberattacks

Article Link:

http://www.billslater.com/writing/Using_ISO_27001_to_Protect_Your_Organization_in_the_Age_of_Cyberwarfare_and_Cyberattacks_by_William_Slater_2013_0114_v01_.pdf

Cover Photo Link:

http://www.billslater.com/William_Slater_on_the_cover_of_Hackin9_On_Demand_Magazine_2013_0115_.jpg

Q. Was the article something that developed out of a class project?

Answer:

No. I was inspired to write it because I knew that applying the concepts described in the article would help make cyberspace a little safer. The article explains how using a well-designed security compliance framework can help an organization defend against the perils of cyberattacks and cyberwarfare. As far as I know, no one yet has been bold enough or knowledgeable enough to take the time to write such an article for the general public. Note that I did not receive any academic credit or even any compensation for writing this article.

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Q. What led to your interest in Bellevue University's Cybersecurity program?

Answer:

I was accepted into the M.S. in Cybersecurity program at Bellevue University on Friday, Aug. 26, 2011. I chose this program for two reasons: 1) you folks appear to really have your act together compared to everyone else; and 2) I hope to work at least another 20 years, and the Bellevue University M.S. in Cybersecurity program will equip me to accomplish some great things, including teaching and equipping the Cyberwarriors of America's future.

I have been making a living in Information Technology since I started my service in the United States Air Force in July 1977. I served as a Computer System staff officer (AFSC 5135B) at Strategic Air Command Headquarters supporting the command control systems that provided command control and communications capability to SAC forces globally for the leadership of SAC and also the National Command Authorities. If you are interested in what I did at HQ SAC, there are several interesting pictures here: http://billslater.com/myusaf . After becoming ill in 1980, I left active duty in October 1980 and travelled to Houston, TX to begin my civilian career in IT. My career has involved many roles and many technologies over the years. You can see a synopsis of my career here: http://billslater.com/career and here: http://billslater.com/interview .

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Q. What has been your impression of the program thus far?

Answer:

It's been very educational and VERY intense. I am completing my 11th and 12th classes in this program and it basically means that whenever school is in session, I have had no weekend time off since August 2011. Between work, teaching, and my M.S. and Cybersecurity course work, I have stayed extremely busy. It has been worth it, but I don't think people outside the program realize how hard the Bellevue University Cybersecurity students work to complete the assignments and keep their grades up. It is definitely the biggest challenge that I have had in academia.

But, considering the importance of what we are learning and the overall high quality of the courses and the faculty, I would say that considering the price tag of the program it's a real bargain.

I also admire Professor Woerner and Dr. Patrick for creating and administering this program. In the modern history of this country, the topic understanding and protecting everything in cyberspace has never been more important than it is right now. The M.S. in Cybersecurity program at Bellevue University fills a special and critical niche in national security and in the private sector.

Q. Should I refer to you primarily as an IT consultant?

Answer:

Yes. I am a Senior IT Consultant.

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Q. Do you have a primary employer I should refer to?

Answer:

I am the owner and head Sr. IT Consultant at Slater Technologies, Inc., and that is my own company, a Type "S' corporation.

Q. Also, what is your role at the Illinois Institute of Technology?

Answer:

I have been an adjunct professor at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) for nearly five years. I teach the following classes at IIT:

Data Center Architecture

Data Center Management

Introduction to Operating Systems and Hardware, Level I

Introduction to Operating Systems Level II, with Linux, bash scripting and PERL Scripting

Introduction to Java Programming and OO Application Development

Presently, I am teaching the following classes:

Data Center Management

Introduction to Operating Systems and Hardware, Level I

Introduction to Java Programming and OO Application Development

Q. How has your education at Bellevue influenced how you teach?

Answer:

I have paid a great deal of time and attention to focusing on the Cybersecurity aspects of EVERYTHING I teach. Since most of my students are rather young and about to begin their careers, I have influenced them toward jobs and education in Cybersecurity. They are also impressed that a guy with well over three decades of IT experience, would go make and work toward earning his third graduate degree, this time in Cybersecurity at Bellevue University online.

My students are just beginning to wake up and realize that to work and thrive in the IT fields, it will mean a strong commitment toward a life-long education process. You can see a picture of me with my students at this link: http://on.fb.me/vfGRVi

Q. How has your education impacted your work?

Answer:

My M.S. in Cybersecurity academic work and my career work have been extremely complementary to one another. My academic work, especially the research and writing have helped me refine and maximize my professional strengths, making me a stronger, more confident Cybersecurity professional who can consistently add more value to his clients. Also, I have been able to use real-world examples to be a more effective Cybersecurity graduate student.

Doing the challenging and rigorous academic work that compliments my work experience and certifications has made me a more effective IT security professional. I believe also that it has made me more marketable in the workforce because this M.S. in Cybersecurity degree is still a rather new, rare, and elite thing. In 2013, I think that less than 200 people in the world have such a graduate degree.

Q. What are your plans following the completion of your Master's degree?

Answer:

I plan to continue to do work in Cybersecurity, and to research, write, and teach. I think there are some things I can still create and write that will make cyberspace safer for all of us. I also plan to co-write with some of my students and also with other Cybersecurity professionals. In fact, I expect to be co-authoring one or two articles and presentations with Professor Woerner between now and the time I go through the June 2013 Bellevue Commencement Ceremony.

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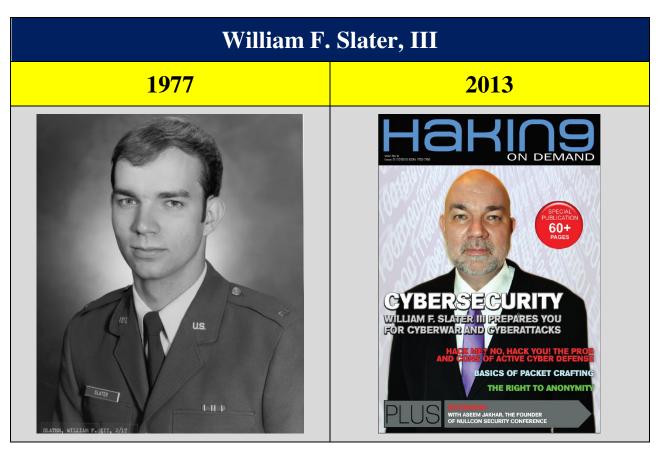**Q. Definitely feel free to add any additional comments that you would like.**

Answer:

Behold, the Cyberwarrior I was, and still am:

1977 - http://www.billslater.com/wfs_USAF_2LT_770728.gif

2013 - http://206.126.230.92/William_Slater_on_the_cover_of_Hackin9_On_Demand_Magazine_2013_0115_.jpg

William F. Slater, III	
1977	**2013**

Currently, I am a freelance Sr. IT Consultant and IT Project Manager. At this moment, I am actively engaged in working on and managing an exciting Fast-Track ISO 27001 Implementation Project. You can see other information about my career and things like certifications at this link: http://billslater.com/interview .

I have been interested in IT security since my days in the USAF and actually wrote a graduate paper on the legal issues related to unauthorized computer access and S.B. 215 for a University of Nebraska at Lincoln Business Law class back in Fall 1979.

Presently, my interests include the following:

Data Centers (Architecture and Operations)

Cyberwarfare and Cyberdeterrence

Making Cyberspace safer for everyone

Compliance

Cloud Computing

Programming (PERL, Java, C#, Python, Visual Basic, and C++)

Security Automation using SCAP – the Security Content Automation Protocol

Service Management

Automation of mundane processes in IT to achieve increasingly greater efficiencies

Pursuit of additional education and training that will lead to additional certifications in Cybersecurity and Information Technology

You can read some of my other writings and collections of resources at these links:

http://billslater.com/writing

http://billslater.com/iso27001

I am the most certified IT professional in the entire Midwest, if not the entire U.S. But I did not ask for, expect or receive any special treatment, and I did not ask to be credited for any of the security-related certifications that I have (CISSP, CISA, SSCP, etc.). I did all the coursework in this program the same as other students. You can view my M.S. in Cybersecurity program portfolio at this link: http://billslater.com/ms_cybersecurity

Thanks to Professor Woerner and Bellevue University for putting together this excellent Cybersecurity graduate program. I am greatly inspired by Professor Woerner and your contributions to the this hugely important field of Cybersecurity.

Q. It would be helpful if you could send along a headshot and/or a shot of yourself at work or something along those lines.
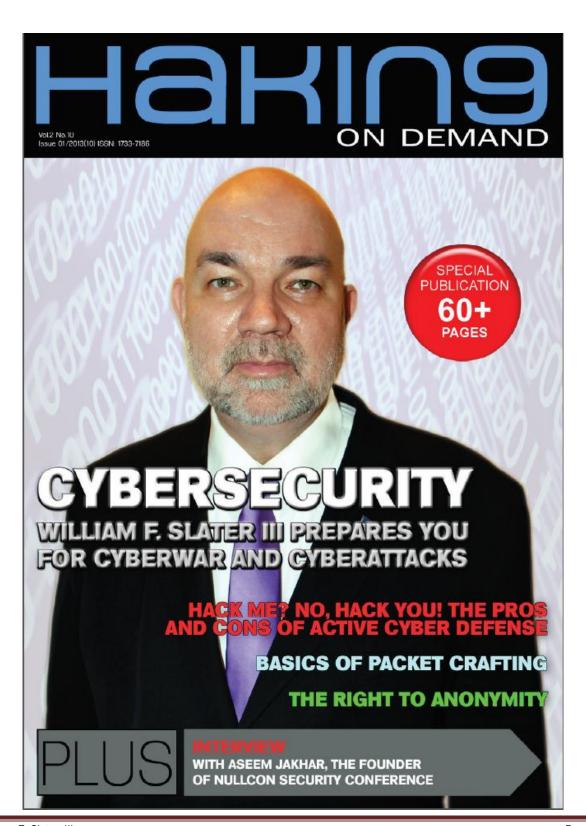
Answer:

Any pictures from these links would be fine:

http://sdrv.ms/UXWilC   general and portrait pictures

http://on.fb.me/vfGRVi   pictures of me with my students

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William Favre Slater, III
MBA, M.S., PMP, CISSP, SSCP, CISA, ISO 27002, ISO 20000, ITIL v3, IP v6, Cloud Computing Foundation
Project Manager / Program Manager
slater@billslater.com
williamslater@gmail.com
http://billslater.com/career
773 - 235 - 3080 - Home Office
312 - 758 - 0307 - Mobile
312 - 275 - 5757 - FAX
1337 N. Ashland Ave. No. 2
Chicago, IL 60622
United States of America