

EFF ASSESSING RISKS

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A PROJECT OF THE ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION

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THREAT MODELING helps you identify threats to the things you value and who you need to protect them from. When building a threat model, you can ask yourself the following questions.

- What do I want to protect?
- Who do I want to protect it from?
- What are the consequences if I fail?
- How likely are these consequences?
- How can I address the most likely risks?

THREAT MODELING GLOSSARY:

Asset: What I want to protect

Adversaries: Who I want to protect my assets from

Threats: What are the potential consequences if I fail?

Risk: The likelihood that a particular threat against a particular asset will actually occur

Adversary capability: What an adversary is able to do to achieve its aim. For example, a country's security services might have the capability to listen to telephone calls while a neighbor may have the capability to watch you from their window. To say that an adversary "has" a capability does not mean that they will necessarily use that capability. It does mean that you should consider and prepare for the possibility.

Try it! Make a threat model for a jewelry store owner:

THREAT MODEL FOR A JEWELRY STORE OWNER

YOU inherit a JEWELRY STORE in the city.

The JEWELRY STORE has:



- \$1 million worth of diamonds.
- A staff of five people.
- An alarm system.



- A safe.



- A cash register.
- A camera monitoring the door.
- A pin-protected alarm for the door.

1 What assets are you protecting?

- \$1 million worth of diamonds
- Money in the safe
- Alarm code
- **Anything else?**

2 Who are your adversaries?

- Jewelry thieves
- **Anyone else?** (Consider: Who might have access to the jewelry store safe? What about cleaning crews, or maintenance staff?)

Consider:

- What would motivate your adversaries?
- What are your **adversaries' capabilities?**

3 What are the consequences if you fail?

- Theft of jewelry
- Any other **threats?** (What if the safe code or alarm code is stolen?)

4 How likely are these consequences?

Map the likelihood of these threats occurring on the back!

5 How can you address the most likely risks?

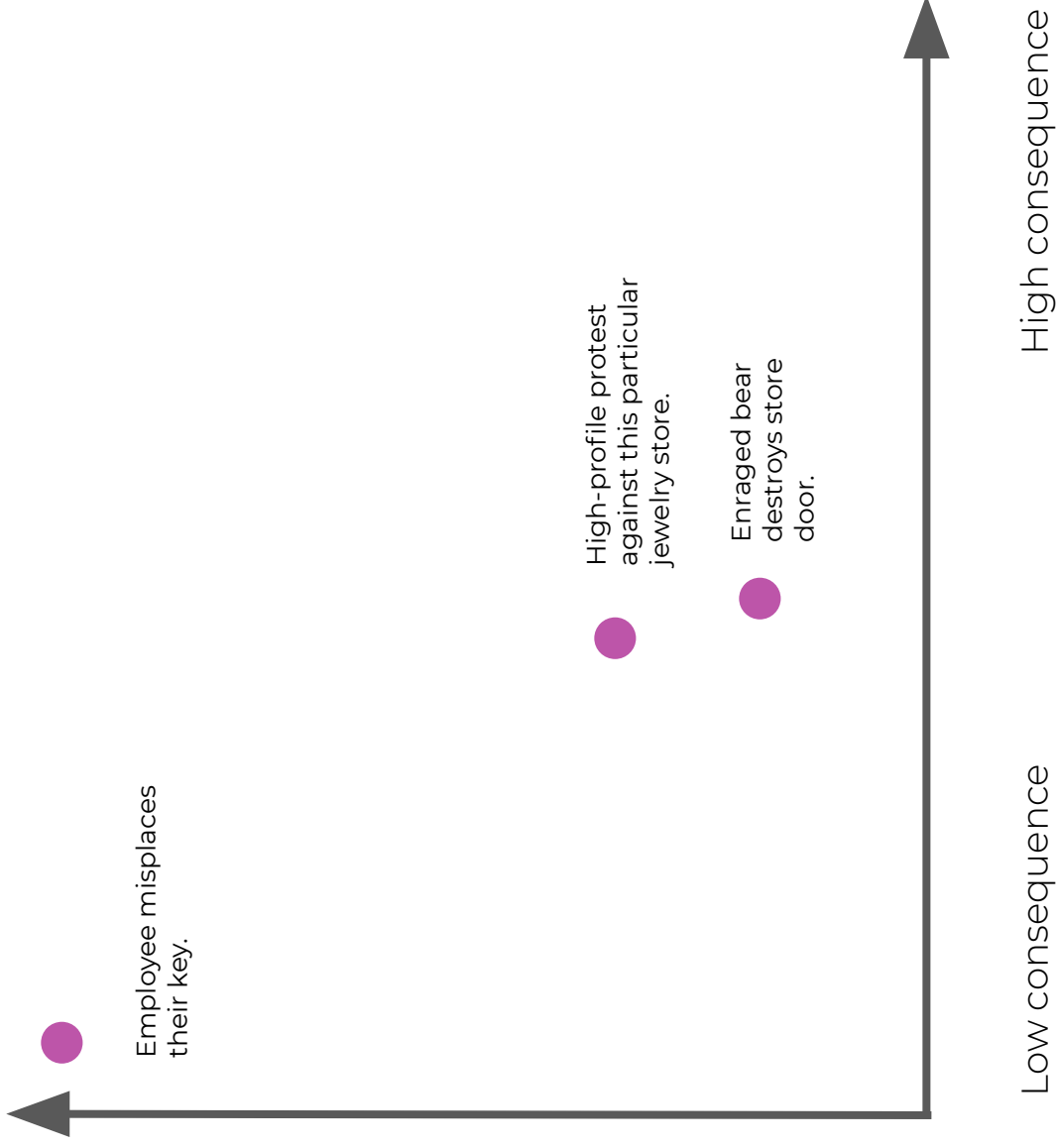
- Changing the passcode every month, and after an employee leaves.
- **What else?**

THREAT MODELING FOR A JEWELRY STORE

How likely are these consequences? This depends on your adversaries' capabilities.

Risk

High
likelihood



Threat

Low consequence

High consequence

Low
likelihood

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1

ASSETS:

What do you want to protect?

2

ADVERSARIES:

Who do you want to protect it from?

What would motivate your adversaries?

What are your adversaries' capabilities?

3

CONSEQUENCES:

What are the consequences if you fail to protect those assets?

4

LIKELIHOOD:

Map the likelihood on the next page!

5

PROTECTIONS:

What kinds of protections make sense in response?

Fill this section out after completing #4 on the back. Determining appropriate measures depends on your appetite for risk.

6

PLAN FOR CHANGE:

Technologies and threats change. Plan to reassess your risks.

I will reevaluate my threat model on: _____

Risk

High
likelihood

Low
likelihood

Threat

