

Corporate Security Career > Talent Management >

Build a High Performing Security Team and Reap the Rewards

Corporate Security is a team sport. From information sharing between security managers to collaboration with other functions for enterprise initiatives like workplace violence prevention and GSOC, Corporate Security relies on a strong, well-functioning team.

The security team looks different in every organization. Sometimes it's a CSO, three staff, and an outsourced or shared services crew; sometimes it's hundreds of internal full-time employees reporting regionally up to corporate leadership. But regardless of the makeup and structure of the function, a high-performing security team can elevate the perception of Corporate Security in the enterprise while better fulfilling its protective mission.

So what does a "high-performing team" look like? The term is generally used^{1 2 3} to refer to teams that:

- communicate clearly
- maintain a culture of psychological safety, trust, and respect
- share team goals and values
- understand and find meaning in their purpose within the context of the organizational mission and vision
- participate in continuous learning
- benefit from and demonstrate strong leadership.

Teams with the above characteristics tend to:

- get a lot done quickly
- be agile in responding to a changing imperative or environment
- contribute to a positive workplace culture
- demonstrate significant autonomy

- embrace innovation
- collaborate actively and well.

In the realm of corporate security, all this can equate to strong executive and organizational influence, a seat at the table, a reputation for doing more with less, an ability to look beyond what has been done before to incorporate fresh ideas, and over time, a track record of risk avoidance and mitigation that is recognized and appreciated across the organization.

Security Executive Council faculty have shared some advice over the years on how to lay the groundwork for a high-performing security team.^{4 5} Some of their top recommendations:

- **Set clear goals.** The security team can't work as a cohesive unit unless its leadership defines and reiterates its mission and goals.
- **Model collaborative and positive culture.** Many corporate security departments have seen their development in this area stymied when leaders fail to exemplify the appropriate behaviors from the top.
- **Invest in education.** Even a strong employee cannot be expected to engage in continuous learning without some organizational support in the form of incentives or funding for educational opportunities. If incentives can't be secured, low-cost or free educational options may be available.
- **Encourage risk taking.** If the security team expects every new idea to be shot down, they will stop looking for new ideas.
- **Get out of the way.** Providing some level of autonomy to one's staff is imperative if they are to gain confidence and trust in their own decision making.
- **Incentivize communication.** Setting rules and boundaries for the tone of meetings and communications can help ensure that all team members feel safe sharing information, thoughts, and critiques.
- **Evaluate expectations against reality.** Strong leaders should recognize where their existing team's strengths and weaknesses lie and evaluate how to move forward, even with small steps, toward a higher-performing state. It may help to lay out each team member's job description and duties and compare what they were hired to do against what they are actively doing.

An agile, efficient, communicative, and cohesive security team has the potential to save the company money, build a positive security culture, keep abreast of risk-related shifts in the organization, industry, and environment, and identify and mitigate horizon risks before they can cause serious damage. Building that team is worth the investment.

Visit the Security Executive Council web site to view more resources in the [Corporate Security Career : Talent Management](#) series.

About the Security Executive Council

The SEC is the leading research and advisory firm focused on corporate security risk mitigation solutions. Having worked with hundreds of companies and organizations we have witnessed the proven practices that produce the most positive transformation. Our subject matter experts have deep expertise in all aspects of security risk mitigation strategy; they collaborate with security leaders to transform security programs into more capable and valued centers of excellence. Watch our [3-minute video](#) to learn more.

Contact us at: contact@secleader.com

Website: <https://www.securityexecutivecouncil.com/>

¹ [What Makes Some Teams High Performing?](#) By David Burkus, Harvard Business Review

² [How to build a high-performing team](#), Institute of Directors

³ [High Performing Teams](#), by Lean Agility

⁴ [Faculty Advisor: Building a Successful Security Business Team](#), Dave Quilter

⁵ [Faculty Advisor: Take Care of Your Staff and They'll Take Care of Your Organization](#), Dean Correia