Podcast Transcript

Risk Never Sleeps
Episode 90
Scott Dickinson

Ed Gaudet: Welcome to the Risk Never Sleeps Podcast, in which we learn about the people that are on the front lines, delivering and protecting patient care. I'm Ed Gaudet, the host of our program, and today I am pleased to be joined by Scott Dickinson, the Chief Information Security officer at AnMed Health. There we go. That's a mouthful, Scott.

Scott Dickinson: Yes, it is.

Ed Gaudet: Now, you're based in South Carolina, I believe.

Scott Dickinson: Yes, yes, we are.

Ed Gaudet: All right. Excellent, excellent. So, well, let's start off with tell the listeners a little bit about your current role in your organization.

Scott Dickinson: Okay. So I am the first ever CISO here. It's not my first CISO role. So I've been charged with, you know, building them up and leading and building out the security department, dancing it and making it, you know, world-class.

Ed Gaudet: Excellent, excellent. I saw a little bit about your background. It looks like you spent a lot of time in DoD. You were at the FBI for a little. So a lot of government experience. How has that prepared you for this role?

Scott Dickinson: So one of the good things about being in the federal government for that long, is you see the standards and you have to do certification in the accreditation. So you're used to audits and, you know, preparing stuff to a standard. It helps you out in that regard. You know, I had four years with the state. You know, again, different type of government but still more government. And then you learn and then you know when you come out and someone says, Well, which standard or framework do you use? I personally like the CIS ones. The CIS 18, basic housekeeping; go from there and do that. You know, and then, you know, as you're more advanced and this makes perfect sense and stuff like that. So.

Ed Gaudet: Excellent. You were in the military as well. How did you get into government?

Scott Dickinson: Actually, it's kind of ironic. A bunch of my friends, I was the youngest in my group and they all got signed up to go into the Army. So I was thinking about joining with them. But then we had one friend that went and he signed up everybody else, and he ended up not going. So, you know, as a 17-year-old, it kind of freaks you out a little bit. You're like, Wait a minute, that's not what we were promised. But I got into, luckily, I had a professor in community college that challenged me. You know, I was a bum, you know, and I was going surfing. I was doing that, coming to class late. And he basically cornered me and said, Son, you know, you're wasting your talent and you're wasting my time. So either get your stuff together or drop out, you can go drop. But if you're late for class, I'm going to fail you. So, you know, give me the kick I needed to, you know, get my act together and do that. And then he helped me get off the government and started painting airplanes with the government, and then got into computers and security. So.

Ed Gaudet: Excellent, excellent. And how did you eventually get into healthcare?

Scott Dickinson: So when I was working for the state, you know, I was a virtual CISO and they did things a little differently than most virtual CISOs. It wasn't just work remotely from home.

Scott Dickinson (cont'd): It was the main state Department of Administration would hire the CISOs, and they would contract them out to other state agencies who had a need for a CISO because they had more cybersecurity experts there who could better vet people, rather than each individual agency having to vet on their own. So that was doing that. And then this opportunity came up here at Healthcare and AnMed. They were looking for the first one, someone who knew what to do with the program from the ground up. And that's what got me into healthcare. Now, I did have, I worked for about three and a half years for DoD as the CIO for the second dental battalions. That was my first foray into health care I've come back to.

Ed Gaudet: Dental battalion. That sounds painful.

Scott Dickinson: Yeah. Just for the class.

Ed Gaudet: That's like my worst nightmare. Okay. A battalion of dentists. That would be it. And if they were dressed in clown suits, that would even be worse. Excellent. So a lot of really interesting topics. Obviously, as of late, we had the huge we have a couple of large incidents recently. Were you affected by Change Healthcare?

Scott Dickinson: No, we were not materially affected by them. You know, unluckily for us, we probably I'd say about 25% of our stuff went through them and it went through ... But we weren't reached by a third party or a fourth party, because we had a contractor that used Change. But like I said, just a minimal amount of stuff, and we had a great staff here that was able to say, Okay, here's the problem, let's start manually doing these processes and do that. So, you know, we just had a little blip on our radar luckily.

Ed Gaudet: How does that affect your thinking or strategy moving forward? Are you making any changes to your program?

Scott Dickinson: Yeah, so one of the things I like to do is particularly after any hack like the NVM hack came out while the social engineered, you know, the help desk and stuff like that. So we made changes to our help desk policy.

Scott Dickinson (cont'd): You can't get a password reset and an MFA reset within 48 hours of each other, unless you show up in person. You know, we don't do it over a telephone. Change Healthcare is basically pointed out how if you have one key vendor that gets hit, you know, you may not be the brunt of the cyber attack, but you can be taken down just like the hospital London was. You know, the ... person got hit. So started to look at all your key processes and say, Hey, where do we rely on one vendor? How hard would it be to stand up a second vendor? You know, do we have procurement rules in place that oh, you got to get three bids and you got to do this, you got to the waiting period. It's all going to affect us in an emergency. So looking at things outside cyber, you know, just look at risk in general.

Ed Gaudet: That's really great. So it sounds like you've added this notion of an alternative vendor or solution as part of your business continuity and resiliency program. Is that correct? Is that?

Scott Dickinson: Yeah.

Ed Gaudet: Now do you also do tabletop exercises?

Scott Dickinson: Yes we do, we do. And I like to have the ones. Like when we did a ransomware thing, we basically, we had an IT security meeting, but we didn't tell them what it was, you know, and then we called the person on call and said, Hey, you know, if you're on this floor with ransomware, what do you do? And so he had to call the manager and call, and the manager called up and said, Hey, we just had a computer with ransomware. And you heard the, oh, you know, ... go around the room. Yeah. Oh, no, we think in words. Yes. Yeah. So you know, but then it's like, okay, so this is a drill. What do we do now? You know? And we purposely left some steps out of our plan to see what people could fill in the missing stuff, like, okay, well we're going to the data center. Okay. Well, you have to have badge access to get a data server. The badge server got hit. What do you do now? Oh, well, our keys work for this door and you tried your keys. So yeah, it helps to walk through that because what you think is going to happen in an emergency isn't what happens.

Ed Gaudet: It never is, is it? No matter how long you prepare, how often you prepare, it's always, I think there's a saying and it's attributed to Mike Tyson.

Ed Gaudet (cont'd): I'm not sure if it is or not, but everyone has a plan until they walk in the ring and get punched in the face, right? I love that.

Scott Dickinson: I love that too, you know, because, and I heard the story behind it. A reporter said, Well, you know, Mike, you fought several fights now. So they got a plan. They've seen you on tape. They've got a plan for you. What happens now? And that's when he said, Yeah, a plan until you get a punch in the phace.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. Well, speaking of plans, AI comes out of nowhere, right? Commercializable AI, right? The ability to consume it a lot faster and deeper than ever in the past, even though it's been around for years. How are you looking at that within your organization? And how are you preparing for risk associated with AI?

Scott Dickinson: ... was doing, we're standing up an AI governance board, and we're asking that anybody that wants to do any kind of AI, they have to run it through the governance board first. Because what I have found is that people often don't realize the danger of just, hey, I got this big spreadsheet, I need to crunch this data. Hey, I can do it for me without realizing that, you know, AIs can become sentient. You know, I give the thing the example of, you know, one thing AI is really good at is code review. Hey, look at my missile launch program here and see if there's any flaws in it. Okay, yeah. Fix this, this, and this. Well, if you submit that to an AI and someone comes along ten minutes later, says, Hey, have you got a missile launch code? Yeah, I'm here. And here's the perfect version of it. People have to realize that, you know, what they put out there can be sucked in, and you may not want it sucked in. So.

Ed Gaudet: That's right. That sentient nature is so critical to understand because that is the core of the risk. Now are you looking at it? And I love the governance model. We hear a lot about how organizations are starting there. Do you have that cross-functional? Is it with every organization? ...

Scott Dickinson: ... involved. We have legal involved. We have, you know, ITs and IT security involved. Other than that, you know, we want to be aware of the projects, not just so we can say no. And I'm not the old-school CISO that says no to everything.

Scott Dickinson (cont'd): I'm here to enable the business, but I want to do it in a secure manner. But in order to do that, I have to know what you're looking at and what you're trying to accomplish, and we can figure out a solution for it.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. And the impace. If it goes bad, what's the impact to the business? Right? Yeah. That's great. And so are you doing internally developed projects with AI or is it much more of a we're just sort of testing it, doing some testing?

Scott Dickinson: Testing and stuff like that. And the way we do it here is we buy a lot of commercial off-the-shelf products. So I imagine people are like, Hey, the data analytics group was going to say, We really need something to crunch all this stuff for us. So we want to be able to submit all this stuff to ChatGPT or Bard or whatever and have it do it for us. You know, it's like, well, no time out. Let's make sure where we put our data, what are they doing with it, and all those kind of things because, while it could be a really benefit, it could open us up to a whole new avenue that we hadn't planned on before.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. That's great. So last year, the HHS announced the cybersecurity performance goals, the CPGs. Well, have you taken a look at that? And how are you thinking about changing your organization process or resources to comply with those?

Scott Dickinson: The one of the things, I went through and I filled it out and took the assessment, you know, and a lot of it was just putting on paper what I already figured out. You know, I'm two and a half years into this gig here. So, you know, I, we made huge, substantial progress since I got here. And it's just kind of helps to kind of have a good external lever I can use when I'm submitting items for budget and say, Listen, this aligns to the performance goals. They said you need to do ..., for example. We can do that. But if I just say I need money for network segmentation, they're like, Well, it's not really in the budget. If I say, hey, HHS says it's a good idea if we do this. So that's one of the things I like about it. It helps give us that extra lever that we might need to apply, you know, pressure.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. Now, did you see the announcement last week that Google and Microsoft now are participating? Do you work with either of those infrastructures? I assume you do at some.

Scott Dickinson: We do. And one of the things I'm always suspicious of, like the Microsofts and Googles of the world, is like, hey, we'll help you get our foot in your door, and then we'll charge you for it later. You know, my big knock on Microsoft is they have a penchant for moving buttons. Oh my gosh. You know, if your admin console looks this way and it used to doing this, you can go in three months later and you've already created a document based on that. And they're like, Where's that button you mentioned in here? It's like they moved it, you know, or they want to start charging for it, you know?

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, that's definitely a consideration. But I think it's a good first step.

Scott Dickinson: Yeah, it is.

Ed Gaudet: For the smaller organizations that just don't have the financial means to.

Scott Dickinson: Yeah. And one of the things I think that, you know, the criminals are realizing that, Hey, if the big hospitals of the world are super protected, I'm going to start going for the smaller ones. So basically, as the bigger guys get better protected, it pushes it out more to the rural. So yeah, I do like that hey, they're coming from the other end saying, Hey, let's help the rural us out and stuff like that.

Ed Gaudet: It's a really, really good point. What are your top three priorities or strategic initiatives over the next year or two years?

Scott Dickinson: So, you know, when I first came in here, you know, I worked in the email security building stuff around that. I'm really looking at building out a SoC and building out threat hunting. I want to make this job exciting for my people. You know, to do that, give them something like this. I'm a geek, you know? And I like threat hunting. And I like stopping bad guys because to me, bad guys are just bullies that are picking on people. So I like to help stop that.

Scott Dickinson (cont'd): And I hope to light that fire in them that, hey, here's how we protect it. You know, one of the things I have in my office is I have a board and has 17 lists of opportunities. Hey, you want to further your career, take one of these and you can run with it and I'll teach you how to do it. Blue team, red team, fishing, you know, fishing simulator, stuff like that. I can teach you that stuff, but you gotta want to have that drive and ambition to do it.

Ed Gaudet: I love that. Could you share that with, I'd love to post that on that. That's really great. I was just having a conversation about career development for cybersecurity professionals, and that's a good framework, a good way to think about it. What keeps you up at night?

Scott Dickinson: Well, the thing is, it's a joke. Everyone, there're only two things: everyone that works for me and everyone that doesn't.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. I love that.

Scott Dickinson: Actually, I try to get a lot of sleep, you know, because I'm also of the mindset that, hey, we protect ourselves the best we can and we're getting better. Having coached basketball and, you know, coached my daughters all up through their sports leagues and stuff like that, there are some games you come in, you think you're prepared and you just get blown out of the water. Well, you look at okay, well why do we get blown out? They were better at this, this, and this, you know. Well, what can others can we fix? You know, if you thought the umpires were bad or something like that. Well, we really can't fix that. But, you know, were you not doing the techniques? The other thing I find like, especially in sports, is don't criticize the player, criticize the technique. Find out where the flaw in the technique is. Hey, that ball got between your legs because you didn't get your glove on the ground. Let's really work on getting your glove on the ground. Those kind of things. Number one, it helps your self-esteem. Like, oh, I'm not the problem. My technique is the problem. And technique is easier to fix.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, that's a really good point. You know, I always say there's no such thing as bad teammates. There's just a bad fit. Right? So you try to work through that, through the evolution of the technique, you know, identification and realization that there needs to be work there.

Ed Gaudet (cont'd): So that's really, really good. And of course, you're, I assume you're a lifelong Celtics fan too. So you'll be rooting for us.

Scott Dickinson: Actually, I live in Canada, I love the Spurs. And the reason I like them, there's a Tim Duncan. I learned about Tim Duncan. To me, he should be in, you know, the top ten category, you know, of all-time players. Just because he didn't play basketball until the 10th grade in high school. He was a swimmer. A hurricane came through, wiped out his swimming pool at his school. And so he got into basketball. He learned the fundamentals and he really focused on the fundamentals. And that's why they call him the big fundamentals, you know, usually with funny quotation marks because they said he's so boring. He's not really fun. But it relates to cybersecurity because if you take care of the fundamentals, we'll have a solid program to build off of.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, that's a great point. And you need to give folks sort of a view of what can be, what the possibility, art of possibility is if you will. And I love that you're laying out that journey for people as well on your team. So outside of healthcare and cyber, what's your passion? What are you most passionate? What would you be doing if you weren't doing this job?

Scott Dickinson: So either surfing or working on cars, you know. I have a 1989 Toyota Supra that I'm fixing up and that's the turbo. '89, yeah, that was kind of one of my high school dream cars. I couldn't afford it then. I can afford it now. And like I said, I'm, one of the things that interesting transcribed in my career was I was really good at computers in high school. Went to college, got a bad teacher. So I got out of it, and I got into auto mechanics. And auto mechanics, my teacher mentioned earlier, he also told me, he said, Scott, don't be a parts chunker. The car comes in, doesn't start. Just don't start throwing parts at it. Troubleshoot it, find out why it doesn't start, you know? Okay. Then start. Okay, well, it's got a bad battery, so you put a battery in it. Three days later, it's dead. Oh, well, this is a bad start. You put a bad starter in it. Three days later, it's dead. Oh. The bad alternator. Well, it's a bad alternator to start with, but if you don't test those things and go through a procedure of let me check this and this and this, then you just end up wasting a lot of time and effort. So that taught me how to troubleshoot a lot of things with IT, and gave me the confidence to pretty much address any problem I come across.

Scott Dickinson (cont'd): Because there's a solution out there, you just gotta find it.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, it's very transferable that line of work and industry. And I love that notion of diagnosing things too before you act right now. Not ready, fire, aim but ready, aim. Really understand the problem and then test and diagnose and then adjust accordingly because.

Scott Dickinson: And that's where I used to tell a lot of the athletes that have come to me. You know, they said hey I want to be the next, you know, LeBron James, Michael Jordan, and I said, Kobe Bryant. Do you have the desire to put in the work? You know, when Kobe Bryant first came out, I hated him. I thought, he's just an arrogant kid, you know, didn't know anything. But later on in life, I learned the drive that he had and the passion he put into it. A reporter asked him one time, you know, How are you so good at shooting? He said, I make 200 shots every day at practice. And he said, well, How do you know when you hit 200? He said, I count. It's not, I think I made 200 a day. I'm about there. No, he knew he had made 200. He counted 200 so that it wasn't just as close enough. That's good enough. No, he wanted to have. No, I have done it. And once I learned that about him, like, wow, you know, he really, you know, I heard other stories where he would show up to a gym, and if he knew you were on the opposing team, he would not leave before you did. And it was actually a player that said, Hey, I'm gonna stay here as long as you know Kobe will, but he ended up leaving and the guy asked him later on and he said, Well, why did you stay so long? He says, because I knew you were still in the gym. He said, You were not. I was not going to leave before you did. But and the same thing for cybersecurity, you know, if you immerse yourself in stuff, then find something that you love, chase it, chase that passion and become really, really good at it.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, it tends to be the formula for success. That notion of Malcolm Gladwell talked about the 10,000 hours that you need to put in to something, and you have to be maniacal about that practice, and it does make you a better writer, basketball professional. Whatever that is, whatever you desire, you got to put the work in and you have to be vigilant, if you will, and diligent. That's really a great point, which is a good segue into a couple of next questions. So if you were to go back in time, Scott, what would you tell your 20-year-old self?

Scott Dickinson: I would tell me that it gets better. You know, a lot of times, especially young people, you're put in situations where you're forced to be there with other people your age and you're all trying to figure out this big mess called life, and you can get depressed and sad about it, but it gets better. So do those things. Take some risks in life. You know, one of things I tell people is, you know, when I was younger, I was kind of convinced I was ugly, so I wouldn't ask the pretty girls out. Well, then I figured out later on in life that I had this fear of rejection. So I set about a plan. You know what? I'm gonna get rejected ten times a month until I get over this fear. And the ironic thing is, every girl I asked out went out with me. You know, so kind of had to change some tapes that were playing in my head, so that's what I mean. It gets better. Take the risks, you know, because if she's not going out with you right now, if she says no, you're still in the same situation you were before, except for you have a little more knowledge now ... But at least you know she says yes, hey, you have a better situation than you did before that we were stopped from taking the risk because you were scared. That's what I would tell myself. You know, I'd do that, and just keep hustling.

Ed Gaudet: That's a great philosophy that can be applied to just about anything. Have the courage to take that step. And if you don't, the answer is always no.

Scott Dickinson: And one of the things I tell my employees is: It's okay to fail. I would rather have you fail and me help you correct it. And if you do something and you're doing your best effort at it and it fails and something goes wrong, I'm going to have your back, you know? I had a great leader one time. He said, yeah, I served as his deputy, he said, Scott, if I go to a conference and I come back, you know, I've gone a week and I come back and there's a decision on my desk that you could have made, I'm going to be upset. He said, If you made the wrong decision, we can turn that around. But I'm going to be upset if there were something you could have done and you didn't do it, you know? And for me, that's kind of the, you know, I kind of lived by. I want you to take the risk. And if you make a mistake, we'll correct it. We'll do whatever it takes to correct it. But I want you to learn and do that.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. And it's never the mistake I found. It's always the repeating the same mistake several times now. Maybe not twice, three times, but several times. And also the cover-up. Right?

Ed Gaudet (cont'd): Don't ever cover up the mistake. Own it, be accountable for it, and then learn from it so you can get better. All right, this is the Risk Never Sleeps Podcast. I have to ask you this question. What's the riskiest thing you've ever done? I think I know the answer.

Scott Dickinson: So I don't know how many podcast guests you have that have never died before, but I actually had a trunk fall on me one time. Taking a wheel off of it. Truck fell on me. I was out. Luckily my neighbor had a friend that came over and helped get off of me. So you know, and I've also almost died surfing one time. You know, I surfed some hurricane swell and I got, you know, knocked under and couldn't get up and finally got up, you know. But so I've done some risky things in my life, but I.

Ed Gaudet: Figured it'd be surfing-related. What're some really interesting places you've served?

Scott Dickinson: I grew up in North Carolina, near the coast, and so I spent a lot of my time doing that. Sometimes we make trips out to Hatteras and down to the Outer Banks. Surf out there. A lot of times it was local. I've been down. Just January, I was surfing in Pensacola. My daughters had a basketball game down there, so I brought the board, went down there and did that. So I tried to get in when I can.

Ed Gaudet: You've been out West? Have you ever surfed?

Scott Dickinson: Never surfed out West. You know, I've only been in Pacific Ocean one time, and it was as cold as they say it is, you know. And, but I've never had a chance to go out there and do any surfing out there.

Ed Gaudet: Wow. Well, you gotta do you gotta make some time for Santa Cruz. That's the surfing capital.

Scott Dickinson: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Ed Gaudet: Real good surfing out there. Did you have any encounters with sharks when you're out there surfing?

Scott Dickinson: A couple times. A scary time was with a dolphin. I was actually sitting on my board waiting for waves, and I had a dolphin jump out of the water ten feet from me, you know, and that kind of freaked you out. You're like, Oh, what's that? It's like, oh, it's a dolphin. Sharks don't jump, you know?

Ed Gaudet: It's not a hunchback doing a no or a breach or, you know, any of the whales. Yeah. So.

Scott Dickinson: And if you have a dolphin nearby, it's a good indicator that sharks aren't there. And stuff like that. I have been at one time where, and if you understand the differences between dolphins and sharks, you know, dolphins usually come up with their fins and be in the circular motion. If a fin ever pops up and just stays up like this and then it goes down, that's a shark. And I've had that one time, you know. I said, Time to go. And another funny story I like to tell is a friend of mine, he said, Hey, I got this great surfing spot. He said, but we gotta walk aways because it's at the end of a very huge sandbar. So we go there, there's the end of an island and there's a trench there, and there was water flowing through it, it connected the ocean to the south side. He says, Stop, wait. I said, What are we waiting for? You know, the surf is way out there. We gotta get going. He said, No, no. He said, We gotta wait. I said, Why have we got to wait? He said, We gotta wait for the shark. I'm like, For the shark? He said, Yeah. Every so often the shark swims through here and sure enough can't swim in there. And then we jumped over the thing. I'm like, wait a minute, we're going in now. No, let's go somewhere else.

Ed Gaudet: Oh, man. That's crazy.

Scott Dickinson: No, wait for the shark. You know, the shark's coming.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. That's right. Well, at least he knew.

Scott Dickinson: Yeah. Yeah, exactly. ... even worse than this.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. What's the hardest lesson in your career?

Scott Dickinson: So one of the hardest lessons I learned was that I was hired one time as an outsider. Me and two other people were hired. We were all ISOs. We were brought into this organization and they had a certain mindset about hiring and stuff like that. And we got in there. And, you know, when you bring in outsiders, you get that fresh perspective. One of the things I didn't realize is you can present very viable and sound principles, but make them look completely foolish. And so we would do that, we would stand up in meetings say, Hey, you know, this ISO should do this, or this ISO supposed to do this and all this stuff. And why aren't we doing this? Why do we have this, this, this? Without understanding the why behind it. And so we came across as complete jerks, that making them look foolish, that they didn't know what they were doing. And so I had to learn like, oh, yeah, that's not a good look, you know. So having to be political. But again, that also taught me a lot about how to be political; how to play the game; how to build trust between departments. I came to one organization one time and I was asked to, you know, come in with a 30, 60, 90-day plan. I came in there and they hadn't passed in three years. And so I'm like, Why haven't you passed? Like, oh, we made a mistake one time and server shut down. So management doesn't trust IT. They were frozen. They had an organizational culture of fear. And it wasn't the one that was you know when you walk to HR you got all the posters up there. IT organization unspoken of fear. So, okay, so 30, 60, 90-day plan on the shelf. We've got to overcome this. We've got to build trust. We got to do that. So anytime I had something that might paint the IT department or, you know, a supervisor or anything in a bad light, I would go to them first, say, Hey, I've got to tell the CIO this. How do you want to shape this, you know? I don't want to come across that you're not doing your job, but I want you to be prepared for when they ask you, well, why haven't we passing this stuff like that? So, involving other people and keeping them from being blindsided, that helped me, that first early lesson of making people look foolish actually helped me down the line.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, and developing that empathy to focus and prioritize the thing that needs to get fixed first was really important. That's a great story, Scott.

Scott Dickinson: And people don't wanna look bad. And I'm not the kind of guy that wants to come across as a jerk because I was, I've actually hired to replace several jerks.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah, I have a no-jerk rule, so I like that. All right, you're on a desert island, and you can bring five albums or movies with you or one of each. What would you bring?

Scott Dickinson: So the first movie would be my, all my favorite book: The Count of Monte Cristo.

Ed Gaudet: Oh, nice.

Scott Dickinson: One thing I like that, especially if you think about cybersecurity or something like that. So I don't know. Have you read The Count of Monte Cristo or seen the movies?

Ed Gaudet: Years ago. Yeah.

Scott Dickinson: Yeah. And so it's really cool how the guy basically gets falsely imprisoned and stuff like that. And he used the tactics that his enemies used against him to perpetrate their downfall. And so, that was kind of cool. And of course, about a guy getting off an island. So, you know, that would definitely help either.

Ed Gaudet: You know, I think surviving in this face of adversity and not, you know, retaining your dignity in the process, which.

Scott Dickinson: And soaking up as much learning as you could. By meeting with the avi that was in the prison with him and learning all these secrets that he have, gave him the freedom to escape later on in life. And that ties into the second movie I would carry was The Shawshank Redemption. You know, again, that movie about escape, right? Great movie in there. And the famous line, You get busy living or get busy dying.

Ed Gaudet: That's right.

Scott Dickinson: And so basically, take action of your life, take action of your career, take action in your stuff. Get busy with that. Don't just wait for it to come to you. One of the executives I worked with here is staying on his desk, he said, So many people wait in line for the elevator to the success when the stairs are right around the corner.

Ed Gaudet: That's right. Always stairs. They're always stairs.

Scott Dickinson: And people don't wait for the elevator to come. You know, I heard somebody else say, you know, Why wait for your ship to come in? Why don't you swim out and meet it?

Ed Gaudet: Of course, it's a shark sighting.

Scott Dickinson: Exactly. ... the shark coming through the loop.

Ed Gaudet: Yeah. Take your time there.

Scott Dickinson: Yeah. I think some of the music I would take with me would probably be the soundtrack to American Graffiti.

Ed Gaudet: Oh, nice. Yeah.

Scott Dickinson: I grew up, you know, without a TV for a while, and so. But I had my parents albums that, you know, and that was when the Beach Boys and stuff like that.

Ed Gaudet: You're surfing, of course, you'd have to.

Scott Dickinson: Surfin Safari. Yeah, the Beach Boys'd probably be another one on there. So yeah, that would be some of my favorites there.

Ed Gaudet: Excellent, excellent. Last question. What advice would you give to someone coming out of school that wanted to pursue a cyber or an IT profession in health care?

Scott Dickinson: Yeah. So I would tell them, get a job in IT, even if it's not necessarily where you're at. So a little backstory. So I was painting airplanes for the government. That's how I started with the DoD. I came home one day and my wife said, What would you love to do for work if you could do it? I said, Well, I'd love to get back into computers. And she said, Well, why don't you? I said, It'd be a 50% pay cut. We got two babies in diapers, you know, how are we going to survive? She said, Go ahead. We'll manage, you know? And it was so awesome. I got back in. I don't feel like I worked a day since. My first job was a computer operator. How many of you passed a series of codes? Print out, spin out, tear them out, you do back-up stuff like that. But on our backup server was also the antivirus console. So I asked my boss; said, Hey, who's monitoring the antivirus console? She's like, Nobody. I said, Well, can I do it? You know, sure. So I started doing that. Start looking for jobs that are going undone and volunteering and doing it. One of the things that catches up so many young people and even, you know, older people in the career, they'll say, Well, when they start paying me more, I'll start doing more not realizing they're missing out on this huge opportunity for. You know, for me, I like to use the phrase I'm hustling for tomorrow's dollars, not today's dollars. I'm getting stuff like, you're not paying me now, but I'm getting to put it on my resume. I served as a team lead for no extra pay. I got to put that on my resume. You know, I started as a relief supervisor. No extra pay. Got to put that on my resume. Got experienced the world of supervisors. At that ..., you know, you only got an email address if you were a supervisor. Well, so I did that so I could start making contacts and doing that stuff. Again, no extra pay at the moment, but it benefited me so much more down the line. One of the other things I tell people, if you want to get into cyber security or any IT position, work a help desk. It teaches you the language of IT and how someone can say, My computer doesn't work and it means ten different things to ten different people. My computer won't turn on. Same thing, ten different things to ten different people. Learn how to troubleshoot that. What do you mean it doesn't turn on? Do you see anything on your monitor? Do you have a blue light down here? That kind of stuff. Learning to work through those processes and also learn the empathy. Because a lot of times when people call the help desk, they're upset, they're frustrated, they've got a spreadsheet, they've got to get their boss in 30 minutes and their Excel isn't opening, so they're going to be hot. Learn how to deal with hot-headed people. Learn how to do that and calm that down. And that will get you into there. And then look to see, you know, the first job that comes open to health care might not be a cyber security analyst. It might be at the help desk, it might be working in IT thing. But get in and do it.

Scott Dickinson (cont'd): If you can't get in, create your own home lab. Look for opportunities. Take that initiative to go in. I got a job one time because I'd never done this in enterprise. You know, they said it was all about Active Directory and this and that. And I said, Well, here's my home lab and it's got 15 computers and the router and the switch and all this stuff. Like, you set that up, we can teach you at rest. If you can do that and you're in business enough to set it up, I'm on board.

Ed Gaudet: That's great advice. And I see a future in education for you, sir. Like the adjunct level or being a professor. What a great advice, I mean. Yeah, terrific. Terrific way to end the program. This is Ed Gaudet from the Risk Never Sleeps Podcast. And if you're on the front lines protecting patient safety and delivering patient care, remember to stay vigilant, because Risk Never Sleeps.

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