



Seven Critical Factors for an Optimized IAM Security Investment

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With security breaches dominating the daily headlines, it's easy to become overwhelmed. As each new story reaches your C-level and board of directors, you may find yourself fighting fires rather than strategically planning. In fact, simply reacting to urgent needs is often the standard problem-solving response for many CISOs today.

Shifting focus from the big picture—while simply buying technology to solve urgent needs—has become all too common. Although this might be a comfortable approach, in my many years working with clients I've found this only solves the specific problem at hand.

The most successful CISOs focus on an enterprise-wide strategy. By undertaking a holistic risk analysis approach—including people, processes, and data—security leaders can map technology to strategy. With this strategy-first approach, CISOs can build better long term investments, and stay more secure.

Seven Factors for a Winning IAM Program

The next time you are trying to solve a problem by buying and implementing technology, stop and ask yourself, are you taking a technology-only approach? If so, you might want to consider the following factors to ensure it makes sense with your overall strategy.

- 1 Exposure:** Do you understand your current risk exposures? What's at risk and why?
- 2 The Board:** Do you have executive sponsorship to enable enterprise-wide buy-in and support?
- 3 People:** Do you have a cross-functional IAM team representing all the key technology and business owners? Are they truly engaged to solve the right problems with the correct stakeholders?
- 4 Path:** Do you have your compass set for a multi-year journey in the right direction with the right people, processes, and technology? Will the stakeholders know they've arrived at the right place when you get there? Are you set up to survive mid-project storms and changes?
- 5 Transformation:** Are you moving your organization toward enterprise-wide change and applying the governance to sustain the change?
- 6 Risk Economics:** Does your organization use risk economics as well as ROI to ultimately decide which problems are most critical with highest risk and where to make your investments?
- 7 Funding:** Is your organization planning with an understanding of an overall risk model and the importance of sustained, multi-year focus to transform the enterprise? Do you have a well-documented business case and roadmap for your identity management program to achieve enterprise-wide success?

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