OPSEC â€“ Itâ€™s Still Important

Description

Operational Security (OPSEC). Important stuff for the Cold War, and even today. PatriotVoices has a great post on the topic, taking us back to another time (at least for us older ones who had to face the â€œEvil Empireâ€• while wearing a uniform. I concur with that post and vouch for itâ€™s accuracy. The bad guys had incredible intelligence gathering organizations, and even if todayâ€™s enemy doesnâ€™t have those resources, they have the web. Itâ€™s a great aggregator of infoâ€¦.

While we make our posts, the world reads them. Itâ€™s quite satisfying to get a good comment. Good doesnâ€™t mean as in how wonderful a post was (yep, those are nice), but one that adds to the issue, or corrects an error, or critically debates the info, (debate here meaning what the ancient Greeks would recognize as debate, not just a bunch of personal opinions presented with truth). As the posts propagate out via trackbacks and links sent around by others to friends and associates, more information on the topic can be aggregated. In a dedicated intelligence collecting environment, this becomes powerful. By accident it the same thing can happen. This morning I saw this very example. The topic is the physics and chemistry of state changes of water, but it you read the post and comments, youâ€™ll follow my point.

default watermark

I found the post via the Open Post for 7/8/2005 on Mudville Gazette. Ma Deuce Gunner posted a science question Friday 7/8/2005 @ 6:31PM (I assume thatâ€™s sandbox time). At 8:25 PM, Owen had answered the question, with a correction to the actual naming by John of the phenomena by 4:43 AM 7/9. That is some serious application of knowledge in my view.

Think for a moment how a moment of typed pondering of any one of the Milbloggers, regardless of when we served, might have a similar effect? Consider a situation where the comments were not fed back to the author, but to others who could use the description of a tactical concept to their advantage. Itâ€™s like the breaking of atomic bondsâ€¦it can light up a city, or decimated it. Same principle, different logic behind the application. We know the military is a plodding beaurarcy, and some things donâ€™t change. We also know the basics of warfare havenâ€™t changed from itâ€™s very beginnings, but then many of us have been present when some new tactical or strategic concept came to be. Some us may have been actively involved in the birthing of something that made the organization more militarily effective. Some times, itâ€™s the assemblage of several old, well known concepts that make a new tactical break through. Just before WWI, some german scientists came up with a process to create fertilizer. It was expensive and the process shelved. When WWI came along, and the sea lines of communications were restricted and bird guano, rich in nitrates and used in the production of explosives, as well as being used on the farms was cut off, the process was pulled of the shelf, so explosives could be madeâ€¦The 1 year supply of natural nitrates in 1914 should have limited Germanyâ€™s ability to fight any longer than that. Application of an old idea killed many of the youth of Europe and the US for four years, thanks to modern living thru chemistry.

A few years ago, a couple of math guys speculated the we are all connected to each other by at most, six people, hence the concept of â€œSix Degrees of Separation.â€• The business world knows of this

and I have a friend who has leveraged off this concept, and while he is a civilian, with military like efficiency. Using a network, intentionally, or unintentionally, yields a large amount of information quickly. Throw in the ability to search the web, once you have been â€œtipped offâ€• for other knowledge on the subject.

While I was in the Navy, there seemed to be a constant low level battle waged about what had to go into the â€œburn bag.â€• Some said all naval messages, regardless of classification, others said only classified ones. Given the massive stack of paper I routinely dealt with in my operations department tours, and having been the communications officer, I thought it far too easy for a classified message (of which many were Confidential, could accidentally end up in a trash can, mixed with the unclassified ones, so I preferred the burn bag for messages. Those who had to store the many red and white striped bags, and those who had to actually take them to the shore based incinerators, disliked that idea. Both sides of the battle had legitimate reasons for their choices.

There are things I have great sea stories about, and some of the things have come out in open source, but I still refrain.

default watermark

Summary;

Itâ€™s a double edged sword out here with information on the web. Be mindful of what you post

Category

1. Blogging
2. Military
3. Technology

Date Created
July 27, 2005
Author
admin