

The Security Game and a Strategy to Win

CISO Melbourne 2025

Paul Thomas Solutions Architect



Agenda

- O1 Intro
- O2 The Game
- 03 Strategic Thinking
- 04 Intelligence for Strategy

Axonius

The Game

Goals, Rules and Adversaries

The Cyber Security Game

Games in general

Game theory studies interactive decision-making, where the outcome for each participant or "player" depends on the actions of all.

If you are a player in such a game, when choosing your course of action or "strategy" you must take into account the choices of others.

In cybersecurity, the players are often cyber attackers, defenders, each strategizing to outwit the other to maximize their own payoffs — attackers aim to maximize damage or access, while defenders aim to prevent these breaches.



A good strategy will include these three elements

At its most basic level, a strategy is a hypothesis

To be a good strategy,

it must **precisely diagnose the problem** being solved;

set a guiding policy that will address that problem;

and propose a set of coherent actions which will deliver that policy.

Richard Rumelt 'Good Strategy / Bad Strategy'.





Strategic Thinking

Breaking the Status Quo (Doing the same thing expecting a different result)

Strategic Thinking

A methodology from Mike Gastin

01

Gather Context

Construct a better map for the game

- Know as much as possible in as much detail as possible
- Continuously gather as aspects of the game and the adversary as they are constantly changing.
- Consider macro factors; art, culture, stories, and other business functions

02

Decompose and Analyse

Break down the big picture.

- Analysis the constituent parts and understand them.
- Analysis the data produced

03

Synthesising

Consider ways of reconstituting the big picture

 Observe the previously hidden and unexpected connections 04

Cognitive state

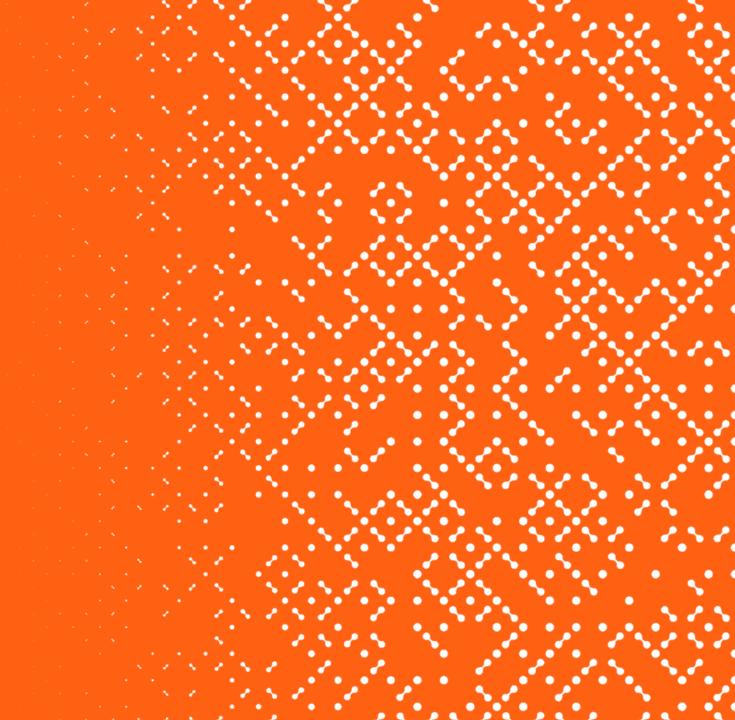
Permissive cognitive state.

 The Mind can make the discoveries when the goal, context and data are brought together.





Intelligence for Strategy



One Last Breakdown

to the foundation





Be Strategic

Have a Data, Information and Intelligence Strategy

- Data aggregation is a key activity in constructing a better Map
- When data is consolidated relationships and information can be discovered,
 and gaps can be uncovered
- Repetitive aggregation and storing of data enables the measurement of the impact of tactical changes as well as exposing trends in the environment



Thank You