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1. If elected, what would be your top three priorities for your first year on the board?

My primary goal as an OWASP Board member would be to enable the community to do more and ensure we avoid restricting what our contributors can do. To that end, I want OWASP to focus on three initiatives: provide community infrastructure, improve the visibility of OWASP and recognize our contributors.

I want OWASP to invest in platforms that enable collaboration and reduce the overhead of "managing" so OWASP leaders can get back to the things they want to do (i.e. the things that are most important to OWASP). Platforms like message forums to foster communication; event management platforms to make it easier to setup, manage and track chapter meetings/events; and project hosting platforms to make it easier to share, manage and promote projects.

I also want OWASP to become more visible. As I mentioned in my interview, the OWASP website is probably the most visible presence we have and we are not leveraging it to its full potential. Reorganizing the website is certainly a top priority but there are still more ways we can leverage our resources to increase our visibility. In the past, we've create publishable books of our mainstream documentation projects through Lulu. I want OWASP to invest in graphic design and templates to enable any documentation project to easily turn their existing document into a clean polished publication. I'd also like to see us make these documentation projects available in mobile form so that consumers can consult our references in any environment.

Finally, I'd like us to do better in recognizing our contributors. We've made great strides in this area with the WASPY Awards but we can do more. Recognition for running a chapter meeting, hosting a local event, making a contribution to a project, answering questions on a project mailing list, or proof reading and editing the wiki should not be limited to one person a year. Contributions come in various different shapes and sizes but all are important to OWASP. All our contributors deserve credit for what they've done. Even more, OWASP consumers deserve to know who the real contributors putting in effort and differentiate them from the people that are OWASP "leaders" in name only. I see this recognition as a natural output and evolution of the platforms OWASP should invest in to enable our community to do more.

As a corollary to these three priorities, these efforts alone are not worthwhile unless the community knows about them. Historically, resources and initiatives at OWASP community have not always been clear. We've made great strides in communication with the OWASP Connector but there is still room to grow. In pursuing these priorities, I want us to not only be open, but proactive about communicating with the community so that everyone can benefit.

2) What is your style for dealing with complex situations that may impact many people or where other decision makers hold differing viewpoints?

The Board is often seen as holding the power to act as the final authority in all things OWASP. That's not entirely true in reality but the fact of the matter is anything that is said or done by our Board members sets the tone for the entire organization. As a result, I feel that it's imperative that Board members act in a civil member - especially with each other. I've found lately that as

issues get heated, there tends to be more bickering and accusations than is appropriate for civil discourse. In dealing with issues between two conflicting personalities, I believe that people should raise personal issues in private and apologize in public – not the other way around.

From an organizational perspective, the Board has to make decisions on a variety of governing topics. The way the Board should approach these topics depends on the nature of the topic. Here's the analogy I see (and apologies for making it a US-centric analogy). When the United States Congress puts forth legislation, they have subcommittees that do the initial leg work of drafting proposals and brokering consensus amongst themselves internally. After that proposal work is done, there's a general floor discussion and then the legislative body makes a decision. On the other hand, when the United States Supreme Court issues a ruling on an issue, they solicit briefings of the various viewpoints - including outside opinions (i.e. amicus curiae briefs), listen to testimony and then make a decision.

So when looking at Board action, the question I would ask is this: is the Board trying to "do" something (hold a conference, generate project revenue, create a new paid position, etc.) or is the Board trying to "judge" something (establish a policy, change membership requirements, set standard for conduct, etc.)?

In the case where the Board is "doing" something, I think it makes sense to act like a legislative body: have small working groups to create a strawman, generate internal consensus, and then solicit community feedback. In the case where the Board is "judging" something, I think it makes sense to act like the Supreme Court: solicit community feedback, generate internal consensus, and then create the decision.

There will always be contentious issues that result in disagreement. But in taking this kind of measured and thoughtful approach, I think that we assure ourselves and the community that Board decisions are informed and not made in haste.

3) Describe your experience leading organizations. Were they non-profits or community based? Please explain both your role and the nature of your involvement.

Within OWASP, I was the chair of the Global Projects Committee, co-author of the AntiSamy Project, co-author of the Code of Conduct for Certifying Bodies, and one of main organizers for the 2011 OWASP Summit. These experiences have given me a great deal of appreciation for the fabric and history of OWASP and the importance of OWASP culture. I think it's critically important for our Board members to have an understanding of that history and culture in order to effectively lead the organization.

Professionally, I've lead a variety of different sized teams working on a wide range of things from small development projects to large scale enterprise security initiatives. I've managed people, processes, and technologies and I've learned that successful policy is about being practical, scalable and pragmatic. I think it's critically important that decisions that the Board makes are forward thinking in a way that is viable for the organization, can grow with the organization, and is limited in scope to what needs to be done.

Personally, I'm president of my local community association (a volunteer community-based organization) which directs local planning & development, manages association budgets and expenditures, administers community policy and regulations, and resolves disputes between community members. In this community based organization, I've learned that you can't always make everyone happy but an organization cannot be paralyzed by disagreement. Strong organizational leadership is about being informed but also being decisive. Sometimes even the most well thought out and justified decisions end up being incorrect and we need to readjust – but we must not be afraid to make those initial decisions.

4) Describe your most successful contribution to the OWASP community (Project, Chapter, Conference, or other).

As I mentioned in my bio, I was the chair of the Global Projects Committee, co-author of the AntiSamy Java Project, co-author of the Code of Conduct for Certifying Bodies, and one of main organizers for the 2011 OWASP Summit. I've also worked behind the scenes supporting OWASP staff by creating the Expense Reimbursement workflow and New Project forms that are still in use.

I think all of these contributions have been valuable and successful. But I think that I'm most proud of my contributions to the OWASP wiki. As of this writing, the top 8 most used wiki templates on the OWASP wiki were originally created by me and are cumulative referenced 4,380 times. To be sure, the wiki is still very user unfriendly and the organization of the content leaves much to be desired. As I mentioned in another question, cleaning up the website is one of the top priorities I think OWASP should invest in. At the same time, there's a level of consistency (limited as it may be) that was not there before but has been enabled by those templates that sit quietly in the background of our wiki. Not only that, but their design has driven the creation of many other useful templates including some of the dashboards used by our operational staff to track and display data.

So to other people, the AntiSamy project probably seems much more useful, the 2011 OWASP Summit much more impactful, and the Global Projects Committee chair position much more prestigious. But I actually find the small contributions I have made that smooth over rough edges, serve as an example to others, and go quietly unnoticed in the background to be the most valuable and successful contributions.

I feel that is also the ideal way for the Board to operate – act to remove barriers, enable our contributors, and operate in a non-intrusive way on behalf of the community.