

TED TALKS TUESDAY



“What’s Wrong With Your Pa\$\$wOrd?” ***by Lorrie Faith Cranor***

Sample Outline:

Goal of Talk: Educate listeners about the types of research being done on passwords, and what to consider when making a password

The Speaker

- Does research at Carnegie Mellon re: online safety
- Carnegie Mellon changed password requirements in 2009 new policy, to improve entropy (strength of password)
- Her research group decided to see if they could get better info on passwords (limited data as no one wants to reveal passwords)

Data from stolen passwords on the internet:

- More dangerous to re-use passwords than to write down
- Most people use a symbol from the same small number of symbols
- They need a better source to collect data

Amazon Mechanical Turk

- They got 5000 samples this way
- They looked at how long it took to crack passwords (start with common passwords like: password, iloveyou, monkey, 12345678)
- Research found: You are better off to have longer passwords, but with additional requirements

Password Meter

- Research looked at “Do they help people have stronger passwords?”
- The best ones waited to give positive feedback
- Most examples were “too soft” so people didn’t improve passwords

Pass Phrase vs Password

- Research looked at “Would 4 random words be better to use than a password?”
- No. They were not easy to remember, took longer to type, more errors
- They did find that pronounceable passwords worked well → more research

What People Pick

- Quilt examples
- People pick things easy to type or remember
- More love than hate: People pick something happy

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Comprehension Questions:

Open-Ended

1. What is the challenge with getting data on real-life passwords?
2. What are some topics the speaker’s research group investigated?
3. What did research show about using password meters?
4. Why were Pass Phrases found not to work well?
5. What would the speaker encourage you to remember when choosing a password?