Security Response Survival Skills:
Zen and the Art of Incident Response

Microsoft Security Response Center

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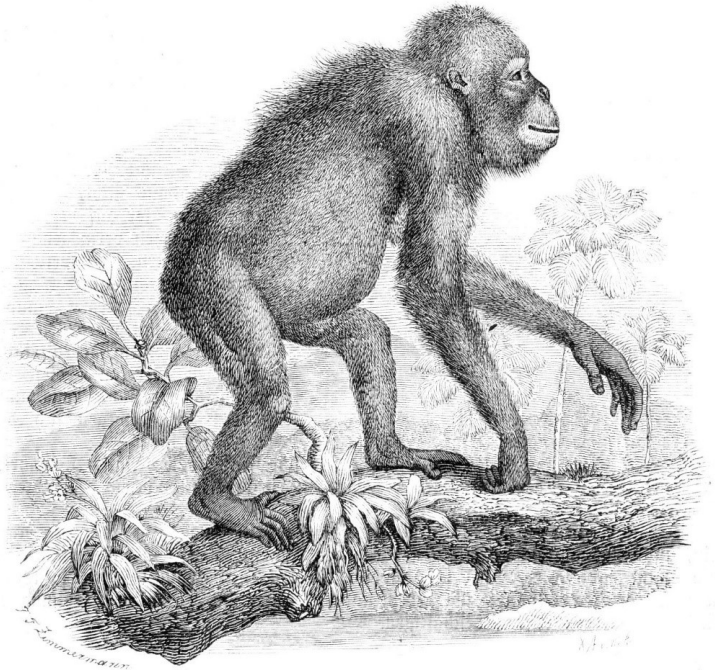
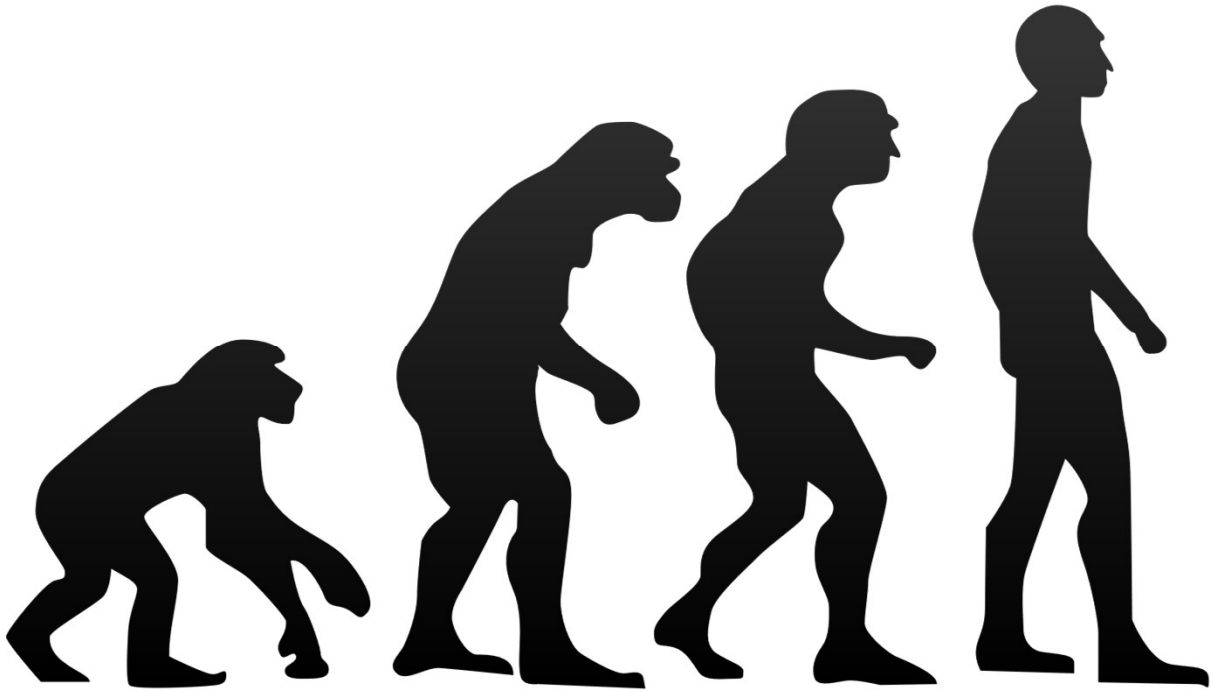




Lizard Brain – Fight flight or freeze

Monkey Brain – Dishonor is death

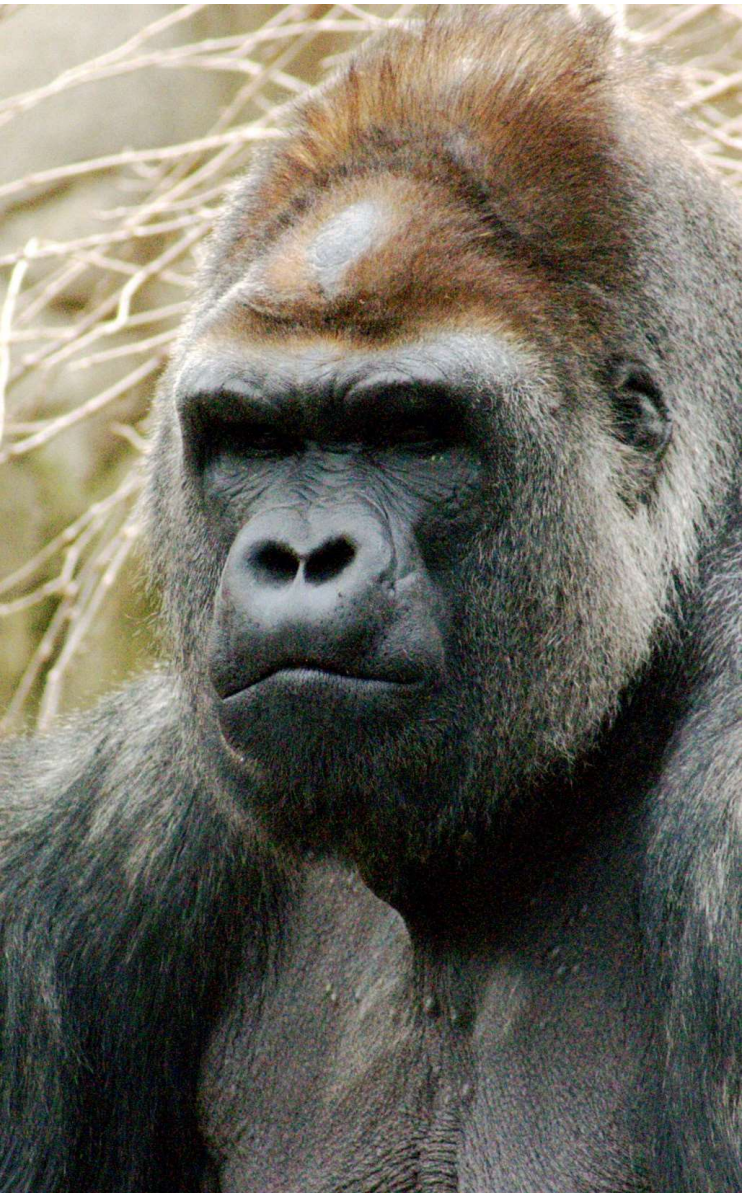
Human Brain – Leisurely logical

SIR is a human problem

And when we get it wrong…

- Poor decision making skills
- Failure to follow process
- Costly operational mistakes
- Failed court cases
- Burnout

Strategies for successfully navigating the human factor



Learn to spot Monkey Brain

- Physical response
- Like/Dislike teammates
- Must prove you are right
- How trumps what
- Labeling of others
- Excuses/Justifications


Step 1
De-escalate yourself

Reasoning with the Monkey Brain

- Use Team Speak
- Highlight triumphs
- Don’t postmortem until the post mortem
- Empathize with detractors
- Be open with your plans

Throw the monkey a banana

Filling leadership vacuums

- Monkeys and lizards thrive in leaderless situations
- Will the loudest monkey please stand up?
- Step in:
  - It doesn't matter where, just move
  - Remember: everybody is faking it
  - BUT: don't lead through ignorance
  - When all else fails: ask questions

Discipline isn't accidental

IR teams try to move fast and loose

Make documentation a core function

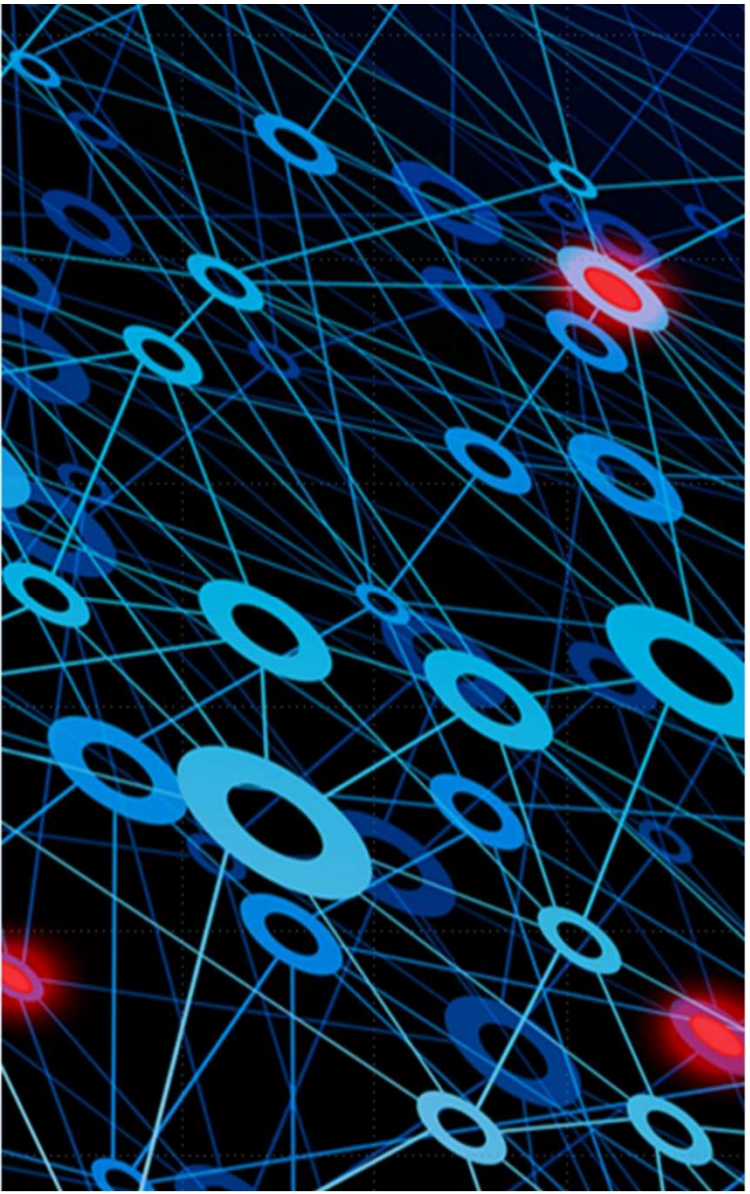
- "Discovery" cases: 1 per 4-6 analysts
- Everything else: 1 per 6-8 analysts

Proper prior preparation

Combatting Fatigue

Fatigue is your most dangerous adversary

- Day 1: no more than 16-hours straight
- Day 2-7: no more than 10-hours straight
- Day 7-n: no more that 10-hours straight for 4 consecutive days



The simplest and most effective way to combat IR team fatigue:

Regularly reevaluate the objective

- Is what we are doing getting us there?
- Is there anything we are doing that we don’t need to do?

Long term impact of stress and fatigue

- Memory and concentration impairment
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Digestive problems
- Headaches
- Heart disease
- Sleep problems
- Weight gain

Avoiding The Security Team Death Slide

Sources and Further Reading

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The human problem

“A bug is never just a mistake. It represents something bigger. An error of thinking that makes you who you are.” – Elliot Alderson, Mr. Robot

Thank you