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At the beginning of the year, after 10 years on the job, I was laid off because of a slowdown caused by the housing slump. I took a month to just get my head together and look at training options, but when I found they were limited, I started looking for another job. The job I accepted was a part-time position as the first in-house tech for a 50-year-old company that's always outsourced its IT work. Because consultants typically have more than one customer, there were often delays in resolving problems or implementing improvements. So the company decided to bring in someone to handle all IT needs.

No one at any of the three locations knows anything about the systems, and nothing is documented. So I made the following list to walk through the process of mapping out what the company has so we can see what it will take to go forward from here.

## Make a full list of all servers

- What is the hardware?
- What software is installed?
  - What versions?
  - What is the licensing?
  - What services are running and why?

\* Each service takes up system resources. If a service is no longer used, it should be disabled (improves server performance, security and stability).

\* Each service running is another avenue of potential attack. The fewer services running, the less exposed we are to compromise.

- What services are exposed to the Internet and why?
- Document systems, as well as any maintenance tasks.
- What antivirus is installed, is it current, and what is its status?
- Perform updates of software.
- Apply patches to servers.
- Check system resources (CPU usage, memory usage, disk space usage).

## Make a full list of all PCs

- What is the hardware?
- What software is installed?
  - What versions?
  - What is the licensing?
  - What services are running and why?
  - Document systems, as well as any maintenance tasks.
- What antivirus is installed, is it current, and what is its status?
- Perform updates of software.
- Install new software as needed.
- Apply patches to servers.
- Check system resources (CPU usage, memory usage, disk space usage).
- Upgrade hardware as needed.
  - Possible memory upgrades on other systems to improve performance and reduce system crashes.

## Make a full list of network equipment

- What firewalls?
  - What version of firmware?
  - How are they configured?
  - What are they allowing into the network and why?
- What switches?

## Network connections

- Document the network connections for each location.
    - IP addresses
    - Connection speeds
    - Cost
- \* Confirm that we are getting the speed we're paying for.
- Evaluate connections. Prices change, but providers will not notify you of price drops or faster connections.

## Make and maintain a full list of all contacts

- Contact list for each network provider
- Contact list for each software package
- Contact list for server support
- Contact list for AV support
- Contact list for firewall support
- Contact list for LAN-ACES (Office-Logic e-mail system)

## Make and maintain a list of ALL service contracts

- What is covered by each service contract?
  - How long is the coverage?
  - When will it need to be renewed vs. replaced?
  - How much does the coverage cost?

\* How much for new equipment that comes with 1+ years of support vs. renewal?