



## OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### Topic 1: Virus Protection

Recent statistics show that an unprotected computer can be infected with a virus, worm, or Trojan in less than five minutes after being placed on a network.

Worms and Trojans are the most common forms of infection and/or compromise. They are dependant on computer systems that have not been protected with the most current security patches released by operating system and application vendors. These neglected applications and operating systems provide easy targets for hackers to exploit in order to gain greater access for their criminal activity.

Some viruses prey on uninformed computer users. They do this by embedding attachments in appealing looking e-mails hoping to trick the user into activating the virus, worm, or Trojan. Viruses can also be transmitted during file sharing using Instant Messaging services. Users should never open an attachment in an e-mail or a file received through IM unless they know and trust the sender. Viruses can come from a friend or relative as easily as from a stranger. A common indicator that a virus is attached to an email is the presence of inadequate or misspelled text or short phrases like, "Attention!!!" or "Your file is attached." in the body of the message. An easy solution for this is to **be suspicious** of all attachments and shared files, even those from a known or trusted source.

In addition to patching, the most important tool a user can have to protect their computer from viruses is anti-virus software. This software protects a computer system from receiving viruses and from distributing a virus if the system becomes infected. The good news is that Tuskegee University supplies free anti-virus software to all faculty, staff, and students. Please contact x8040 for a copy of the virus protector.

**Please take advantage of this FREE service.**

**NOTE:** After you have installed your anti-virus software it is extremely important to keep it up to date.

Remember, the three most important things you can do to protect your computer from virus infection are:

1. patch the operating system (OS) and all other applications installed on your computer
2. be careful and selective in which attachments you open
3. Install the free anti-virus software from TU on your computer as soon as possible -- preferably before attaching it to a network.

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