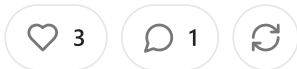


How to Spot a Scam in 3 Seconds

ANDY

JUL 22, 2025



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My cybersecurity presentations usually run 30 minutes, but they can be boiled down to three simple truths:

One: Emotional triggers are the scammer’s most powerful tool.

Two: If you receive a message that was unexpected and a surprise...and if that message causes an emotional reaction of Fear, Hope or Obligation...and if the sender is unknown...**It. Is. A. Scam.**

Three: Verify *first*, then trust.

But these messages don’t seem to be getting through.

I recently turned down a speaking gig because the organizer wanted a generic ‘senior scams’ talk. My core message didn’t fit their expectations.

But here’s the thing—there is no secret formula.

There isn’t any secret sauce. There isn’t any “class” you can take to make you safe from fraud. It all comes down to “street smarts” and to treat all interactions with a jaded eye.

Part of the problem is that baby boomer and older generations are inherently trustful, especially of authority figures.

To fight fraud effectively, treat every phone call, email, and text with a jaded eye.

Did the message come from an unknown party? *Trash it.*

Did the message come from a loved one, a friend, your pastor, a trusted professional?
Doesn't matter. Your first response must be to ask, "*Is this true?*"

If that unexpected message causes *your heart to jump*, that's the sign it's a scam.

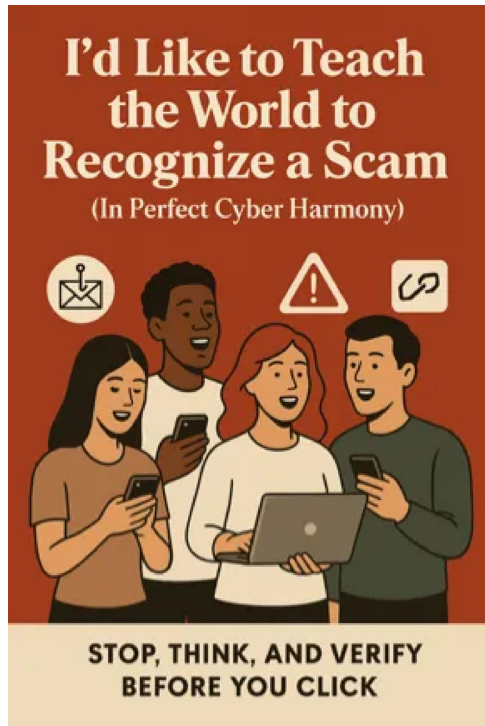
It isn't any more complicated than that, folks.

Remember that famous Coca Cola commercial, "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing?"

I want to teach the world to recognize a scam:



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Cyber Safety Watchdog Jul 22



Another one I like to use comes from one of my favorite 90s tv shows the X-files: Trust No One. Sadly we can't trust anything anymore - our own eyes or ears included. Question everything!

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