

THE MITRE ENGAGE™ 10-STEP PROCESS

Organizations often fail to adequately plan how and where denial, deception, and adversary engagement will be utilized on their networks. Adversary engagement is an iterative, goal-driven process, not merely the deployment of a technology stack. The Engage 10-Step Process, a refinement of work done by Barton Whaley in *The Art and Science of Military Deception*, helps organizations think through the process of adversary engagement.

OVERVIEW

Unlike other defensive technologies, such as antivirus software, adversary engagement technologies are not “fire and forget” solutions. It is not enough to deploy a decoy and declare success. Organizations must think critically about what their defensive goals are and how denial, deception, and adversary engagement can be used to drive progress towards these goals.

The ten steps are broken into three categories—Prepare, Operate, and Understand—mirroring the three components of the Engage Matrix. Steps 1-6 correspond to the strategic approaches and activities under the Engage Prepare goal. Step 7 corresponds to the engagement approaches and activities under the Engage Expose, Effect, and Elicit goals. Finally, steps 8-10 correspond to the strategic approaches and activities under the Engage Understand goal.

Prepare	Step 1: Assess knowledge of your adversaries and your organization
	Step 2: Determine your operational objective
	Step 3: Determine how you want your adversary to react
	Step 4: Determine what you want your adversary to perceive
	Step 5: Determine channels to engage with your adversary
	Step 6: Determine the success and gating criteria
Operate	Step 7: Execute your operation
Understand	Step 8: Turn raw data into actionable intelligence
	Step 9: Feedback intelligence
	Step 10: Analyze successes & failures to inform future actions

It is not an accident that engagement activities fall into the category with the least number of steps in the Process. While engagement activities often get the spotlight, the most important elements of any operation are the strategic actions taken to prepare for and understand the results of your operation.

The 10-Step Process is particularly important to organizations with limited resources or less mature security programs. By clearly defining goals and scoping down engagements to tightly align with those goals, even small organizations can get started integrated adversary engagement into their defensive strategies.



Adversary engagement is a process, not a technology stack.

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