

RE: Cluster not compatible with Windows Server 2003 Security Guide NTL

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Update: In my environment, the issue was determined to be an issue only with transitioning a cluster to the Windows Server 2003 Security Guide settings. The real fix for the issue is to schedule time for the entire cluster to go down, and apply the security group policy settings, without my fix below, to all of the servers in the clusters and reboot. This is not as smooth as the original fix, but doesn't require reduced security.

The reason: The "Require NTLMv2 session security" and "Require 128-bit encryption" settings appear to be all-or-nothing settings for a cluster, where servers can't be in the cluster if they don't have the same settings as the other servers in the cluster, at least in my environment. Adding the GPO to the servers one at a time will cause the servers with the new settings to not be able to talk to the existing servers and the cluster service to then fail on the servers with the new settings.

After much effort, I was able to get Microsoft's clustering to work in my environment with the settings in Microsoft's 2003 security guide. To assist other people who may run into this problem, I am posting it to make it easier to Google.

In my environment, running two Windows Server 2003 R2 SP2 servers and applying Microsoft's security guide group policy settings to one make it so the server can't join an existing cluster. The fix: create a new GPO to override two settings in the security guide GPO for the cluster servers. These are the two settings that needed to be changed:

Computer Configuration / Windows Settings / Local Policies / Security Options / "Network Security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) clients", and "Network Security: Minimum session security for NTLM SSP based (including secure RPC) servers".

In both of these, the "Require NTLMv2 session security" and "Require 128-bit encryption" need to be set to "Disabled".

Also, once the cluster servers have all these settings applied, removing either the NTLMv2 or 128-bit encryption setting will cause that machine

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cluster service to not start.