**A policy** is typically a document that outlines specific requirements or rules that must be met. In the information/network security realm, policies are usually point-specific, covering a single area. For example, an **"Acceptable Use" policy** would cover the rules and regulations for appropriate use of the computing facilities.

**A standard** is typically collections of system-specific or procedural-specific requirements that must be met by everyone. For example, you might have a standard that describes how to harden a Windows NT workstation for placement on an external (DMZ) network. People must follow this standard exactly if they wish to install a Windows NT workstation on an external network segment.

**A guideline** is typically a collection of system specific or procedural specific "suggestions" for best practice. They are not requirements to be met, but are strongly recommended. Effective security policies make frequent references to standards and guidelines that exist within an organization.