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### Reflection Paper 3

After finishing the 150 hours of my internship in IP Configure, Inc. I can proudly state that this experience has helped me to make my both technical skills and knowledge of professional responsibility in an IT setting stronger. Although my previous thoughts were aimed at adjusting to the processes and becoming efficient, the last phase of the internship enabled me to analyze the connection of this experience to my professional growth in the long term.

During these 150 hours, I have been working on assembling servers, imaging systems, and video export processing. Nevertheless, the gap between the first week and the present is significant. I am no longer looking at building servers as a list of steps to follow; now I know the reason why each component was installed and configured the way it was. The process of troubleshooting has been made more intuitive. Whenever a system does not work or acts in an unpredictable way, I now systematically troubleshoot problems by ensuring that memory is in place, CPU is properly seated, cables are intact and imaging processes have been done properly. This formalized troubleshooting attitude represents task performance to technical thinking.

Discipline in adherence to documented procedures is one of the most significant professional

habits that I have learned. According to the internship experience, I made some minor errors earlier because I was rushing or I thought that I understood how the hardware worked and that I did not have to be so accurate in the process. By repetition and accountability, I was taught that consistency is better than speed. This change in attitude has enhanced the quality of my construction and has strengthened the need to pay attention to detail which is a key characteristic in the field of cybersecurity and infrastructure where minor omissions can have huge impacts.

I have also better appreciated documentation and communication. The necessity to report on daily productivity using internal communication tools was initially a formal procedure but as time went by I realized that it is useful in operations. Transparency, productivity tracking, and accountability between teams are supported by clear reporting. These communication practices reflect the expectations of cybersecurity operations, which highly depend on documentation and audit trails.

In terms of cybersecurity, the concept of infrastructure security has been indirectly exposed through this internship but in a valuable way. The servers I build and picture archive delicate video surveillance information of organizations that depend on the dependability and integrity of the system. Though my task is largely hardware-based, the realization that these systems aid in investigative processes highlights the need to have proper configuration, data integrity, and system reliability. It has strengthened the relationship between infrastructure and cyber security.

My career direction is also more clear at this stage. Although I do not envisage myself working

on long term basis in server assembly, I understand the value base of this experience. I have found the construction and imaging systems to have fortified my knowledge on hardware architecture, deployment of operating systems, and troubleshooting processes. Such skills will be applicable to other cybersecurity roles in the future, especially in such domains as systems administration, security operations, or the penetration testing labs where the knowledge of underlying infrastructure is critical.

Confidence is another area that has developed. I now work autonomously on most of my duties and can only raise issues where it becomes critical. There has also been an increment in leadership trust because I have been able to match productivity expectations and build reliable builds. This change in the role of a supervised learner to a trusted contributor is one of the most significant changes of this internship.

All in all, I have been able to complete 150 hours at IP Configure, Inc. and this has helped me to establish my concepts of professional discipline, technical performance, and accountability. This has reinforced the value of procedure, documentation, systematic troubleshooting. It has also helped me understand the kind of work environment where I work best, i.e. structured, technical and process-driven. Although this internship might not determine my long-term specialization, it has given me a solid background in operations that will shape the rest of my time at ODU and my future career in the field of cybersecurity.