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Toano Contractors

Reflection #3

Reaching the 150-hour mark in my internship at Toano Contractors has given me the chance to see how IT and cybersecurity operate over a longer stretch of time. During my first 50 hours, I was still finding my footing and learning the basics of the company's systems. By 100 hours, I had grown more confident and started contributing to bigger tasks, like building computers and managing mobile device security. Now, at 150 hours, I'm starting to see how all those smaller pieces fit the company's broader needs and long-term goals.

One of the clearest patterns I've noticed is how important mobility is to Toano Contractors. Their Samsung tablets aren't just convenience, they're a core tool used daily by supervisors, project managers, and field workers. These devices store project information, track material deliveries, update job statuses, and allow employees to communicate without constantly traveling back to the office. With so much work happening outside traditional office spaces, tablets essentially act like portable computers.

Because of that, I've spent a significant amount of my time improving how these tablets are set up, secured, and maintained. I now routinely handle tasks like syncing

company apps, organizing file storage, troubleshooting login issues, and ensuring updates are installed on time. I've learned that even small delays in updates lead to bigger problems later, especially when outdated apps stop syncing properly. I've also gotten better at spotting issues before they spread, like permissions that weren't configured correctly or devices that weren't connected to the company's secure network.

Security continues to play a major role in everything I do. With more responsibility, I'm now helping monitor how data moves between devices, making sure sensitive information isn't left unprotected. I've also revisited and added onto the checklist I created earlier for tablet setup. It now includes secure Wi-Fi requirements, file backup routines, and user account guidelines. This checklist is slowly turning into a standardized onboarding procedure for future devices, which feels like a real contribution, not just a temporary task.

One area where I've gained even more experience is building and configuring workstations. Since my last reflection for 100 hours, I've built additional computers for employees in different departments. These setups have ranged from basic office desktops to more performance-focused machines for roles that require advanced software. I've learned to balance hardware capabilities with budget and real-world needs, rather than automatically choosing the highest-end parts.

I've also gotten better with the software side of things. After assembling each system, I handle operating system installation, security configuration, account setup, and workplace software installation. I've built a routine that helps me make sure every system

is set up safely from the start, updating drivers, installing antivirus tools, setting up backups, configuring privilege levels, and enabling automatic updates. What used to take me hours now feels much more streamlined because I understand the company's workflow better.

At the 150-hour mark, I've also been able to assist more directly with cybersecurity conversations at Toano Contractors. These aren't full security audits or advanced threat investigations, but more practical discussions about how the company can protect itself as it grows. I've been able to offer input about data storage practices, password policies, and device management improvements. I even helped identify a few weak spots in their backup process and offered suggestions that the company is now considering implementing.

One of the biggest skills I've developed during this time is communication. Technical knowledge is important but being able to explain the "why" behind a solution has become just as important. Employees often ask why they need to update something, change a password, or adjust a setting, and I've learned how to explain things in a way that makes sense without overwhelming anyone. It's become clear that earning people's trust is a huge part of working in IT, and I feel like I've gotten better at that as the weeks have gone by.

Another thing I've noticed is how much more independent I've become. Earlier in the internship, I relied heavily on supervisors, asked lots of questions, and double-checked everything. Now I still ask questions when needed, but I'm trusted to work on my own most of the time. Whether I'm handling a new tablet setup, diagnosing a network issue, or

building a workstation from scratch, I feel confident in the steps to take and how to get everything done efficiently.

Overall, completing 150 hours at Toano Contractors has been a strong learning experience. I've grown both technically and professionally, and I've gained a much clearer understanding of what day-to-day IT work looks like in a business environment. Cybersecurity, device management, communication, troubleshooting, planning, and system setup have all become areas where I feel more capable than when I started.

This internship continues to be the most valuable hands-on experience I've had so far in my IT and cybersecurity studies. With every task, big or small, I learn something that connects back to what I want to do long term. As I move into the final stretch of my hours, I'm excited to take on even more responsibilities and continue supporting Toano Contractors while developing my skills further.