

Reflection Paper #2

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As I continue my internship, I have begun to gain a deeper understanding of what it means to work within a professional cybersecurity and information technology environment. While my first progress report focused primarily on the responsibilities I was undertaking, this reporting period has allowed me to reflect more on the skills I have developed, the knowledge I have gained, and how this experience is shaping my future career goals.

One of the most valuable aspects of this internship has been the opportunity to contribute to projects that have a direct impact on the organization's technology infrastructure and cybersecurity posture. Over the past several weeks, I have worked extensively on organizing and managing the company's technology inventory. Through this process, I have nearly completed entering all company devices into the asset management system. While this may seem like a straightforward administrative task, it has given me a greater appreciation for the importance of asset management within cybersecurity. Organizations cannot effectively secure devices if they do not know what assets they possess, where those assets are located, or who is responsible for them. This project has helped me understand how foundational inventory management is to maintain a secure and efficient technology environment.

I have also spent a significant amount of time developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for various technology and cybersecurity-related policies. Creating these documents has been a valuable learning experience because it has required me to think beyond technical solutions and consider how organizations communicate expectations to employees. Writing policies related to password security, phishing awareness, device management, acceptable use, and remote work technology guidelines has reinforced the idea that cybersecurity is not solely about technology. It is also about creating processes, educating users, and establishing clear expectations that reduce organizational risk.

Another significant opportunity that has emerged during this reporting period is the chance to prepare and deliver a presentation to the company's CEO regarding cybersecurity awareness and account security practices. The presentation will focus on the importance of phishing awareness training for employees and the role that multi-factor authentication (MFA) plays in protecting organizational accounts and sensitive information. As part of my preparation, I have been researching common phishing tactics, the risks associated with compromised credentials, and the ways employee awareness training can reduce the likelihood of successful cyberattacks.

In addition to discussing phishing awareness, I will be presenting information on MFA solutions and recommending Cisco Duo as a potential authentication platform for the organization. My research has focused on how MFA can strengthen account security by requiring users to verify their identity through multiple authentication factors rather than relying solely on passwords. Preparing this presentation has allowed me to further develop my research, communication, and presentation skills while demonstrating how cybersecurity concepts learned in the classroom can be applied to real-world organizational challenges. I am excited for the opportunity to present these recommendations to executive leadership and contribute to discussions regarding the company's future cybersecurity initiatives.

One of the biggest lessons I have learned so far is the importance of professionalism within the workplace. Prior to this internship, most of my experience came from academic coursework and individual projects. While those experiences provided technical knowledge, they could not fully prepare me for the day-to-day realities of working within a professional environment. Through interactions with my supervisor, colleagues, and employees, I have learned how important communication, accountability, time management, and adaptability are to

professional success. I have become more comfortable participating in meetings, asking questions when clarification is needed, and communicating with others in a professional manner. These skills are just as important as technical knowledge and will continue to benefit me throughout my career.

The work I am performing relates to many of the concepts I have studied throughout my cybersecurity education. Courses covering cybersecurity fundamentals, risk management, information assurance, systems administration, cybersecurity policy, and network security have all contributed to my ability to understand the work being performed within the organization. I have been able to see firsthand how concepts discussed in the classroom translate into real-world business practices. Rather than viewing cybersecurity as a collection of technical tools and theories, I now better understand how it functions as part of an organization's overall strategy to protect information, manage risk, and support business operations.

This internship has also helped me determine that cybersecurity and information technology are fields in which I can see myself growing professionally. One of the reasons I am drawn to these fields is that there is always something new to learn. Technology continues to evolve, and cybersecurity professionals must constantly adapt to new threats, tools, and challenges. I enjoy the continuous learning aspect of the profession and the opportunity to solve problems that have meaningful impacts on organizations and individuals. The experience I have gained so far has strengthened my confidence in pursuing a career within cybersecurity after graduation.

Professionally, I believe I bring several strengths to my role. I am highly organized, detail-oriented, and willing to take initiative when opportunities arise. Throughout my internship, I have demonstrated the ability to work independently while remaining receptive to feedback and

guidance. I enjoy learning new technologies and processes, and I am not afraid to ask questions when encountering unfamiliar situations. Additionally, I believe my communication skills allow me to effectively interact with individuals who have varying levels of technical knowledge. Being able to bridge the gap between technical concepts and everyday communication is an important skill in both cybersecurity and information technology.

Another exciting development during this reporting period is the opportunity to collaborate with a cybersecurity consultant based in Brazil and assist with scripting and coding efforts related to the company's artificial intelligence initiatives. This upcoming project represents an opportunity to expand my technical experience beyond documentation and asset management while gaining exposure to software development and AI-related technologies. As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly integrated into business operations, I believe this experience will provide valuable insight into emerging technologies and their relationship to cybersecurity.

Throughout this internship, I have felt supported by both my supervisor and my colleagues. Their willingness to answer questions, provide guidance, and include me in meaningful projects has helped me build confidence and become more comfortable within a professional workplace environment. As I continue adjusting to the expectations of a professional career, I have learned valuable lessons about communication, teamwork, accountability, professionalism, and workplace culture that extend beyond technical knowledge alone.

Overall, I find my work both rewarding and meaningful. What makes this experience particularly valuable is knowing that the work I contribute supports larger organizational goals and helps create a stronger technological and cybersecurity foundation for the company. Whether

I am developing policies, organizing technology assets, researching security solutions, or preparing recommendations for executive leadership, I can see the impact of my contributions. This internship has reinforced my passion for cybersecurity and information technology while providing experiences that will help prepare me for future professional opportunities. As I continue my internship, I look forward to expanding my responsibilities, learning from experienced professionals, and continuing to develop both technically and professionally.