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Interview with Cyber Professional

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Interview with Cyber Professional- Jodee Spring, Senior Vice President and Senior Manager of Information Security and Cyber Defense in Global Technology. Interview conducted by Darcy Judd, Corporate Audit Summer 2025 Analyst

Jodee did not have a traditional start into the world of Cyber. She went to Virginia Tech originally majoring in engineering. After her freshman year she realized that she was not a big coder, and on top of being the only female in her class, led her to change her major to Industrial Psychology. After graduating she started in production support with facilities management, quickly climbing the ranks becoming a program project manager. It was during this time she was able to get hands-on experience with programming, and while still not being a coder, she was able to learn quickly, critically, and most importantly she was able to adapt. She officially moved full time into the Cyber career field about 10 years ago when she joined Deutsche Bank as a Cyber Hygiene project manager. After a few years at Deutsche she made the move over to Bank of America where she leads projects such as CIS Benchmark Testing, Secure Coding, and Pen Testing. She also handles strategic development, budgets, vendors, and works closely with legal to make sure that her pen testers are covered properly from a legal perspective and will not be arrested when testing their vendors.

When asked what the most important skill for someone in the cyber field to possess she said flexibility. Jodee highlighted the importance of being able to think quickly on your feet and adapt. The field of cyber security is constantly changing so look at all the transferable skills that one may have in their arsenal and make sure that anyone who is interested in entering the field is doing the research and actively tries to apply the changes to what they already know and adapt their thoughts and skills accordingly.

Jodee also stated then when interviewing applicants for the positions in her area one thing that many of them lack is the foresight to see that they are about to work for a business. It is important to keep in mind that there is friction in the workplace between the cyber world, as they are trying to slow down and be cautious of the potential risks that actions may cause, and the business that wants to speed up and have all of the latest and greatest applications. She stated that it is imperative for professionals to understand that they are about to do cyber in a business and that they have to be able to explain/ translate what they are technically doing in a way that a "lay" person can understand. Another important idea that was brought up is to make sure that when going into the world of cyber that the professional is always keeping in mind the potential risks and how that will affect the company as a whole.

When looking at how to prepare oneself from a technical level, she stated that it depends what area the professional would like to go into. If the are is vulnerability management, it is important to understand vulnerabilities and data mining. If it is Threat Intel, they must understand the different threats out there and be willing to research them to stay up to date. If Pen testing is where their thoughts lie, python and sequel are the applications to know, and while in school start doing bug bounties, this way it shows that the individual can hack ethically and

has done so responsibly. Overall she said if there is any coding program to learn out there Sequel is the one she would recommend to any up and coming cyber professional to learn.

Where may a student or young professional work on these skills, one may ask themselves? The Help Desk! Jodee stated that she is more likely to hire someone who has worked on a help desk because it shows that they have at least utilized the skills stated above. You must have enough understanding to spot and help a technological issue, with enough adaptability to work on all the issues that may come to the desk everyday. On top of that, from a professional perspective, you have to have people skills and patience to work at a help desk since a wide range of people may approach.

The last question I asked Jodee in our interview was "What is one piece of advice you would give to someone who is just starting out their career"? Her response, with no hesitation, was "Do not say no", any opportunity is a good opportunity, the only thing more important than you advocating for yourself is having managers or leaders in the company that will advocate and lift you up. The only way to ensure that you can be seen by all those managers is to not shut yourself off to the opportunities that will appear.