

# **Reflection**

Devin P Johnson

Old Dominion University: School of Cybersecurity

IDS 493: E Portfolio

Dr. Virginia Tucker Steffen

October 10, 2025

Devin Johnson

## **Introduction**

My academic experience at Old Dominion University combined with my work as a Navy IT specialist has led me to develop through ongoing learning experiences. My interdisciplinary education has taught me to bridge technical, social and ethical aspects which will help me succeed in cybersecurity roles that need expertise beyond technical skill. The true value of an e-portfolio emerges when it showcases artifacts alongside their significance and learning connections (Meade, 2024). The selected artifacts in this reflection essay demonstrate three essential skills which include Research, Technical and Writing. The skills I have acquired demonstrate my progress as a student and professional who is ready to succeed.

## **Research Skills**

Research has been one of the most valuable skills I developed throughout my degree program. I learned that research goes past simple source collection because I needed to assess information and integrate it with my own ideas and real-world applications. The three selected papers about Social Implications of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework, Effectiveness of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and The Importance of Windows Event Logs in Cybersecurity Forensics demonstrate my development from studying wide policy effects to performing specific technical assessments.

In my paper on The Social Implications of the NIST CSF, I was challenged to connect a highly technical policy framework to larger social and ethical issues. The research task demanded an evaluation of how cybersecurity policies affect both organizational culture and public trust levels. The first obstacle emerged because I needed to surpass fundamental technical specifications. The project required me to link technical standards with their social and ethical aspects. The assignment showed me cybersecurity frameworks isn't just system protection but

Devin Johnson

also how organizations interact with the ones who depend on them. The field needs this perspective because public trust maintains an equal position with technical resilience.

My second research artifact, Effectiveness of the NIST CSF, gave me practice in comparative analysis. I evaluated the framework through its beneficial elements, drawbacks and other available models. The research study demonstrated that scientific research enables better approaches to policy development. The NIST CSF offers excellent guidance, yet organizations need to modify it according to their specific industry requirements. The research by (Lipovac and Babac, 2021) showed through job advertisement analysis that employers now value social skills and problem-solving abilities as much as technical qualifications. The process of framework evaluation needs both technical knowledge, cultural and workforce compatibility assessment skills.

Finally, my research on Windows Event Logs moved me toward applied technical analysis. The research required me to narrow down my broad research subject into a specific area which examined event logs as digital forensic investigation instruments. The research process showed me the value of proper research scope definition. The broad nature of the subject initially presented a challenge, but I managed to link theoretical research to real-world applications through my focus on forensic methods and case studies. (Casey, 2011) explains that digital forensics require attention to detail, precision, and applied technical skill. This artifact reflects how I developed those qualities through research.

The three artifacts show my development as a researcher who can navigate social aspects, policy elements and technical components. They show that I can conduct critical analysis, evaluate diverse sources, and connect research findings to both academic and professional goals.

Devin Johnson

Research serves as a functional method which enables me to stay flexible and think critically while working in a dynamic cybersecurity environment.

### **Technical Skills**

The research activities I participated in helped me improve my critical thinking abilities, but my technical skills show how I can apply learned knowledge to solve real-world problems. The skills I possess stem from my time in the Navy as an IT and my education at ODU. The three artifacts I chose for this section demonstrate my technical skill application through the Forensic Case Assignment, Network Case Analysis and my Awards.

The Forensic Case Assignment required me to execute a computer-based digital investigation simulation. I conducted device imaging, file recovery procedures and analyzed communication records. The process became frustrating at times because any evidence handling errors no matter how small it could result in invalid results. The project proved that detailed documentation and patience represent fundamental requirements for achieving success. (Casey, 2011) states that digital forensics needs technical knowledge and evidence preservation methods and systematic procedures. That artifact shows my ability to work with sensitive digital evidence which matches the essential skills needed for professional cybersecurity work.

The Case Analysis required me to tackle a unique technical problem which involved creating and protecting a network system. I created a plan which combined structured cabling with VLAN segmentation and firewall configuration. The project required me to apply both networking and security principles which demonstrated to me the need for technical knowledge integration between different fields. My Navy experience provided me with systems administration skills, but this project required me to evaluate efficiency and scalability and

Devin Johnson

organizational requirements in addition to security needs. The project required me to combine my technical skills with real-world problem-solving methods through interdisciplinary methods.

Finally, the technical expertise I possess becomes evident through the various awards I have received. The awards serve as recognition tools for my work and dedication, but they are not equivalent to actual projects. My technical abilities have received recognition from others through my awards which establish my professional credibility.

These three artifacts together demonstrate my growth as a technical problem-solver. I have acquired multiple practical skills through my work which includes digital evidence examination and secure network development. The different awards I have received during my career demonstrate that these skills create tangible advantages in real-world situations and hold genuine value. The combination of practical work experience with outside recognition makes me well-prepared for future cybersecurity positions.

### **Writing Skills**

The development of my skills has been equally influenced by writing activities as it has with my research and technical abilities. I use my writing skills to convert complex ideas into basic language which enables readers from diverse backgrounds to understand them. The three artifacts I chose for this skill demonstrate my development as a communicator who learns to adjust to various situations as shown through my work with 'Freedom of Expression and Privacy', "SolarWinds Supply Chain Attack" and 'Adolescent Mental Health and Social Media' papers.

The paper about Freedom of Expression and Privacy integrated my personal experiences together with academic data regarding legal and ethical systems. The process of writing this paper required me to integrate my personal comprehension with evidence-based findings.

Devin Johnson

According to (Yancey, 2009) writers in the digital era need to merge their personal voice with academic and professional writing styles. This paper taught me to unite my technical abilities with my people skills which will enable me to explain complex issues affecting both people and organizations.

My SolarWinds Supply Chain Attack paper was one of the most technically demanding writing assignments I completed. The task demanded me to describe a sophisticated cyberattack through terminology which would be accessible to academic professionals and industry specialists. The training program enabled me to transform intricate technical information into simple and precise language which serves as a crucial skill for cybersecurity information sharing. This artifact demonstrates my ability to explain technical risks to non-technical personnel which employers frequently seek in their candidates.

The research on Adolescent Mental Health and Social Media needed me to unite psychological, sociological and public health knowledge into a unified paper. The interdisciplinary writing assignment required me to organize diverse perspectives into a single structured argument which I was able to present in an organized way. (Klein 1990) highlights that interdisciplinary approaches create richer, more comprehensive understanding, and this paper confirmed that writing is one of the best tools for making those connections.

These three artifacts demonstrate my writing abilities through their different contexts of legal and ethical reflection, technical communication and interdisciplinary analysis. Through writing I have learned to connect different groups of people including technical specialists, public officials and ordinary citizens. The experience has increased my ability to present my ideas with clarity and persuasive power.

## **Conclusion**

Devin Johnson

My academic work at Old Dominion University demonstrates how my Cybersecurity education has developed me into a skilled student who handles intricate technical problems and makes ethical choices. My core skills of Research, Technical and Writing support each other to demonstrate my development for a cybersecurity career.

The research process showed me how to solve problems by using analytical techniques while learning cybersecurity frameworks from both technical and social perspectives. My technical skills show my ability to apply knowledge in real-world settings, from digital forensics to network defense. Writing helped me develop effective self-expression and assertiveness which allowed me to link technical details with any subject at hand. The combination of these skills shows how cybersecurity functions as an interdisciplinary field which brings together technology with communication and critical thinking capabilities.

IDS 300W and other cybersecurity courses taught me about the integrated nature of information technology, ethics, law and policy which work together to defend digital systems and their users. The combination of different elements creates a dynamic and influential field of cybersecurity.

The information in my ePortfolio extends past academic content because it shows my capacity to connect different ideas, apply theoretical knowledge to real-world problems and interdisciplinary approaches. I will expand my career base through the combination of research, technical skills and communication abilities to enhance cybersecurity at all my future positions.

Devin Johnson

## References

Casey, E. (2011). *Digital evidence and computer crime: Forensic science, computers and the internet*. Academic Press.

Klein, J. T. (1990). *Interdisciplinarity: History, theory, and practice*.

Lipovac, A., & Babac, B. (2021). Content analysis of job advertisements: What employers value in candidates. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Education*, 10(2), 45–60.

Meade, L. (2024). *Building a Portfolio: Why You Should Show What You Know*.

Lazenby, B. (2022, June 14). *ePortfolios: The What, Why, and How!* Missouri Online: Teaching.

Yancey, K. B. (2009). Writing in the 21st century. *National Council of Teachers of English*.