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Digital Forensics Analyst

BLUF:

The career of a Digital Forensics Analyst (DFA) is inherently interdisciplinary, majorly relying on social science principles to ensure the collection and integrity of evidence. For example, objectivity, ethical neutrality, and cyber criminology are all essential to this role. The societal impact of a DFA weighs more than most think. They gather evidence to solve major cybercrime to protect society via investigating cyber attacks in order to improve cybersecurity for all.

Introduction

The digital forensics analyst is one of the most important careers in the field of cybersecurity. DFAs act as cyber detectives in order to not only prevent cybercrime as a whole but also gather evidence on criminals in order to bring justice. This sounded the most interesting to me and is why I will be talking about this as my chosen career in the field. The DFA position seems to be more nuanced than other cybersecurity roles due to a few different reasons: First, work flows from a case-to-case basis, meaning that the amount and type of work can vary from each case. Second, legal processes are part of the job, this means that working as a DFA, (public or private) one may need to testify in court. I find this type of involvement in the legal system to be really interesting. DFAs actually work very similarly to police detectives in how extensive evidence and reports need to be. I think the career is quite interesting to me and not only relates to social science topics but also has a massive impact on society.

Social Science

The main topics of social science that relate directly to the DFA position are objectivity, ethical neutrality, and cyber criminology. Objectivity is the way social scientists investigate in a bias free manner. This relates to the DFA role specifically in the public sector. The public sector just means you work for the government in some way. The DFA role in the public sector is the most similar to a normal detective which is important because detectives look for culprits objectively. They should not have bias when investigating because that would ruin evidence. Evidence is found objectively, or it may be deemed inadmissible. This objectivity is majorly important for a DFA. If evidence is not objective, then it could be thrown out. Ethical neutrality is the idea that a DFA must adhere to ethical standards while investigating. This is important to note because the rights of suspects should be protected for moral and legal reasons.

Unethically found evidence can be deemed inadmissible and will get an entire case thrown out. This is a simple thought but still very important because unethical action will not only lead to a DFA being fired but they may even be sued by the victim. Lastly, cyber criminology is “the study of causation of crimes that occur in the cyberspace and its impact in the physical space” (Jaishankar). This is an essential field to not only study but truly understand as a DFA. This is because the entire role revolves around this idea. Gathering evidence from cyber crimes digitally and helping to track down the culprit in real life. A DFA is in my opinion the most social science tied role and has major societal impact thanks to this.

Societal Impact

DFAs are very similar to detectives, both in work and in impact. This is because they essentially do the same thing but with different types of crimes. A DFA gathers evidence to bring justice to those affected by cyber attacks but also to punish cyber criminals. This role not only prevents crimes by gathering evidence to punish attackers but also helps victims by potentially preventing further harm. This has a huge societal impact by preventing cyber crime and helping victims and other marginalized groups by giving their offenders punishment. Our digital society would simply not survive without DFAs

Conclusion

DFAs are some of if not the most important workers in the field of cybersecurity. They help society by bringing justice and have an incredibly interesting job thanks to the role's relation to social science. The most important factor for me is making a difference in people's lives while having a, if not fun, interesting job. This is the role I most want to work for if I ever work in cyber security.

References

CYSE201S Module 2 PowerPoint

CYSE201S Module 12 PowerPoint

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