

## **Individual Reflection**

COVA CCI Internship: Team TRS Productions

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***In your individual reflection, what went right? What went wrong? What are your personal lessons learned? If you could do the project over, what would you do differently?***

During this internship, while there were difficult times, things went mostly right. An example of this was the workload. Almost all assignments were fair and flexible, and I didn't have a problem other than shortening reflections. One of the things that went wrong for me was the amount of investible effort for the project. While I wanted to put in more time to ensure it was great, I could only put in so much effort with multiple projects and classes.

I've learned a few lessons from this internship, one of them being to trust in my teammates. While it was difficult, it was needed for me to not work more than I could handle. I've also learned that I need to improve communication and have it be a key factor in a group. Even if I can do my work on my own, I still need to be communicative to improve a project. If I could do the project over, I would have put more time into researching and showing statistics. For me, numbers can be an immediate sign of bigger changes. I feel that incorporating more of them would have been better if given the chance.

***For each outcome or objective you explained your Memorandum of Agreement, describe how the internship fulfilled or didn't fulfill the goal.***

The internship fulfilled most of my objectives from my Memorandum of Agreement except for one. For hands-on experience, this was fulfilled through cybersecurity ethics and the final project. The group work I did improved over time, and I was able to collaborate with my team on projects. Assessing local companies forced me to be flexible with how I communicate

cybersecurity to different organizations. Finally, presenting the final project to Ms. Shadley was proof of my new ability to explain cybersecurity at a basic level.

The only goal that wasn't fulfilled for me was leadership skills. This was due to being in a role that supported our leader as opposed to being a leader. While I did have a say in moving forward, it wasn't an experience that fostered those skills in a way to which I could be a leader, more so be supportive.

***What are your thoughts about working on this team? What were the team dynamics?***

During the internship, my team was good compared to my previous experiences. My teammates were able to get their work done and pull their weight, but there were times when that didn't occur. Despite that, for most assignments, everyone got their parts done. There were even moments when I had to rely on them for work, and they pulled through.

The dynamics of our team were in three areas. Kayrene's role was in setting up documents and important meetings. I was delegated to research and stay informed on assignments, and Dip provided additional information for all work. We were effective at our separate parts and could progress on workdays.

***Describe the most motivating or exciting aspects of the internship.***

An exciting aspect of the internship was learning about cybersecurity on the level of small businesses, as well as meeting new people like Greg Tomchick or Dr. Baaki, who could offer different perspectives. It helped me to see cybersecurity distinctively and apply it to individual people. A motivating aspect was the final project. Working on a project that would go toward something that causes change was motivating for me, especially seeing that Ms. Shadley was excited at our presentation and the value it would have for her.

***Describe the most challenging aspects of the internship.***

One of the most challenging aspects of the internship was adjusting to its speed. The initial phase of the internship was relaxed, but the second half was much faster, and at times, it was difficult to adapt or switch work to prepare for different events.

***List your recommendations for future interns in this internship. What preparations do interns need before starting the internship?***

My recommendation for future interns is to be open and communicate frequently. Reducing barriers to communication can significantly improve the quality of work that the team creates, as well as make interactions less stiff. Another recommendation would be to give more time to the internship if possible. Giving more time towards the internship is also needed with work like the final report and presentation, which, if not handled properly, could lead to crunching.

I feel that the preparation for this internship should be previous group work experience, creative thinking, and quick adaptability. Group work can build the experience for a semester-long project. Creative thinking and quick adaptability also help in accounting for changes, the changing pace, and working through the final report.

***Conclusion: Summarize your main 'take away' thoughts from your internship experience.***

In summary, this internship has been an amazing experience for learning about small business cybersecurity and being able to change one that had few controls. I was able to apply my knowledge to assess local businesses and present the final project, as well as learn from each experience. Getting to work with a business to improve its cybersecurity was something that I never experienced, and it was fulfilling to see the end result.

***Describe how your internship experience will influence the remainder of your college time at ODU.***

This internship experience has helped me to see small businesses differently, and that will influence my time at ODU by having it be a future researchable topic. Learning that cybersecurity is almost non-existent in small businesses is another avenue that critically requires change. Another benefit that this internship has had is the networking from not only Ms. Shadley but also all participants and the local businesses around campus. These connections can go a long way in helping me to get other opportunities.

***Describe how your internship experience will influence your future professional path or planning.***

One of the most important takeaways from this internship for my future professional career will be design thinking. Design thinking changed my perspective on how to think about people's cybersecurity needs, not numbers. Working with teammates on a semester project also prepared me for improved communication with coworkers and collaboration for projects.

***Recommendations to revise the course.***

A recommendation I have is to better connect the two halves of the internship. The initial half of the internship is informative, and the other is hands-on, but there is an immediate switch instead of connecting progression. A way to implement this is to start interacting with the clients during the first half to lead into the first meeting, creating a more solid understanding, and setting up the second half of the internship.