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Reflection Paper 1

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Internship Reflection Paper 1

First 50 Hours

Working as an assistant technician at Tech For Troops for 50 hours has given me a better understanding of what it's like working with technology. So far I have been working in a room with computer teardown for recycling as well as refurbishment for donation to veterans. Previously, I haven't had much opportunity to handle so many different computers and their components. It's been interesting to find myself not getting tired of doing the same thing with the computers, I guess I really do just like technology that much.

I got right into tearing down business desktops and laptops that had been donated but were too old to repurpose. Despite having only a little hands-on experience with computer hardware, I found myself doing well with figuring out how to disassemble them without asking for help. One day I was pulled aside to start refurbishing 20 or so laptops. Starting with cleaning, then BIOS settings, a thorough diagnostic test, many updates, and battery testing. All while noting down the condition of each laptop for later evaluation.

The value of communication and clear instructions are the most important things I've learned so far. I found that if I didn't communicate that I wanted to try other things, I might've been stuck disassembling laptops all summer. After asking the head of teardown about working on something else he remembered that I was an intern and not a volunteer. Meaning that I could work on COD, which stood for certificate of destruction, so I could help him out by taking drives out of company computers. Later the drives would be destroyed and video recordings along with a certificate would be sent back to the company.

Because it's my first time doing a lot of these tasks I need to ask for directions and clarification. When I was doing the BIOS settings for refurbishment, I was given a packet of instructions but I still had someone going through the process with me. The instructions did have a few issues like having to go back to a page to make a second change and one of the steps was only for if a previous step didn't cover a setting but the two were separated.

In addition to work I attended the RVAsec security conference. Some of the talks had life lessons and the keynote speakers were talking about how we could learn from their mistakes. One of those talks was about Sender Policy Framework (SPF) and how it is often overlooked or implemented poorly. SPF is an email security measure that without configuring would allow anyone to spoof their email as if it came from a specific domain. I was curious and checked Tech For Troops' domain and it was configured there.

Overall, the first 50 hours have been a pretty good experience and taught me some good lessons. The experience of working with technology has affirmed to me that I want

to work with technology in the future. I am now a lot more comfortable with handling computer components as well as work tasks. I hope to continue trying different things at Tech For Troops and learning as I go.