

# Individual reflection

Jarrell Jackson

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In my reflection, the things that went right during my project would have to be working with my teammates. We all worked together well, and if I was doing something, they were there to back me up. I think team communication was one of the things that we did right as a team. Another thing would be making sure everyone knew what they had to do and holding each other accountable for the tasks we gave ourselves.

As far as things that went wrong, the main thing I would say is our time management when it came to getting everything done for the project. Things kind of got messed up when spring break came around and scheduling conflicts happened, so our schedule became a little tighter than expected. I also think we did not have enough time to really get to know our client as well as we wanted to. Given more time, as well as maybe an earlier start on the project, I think the final result would have been more detailed and more tailored to our client's wants and needs.

As far as personal lessons learned, I would say I learned that I need to work on my time management skills and prioritize the things I am doing better. I need to focus more on important tasks instead of spending too much time on things that are not as important to the project. A positive lesson learned would be that I improved my communication skills with my teammates and learned how to work in a professional team environment. I was also able to see what a professional workspace is like. If I could do the project over again, I would probably be more hands-on with questioning the client and making sure we were following what they wanted and expected from us. I also would have contacted them more or set up scheduled meetings so we could make sure what we were doing aligned with what they wanted. I would also start the report paper earlier so we were not waiting until the last second to finish the project and paper.

As far as the goals I described in the agreement, most of them were fulfilled throughout this internship. The first one was being able to apply what I learned in my previous classes to this

internship, and I was able to do that not only by using my knowledge within the report, but also by communicating with my peers and applying my knowledge to certain tasks. The next goal was gaining a better understanding of cybersecurity best practices, which was definitely fulfilled during this internship. We went over many tools and resources that helped me understand cybersecurity best practices and how to apply them to a small business.

The next goal was researching cybersecurity solutions, which was also fulfilled. I would say this mostly happened during the report process when we had to research solutions to the problems the company wanted us to look at. I had to help provide solutions and explain how those actions could be implemented. Another goal was collaboration and teamwork, which was definitely fulfilled. I learned how to work in a professional team environment and communicate effectively with my teammates to complete the tasks we needed to get done. The last goal was exposure to threat intelligence, and I would say this was fulfilled as well. However, when I originally wrote this goal, I thought the internship would be more hands-on and technical rather than report-heavy. I think that if it had been a more technical class, I would have explored this area even more. Overall, though, I would say all of my goals were fulfilled during this internship.

The most motivating aspect of this internship was creating a report that we could give to a small company to help them fix vulnerabilities in their current cybersecurity posture. This showed me that I can make a difference with the knowledge I have already learned and continue to learn throughout my program here at ODU. Another exciting aspect of the internship was being able to talk to different companies and hear from professionals in different areas of life. This gave me insight into what it is like to be a cybersecurity professional and helped me better understand the field.

The most challenging aspect of the internship was having to complete a report within basically the span of a month. On top of that, staying committed to a timeline and making sure both the report and presentation were completed was something I personally struggled with because my time management skills are not the best.

My recommendation for future interns would definitely be to communicate with everybody and anybody you can. Networking is probably one of the best things you can do for your future, whether you are going into an office job or starting your own business. I would also say starting your reports early is very important because you never know when someone might not be available or when an incident could happen that prevents you from working on it. You may also need to have something ready earlier than expected.

As far as preparation before starting the internship, I would say you should definitely be prepared to write reports. If you do not know how to write reports, then this internship may not be for you. It is also important to have a basic understanding of cybersecurity best practices and to understand what small businesses can do to improve their cybersecurity posture.

In conclusion, my main takeaway from this internship experience is that no matter what I thought going into it, this internship showed me that I can make a difference with the knowledge I have learned. This experience will definitely influence the rest of my time here at ODU while I pursue my master's degree because it helped me develop soft skills such as communication and teamwork. I will now be able to collaborate with other students more effectively and feel more confident speaking my mind. This internship gave me the confidence I need to continue pursuing my profession.

As far as how this internship will impact my future professional path, being able to work in a team is something I can carry with me into future professional environments. Being able to communicate with others who may not be on the same level as me is another skill I will take away from this internship.

As far as recommendations for the future course, I would keep the Dr. Baki sessions because they not only gave me the courage to speak out to others, but also helped me get out of my head, stop overthinking, and just doing things. I would also keep the dry runs and maybe even add an extra dry run for each presentation because they are very beneficial. Being able to receive feedback from both professors and peers helped improve the report and presentation and made them the best they could be.

When talking about changes to the course, I would probably change how the Valor section is done. To me, it felt like it was just another thing added to the report without much explanation because it seemed to do the same thing as the NIST framework. I think explaining why we need to include it and how to properly add it to the report would make that part of the course better.