Opening

Technology as a whole has always been a humbling experience for me. As I have grown for the past couple of years I noticed that technology will always have a new invention or theory on the rise. Always having that oncoming prospect of new information will always be humbling because you have to love to learn to be invested in technology. More specifically, cybersecurity has multidisciplinary aspects to it and that adds to the plethora of information that you have to take in when you try to stop attackers from attacking your database or interrupting daily operations. This personal narrative will explain my upbringing and how I developed my skills to help me jumpstart my career. Also this will explain how I gotten my interest into technology in the first place.

Introduction to Technology

As an aspiring cybersecurity expert I have gained experience since I was young. When I first ventured into technology as a child I was always interested in how things like computers worked and how I could use them to my advantage.I always loved to play games as a child and would continuously find more websites to play games on. This led me down some sketchy sites that would have pirated versions of games to play for free through their web browser. I would often go through these websites to spend hours upon hours on and eventually after having to go to the website everytime I wanted to start downloading games so I could play them locally rather than having to go to the websites every time. I eventually obliviously downloaded what I thought was super mario 3d world but was actually just a virus. I knew I had to get the virus off the computer

because this was a family computer; and, my parents already warned me before not to download anything onto the computer. They came from the thought that anything asking you for your email online was a virus and even though they were not technically sound they still took the cybersecurity of their devices seriously. With me not taking heed to their constant warnings of not downloading things online I eventually got a virus on the family computer that my mother did her work on. I knew if they figured out that if I had gotten the computer infected with a virus I was in big trouble so I went and thought about how I could fix my mistake. I learned that you could reset a computer to a previous image before you clicked the link by using the event logs to do so. I went and figured out how to do this and I ended up getting the virus removed off the family computer. Kearney (2002) contended, "Every human existence is a life in search of a narrative" (p. 129). In this instance I believe that I found my purpose in cybersecurity and this drove me down the road of research more about how technology works and I was eventually dubbed the "tech-guy" of the house by 11 years of age. My constant thirst for knowledge for cybersecurity related topics led me down a strenuous path of trial and error as I was in for a wake up call when I started highschool. I decided to start challenging myself since I was younger and I applied for the Landstown high school's Governor's STEM academy. While I was there I started going more in depth with cybersecurity and I realized how unprepared I was for the real world.

Development and Purpose In Cybersecurity

As I developed more in high school, being in the tech academy not only helped me realize how unprepared I was, it helped me see how many niches there are in cybersecurity. Seeing the oncoming challenges the future held for me allowed me to assess my current skill

level and motivated me to become better. I ended up being very hyper critical of myself and during this time I was extremely reflective and tried to find more of a motivation and drive to do what I did. During my reflections I noticed that visualizing or creating images of where I wanted to be in 10 years later helped motivate me for the now. I realized that I wanted to help people not get scammed in cybersecurity and make the internet a safer place for people that are not as tech savvy as me and educate older people so they can have a better security posture when browsing online. Mcadams said that "The construction of images helps to integrate a life by bringing into the same narrative format different personifications of the me" (McAdams, 2001). I agree with this statement wholeheartedly because seeing myself in a different light and knowing which part of my personality is associated with my drive and purpose for cybersecurity allowed me to stay motivated and consistent when learning new concepts in the field of cybersecurity. The traits I noticed about myself in my reflective periods during highschool is I am a guardian at heart, a life long learner, a moral driven person than law driven. Seeing these changes in my life allowed me to associate these traits with cybersecurity and chose this field. As a guardian and moral driven person a story that made me notice this is when my grandmother got a call saying that I had been in a car accident and that she needed to send money to them to gett me out of jail because I was under the influence of alcohol when I was driving. When my grandmother figured out that I was fine it shocked me how much this situation affected her and I wanted to let her know that the internet and new technology allows for scams like these to be more prevalent. I hated seeing my love one stress so much about this situation and I tried to understand why she was stressed and it turns out that the scammers had called her saying that they were Chesapeake police department (Chesapeake is the city she lived in) and they knew I was her grandson. Them having that much PII on my grandmother made her believe that I was in real trouble giving them more credibility

and trying to make her give them money out of fear. This situation motivated me to look up to see if there was any prosecution available for the offenders and there was virtually nothing that we could do and I realized that the law has flaws and should be criticized like any other peer reviewed document and people that do their crimes should have a higher risk when doing them. The only issue is the international laws cannot permit the extradition of a couple of scam callers and this showed me further how flawed the law system is because they hurt one of my loved ones and they get off scot free and probably affect others like my grandmother getting money from them.

Conclusion

By applying these concepts of constructing images to drive a narrative of yourself and human existence in life is in search of a narrative allowing me to give myself a worthwhile reflection and allow me to find my own narrative and purpose when discovering cybersecurity. I allowed these narratives to get me a new perspective when it comes to learning and how I should approach development in the cybersecurity field. The life long learner narrative showed me how to always be ready to learn especially in cybersecurity and always have an open mind when approaching new roadblocks in your development. These narratives allowed me to earn a partime job with ODU's Information Technology Services team and drove me to get certifications such as the network plus certification and the security plus certification. My E-Portfolio will be showing my integration of skills I have learned at ODU and include pieces that demonstrate my most fruitful learning experiences.

References

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