Cyber Security Ethics Reflection

Topic 1: whistleblowing

Before doing module 5 on whistleblowing, I thought of whistleblowing as something negative and that it shouldn't be allowed. The case study in that module was on Snowden, A person who wasn't allowed to be talked about in my house because his actions directly affected my dad's job. My Dad always told me that when he blew the whistle, he had lied and that the technology used was actual used to protect the country. But after doing the case study, analysis, and the module readings my views changed and I saw whistleblowing in a different way. Like always there is two sides to a story, and I saw that with whistleblowing. In the case of Snowden, he revealed that the NSA had technology that could be used to spy on the American people, but after hearing endless rants in my home, I heard that the programs being used was to save lives in operations overseas and when put exposed it he put lives in jeopardy. I learned that whistleblowing isn't always a bad thing and can be good for the citizens of a country. But most of the time, it's the word of one or two citizens against the government, and the government usually has more power than those citizens blowing the whistle. One thing I had learned when doing the module is that there is some relation between loyalty and whistleblowing, and loyalty contributes to whether a person will blow the whistle or not. For example, if a company is doing something that is unethical and can harm the public someone has to decide if they have greater loyalty to the company or country and its people. If that person aligns their loyalty to the people and the country, they will blow the whistle. So overall, my views changed on whistleblowing, and I learned to look at it situationally and to look the issue from all angles to see who is at fault.

Topic 2: information warfare

In module 7, I learn about information warfare and the ethical problems that can arise from it. Before doing the module, I had some idea and understanding of fake news and how it was a problem. After completing the case study, case analysis, and the readings, my knowledge of information warfare and fake news deepened, and I realized how big of an issue it was. As a cybersecurity major, I realized that information warfare is a big issue and spreads further than the realm of cybersecurity. After reading about the IRA and doing a case analysis on how Russia used information warfare to influence the 2016 presidential elections, I began to think about the internet differently, and as something that will need increase regulation in the future. Information warfare can be deployed by pretty much anyone of they have the means and resources to accomplish it, and can easily cause discourse and chaos between a government and its people. From what I learned, I think that there should be some kind of regulation or at least response to the growing use and

commonalty of information warfare, as it is something I see as dangerous for the US and any other country, mostly due to the growing popularity and reach technology and the internet have.

Topic 3: Consequentialism/Utilitarianism

One of the tools for ethical reasoning I gained during this course was the consequential idea of Utilitarianism. I knew of the concepts of utilitarianism but didn't exactly understand it that well. After reading "Understand" by Ted Chiang and reading the brief description of Utilitarianism, I understood and even realized I have followed it before in my life. What really helped me understand it was the Trolley problem, the dilemma of picking to steer the trolley away from hitting five people and killing one person or steering it away from hitting one person and killing five people. With the Utilitarian mind set you would steer the trolley away from the 5 people and kill the one person because you are saving more lives, or you are sacrificing the least amount for a greater amount of good. In other words, you're sacrificing one life to save 5 lives. This tool for ethical reasoning real stuck with me throughout the course, and I began to see scenarios where utilitarianism applied around me. For example, I was watching the Chernobyl miniseries and picked it out while watching. In the scene, the executives had to decide between sending 3 men into radioactive plant to manual turn on the cooling, which could have resulted in them dying, or not send them in and let the plant explode killing millions in Ukraine and surrounding countries. The Executives, decide to send the men and they were successful in cooling the plant, however over the next 3 weeks they died a slow painful death from radiation poisoning. I can see myself in the future using the understand and knowledge of Utilitarianism to solve problems, hopefully not one where I have to pick who lives and dies, but one where it could affect one person over many others, like the situation in the professional ethics module, where the coder could have decided between his job or the lives of many teenage girls.