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Reflection Paper 3

BLUF: This reflection paper outlines the events that have occurred over the past 150 hours of my current summer internship, which have had a significant impact on my learning and strengthened my knowledge in both Cybersecurity and IT as a whole.

New Hire Setup

Working as an intern for ODU's IT department has been both an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Over the course of my 150-hour internship, I have gained foundational knowledge of the role and, gradually, been trusted with more responsibilities and tasks, including independently handling tickets and completing various student tasks. In the most recent 50 hours, I had the opportunity to assist a supervisor from the EDUC shop in setting up offices for new hires across campus. Upon receiving the notification, we learned that we had 2 days to set up six new user offices. This task, though time-sensitive, offered a clear and structured process, which I found both challenging and rewarding.

The process of setting up each office was divided into three main steps: scouting, setting up, and testing. During the scouting phase, we visited each office location to assess the equipment needed and identify which network ports needed to be activated. Once we had this information,

we returned to the office to gather the necessary equipment including but not limited to monitors, DPcords, Ethernet cables, keyboards, and other essentials. The next step was setting up the equipment at the designated office locations. This included both the physical arrangement of the devices and the configuration of the software necessary for each new hire. The final step involved testing the setup. We ensured that all devices were functioning correctly: dual monitors were displaying properly, the Ethernet connection was active, and the user could log in using their Midas ID. In cases where something went wrong, we could reach out to our supervisor and create a support ticket for follow-up.

This experience significantly strengthened my troubleshooting skills, collaboration abilities, and knowledge of various technological devices. I particularly appreciated the opportunity to work under time constraints, which further built my ability to stay organized and efficient.

Collaboration

The past 50 hours also provided the most opportunities for collaboration with fellow interns and supervisors. I worked closely with the interns from both the education and science IT teams, which allowed me to gain insight into the different areas of the department and simulated a true work environment. Working together on the new hire office setups across campus, transporting outdated computers, and providing mutual support during tasks allowed me to experience a dynamic and cooperative work environment. This collaboration required the use of diverse skills and knowledge, reinforcing the importance of teamwork in achieving goals.

Device Storage and Updates

One of the more complex aspects of this internship has been dealing with the complications of device storage/organization. In an environment where technology is constantly evolving, older devices can sometimes be overlooked until they are needed again. In the past 50 hours, I was tasked with transporting 18 old model computers (only supported Windows 8). These devices, originally installed in 2010, had not been addressed until recently, which meant we were only now getting around to wiping the hard drives or removing sensitive data. This task was particularly challenging due to the outdated operating systems on the computers, which were no longer receiving software updates and, as a result, functioned very slowly. For example, it took nearly 8 hours to wipe a single device.

Additionally, the older model computers were much heavier than the newer ones, making the physical task of moving and handling them more difficult. However, despite the challenges, I found value in working with these older devices. It reinforced how critical it is to stay updated with current technology, as older systems are more vulnerable to exploitation and are generally unprotected. This experience also reinforced the importance of research in the tech field. For instance, accessing recovery mode on these older devices required a different process than what is used on current models. As a result, I had to refer to our knowledge base system and conduct additional research to complete the task effectively.

This experience also allowed me to practice using the knowledge base system, something I don't get to use often. It was exciting to see how essential these resources are for solving problems in real-time, and I am now more comfortable navigating the system for future troubleshooting and research needs.