CYSE386 Reflection 6

Interview with Kayla Fleenor, Data Analyst at Preferred Direct
Date of Interview: July 28, 2025
Interviewed by: Max Khamphavong

Why I Chose to Interview Miss Fleenor

When I started my job here at Preferred Direct Marketing, I was pretty nervous about how I would be able to adjust and adapt to a workflow that involves tight deadlines, real clients, and software packages I have never heard of. On day one Kayla Fleenor was the person who was tasked to train me. I know right from the start she is a great teacher because although my company has an overall Standard of Produces (SOP) guide, Kayla has went out of her way to create a simpler guide highlighting the separate and even adding smaller nuance details that are not in the in the main SOP. From what I've gathered since working here Kayla is the type of coworker if you need help you go to her. She is not that much older than me also, so that being said there is level of understanding with generational interactions and communications.

Career and Background Journey

Kayla has been with Preferred Direct for over three years. She told me that she has always found computers interesting. Similar to a way an assembling works as one part is part of a whole system. She wanted to find a job that was a good middle ground between too simple and too overbearing. Kayla originally found the company through a temp agency but quickly fell in a love because of the harmonious family culture. What stands out to her about the company is the flexibility to implement and try new products to make workflows more efficient, but also the stability and atmosphere. "I could never work in just plain corporate office, because it is too depressing."

Before joining Preferred Direct Kayla earned her bachelor's degree in computer science at George Mason University. Even though she has received formal education she said during the interview that a lot of the parts of this job learned by self-teaching. "There is only so much a bachelor's degree will teach, and to be appliable in the workforce is a different experience." Uluro for example is a software where yes SQL database knowledge is helpful and formal education will help, but working with live workflows A lot is learned from trial and error.

Skills for the Job

For this portion of the interview, I asked Kayla was the skills and requirements needed to perform well in her position. She was able to break it down into technical and soft skills. For technical she empathized the importance of having a general knowledge of computers and how the file systems work between operating systems. Any knowledge of coding and language learning will also benefit you greatly in this position. Soft skills that were important to her were being able to stay organized and manage tasks efficiently and on time.

Kayla uses more than just BCC Mail Manager or USPS postalOne which are the tools I mostly use. Example of are the tools she uses Renamer.exe, TxtCollector, SWSOneStepV5, and Fiery Command Workstation. Now it sounds like a lot, but these tools correspond to the data that is sent by our clients to merge with the prints, and general information. She is currently training to work with more of these applications as this is more into the data of my field of cybersecurity.

Advice for Breaking into the Field

Kayla says her advice for breaking into this field is simple. "Just be patient and willing to learn." That is statement I fully agree with, because when I first started, I knew none of the proper software used in my current day to day tasks. As time went on, I learned, grew, and organized. Kayla is 27 and she believes that's both of our positions are higher than the Tier One entry level IT help desks, and this is because we work directly with our clients, and we have live data that matters. There is a lot of money at stake here, and this means a lot of things are hands on and critical thinking is needed. In her eyes though both of our positions are not mid-tier either in cybersecurity. In a sense it's a good starting point and maybe help me get ahead ultimately skipping that IT help desk that many people in the tech fields goes through.

Her view made me realize our jobs may not be super glamours on paper but has shown a new light that I never knew existed. This company works as a backbone support system for the clients and to USPS services. The position that she is in will allow her to eventually move to another step potentially doubling her salary. Her long-term goals are to obtain as much knowledge as possible and then growth from there. There is always room to learn.

Reflection

I am almost coming up to two years of working with this company. Honestly, I could not have asked for anything else at the moment. The people, the work culture, and support systems are all great. I enjoy going to work because of the coworkers and how I am able to

thrive to social interaction and with work performance. I am hoping with these traits I will be able to sharpen them as I move up, and possibly away to another journey. Kayla helped me realized there is a lot more to data and compliance regulations. The magnitude of mailings we send out a day as astronomical. I would also say watching Kayla work I have learned that there are more than just technical skills when it comes to the workplace. How you balance soft and technically is what allows you to be efficient.

I plan to be at this company for a few more years, but for now I am definitely at a place where I say I am very comfortable with myself. Rather than be luck or a higher power me stumbling along with job not even with a finished bachelor's degree is luck.