

Miles Anderson

Reflection Paper 3

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Professor Teresa Duvall

Internship Reflection Paper 3 - CS Systems

My most recent 50 hours working at CS Systems featured various different tasks and situations that left me with mixed emotions. Although I faced personal and emotional challenges on the job, I also experienced successes and demonstrated measurable improvement within the department. Additionally, I dedicated much of my time to making improvements to our Windows infrastructure, which was especially meaningful to me as a Windows-focused IT consultant. This experience allowed me to apply my expertise, overcome challenges, and contribute tangible improvements to the department, ultimately reinforcing both my professional growth and my value to the team.

In my previous reflection paper, I had mentioned that I was making an effort to connect with our newer consultants in order to improve the work environment and team chemistry. I was able to connect with the new consultants Brayden, Phillip, and Charlotte in their own individual ways. Unfortunately, despite my best efforts to encourage Charlotte to overcome the challenges presented by the internship, the job proved to be too mentally taxing for her. I recently learned that she had resigned from her position when a new job posting was announced to fill her role. I felt like I had failed as a senior consultant because I wasn't able to support her effectively or help alleviate the stress that led her to resign. It also prompted me to reflect on my own actions and consider what I could have done to make the internship a more supportive and less stressful

environment for her. While I was unaware of the internal struggles she was still facing, I should have made more of an effort to reach out and see how she was feeling about the job.

Additionally, I could have asked her to tag along with more tasks around campus to get her more involved. In the end, I know I did my best to encourage her to stay in the internship, but I also recognize that this role may not be the right fit for everyone. If Charlotte was feeling stressed or not enjoying the work, I'm glad she is now pursuing an opportunity that better aligns with her goals and interests. I plan to use these reflections to better support the new consultant who will be taking her place next semester.

While I felt disappointed about Charlotte's resignation from the team, I also felt proud of my accomplishments within our Windows Infrastructure. The Computer Science Department uses Microsoft Endpoint Configuration Manager (MECM), a Microsoft tool that allows IT administrators to deploy software, updates, and configuration changes across all devices registered in our Active Directory environment. I was tasked with auditing the applications available for download in Software Center, a platform that allows clients to install software directly from the MECM server without needing to locate and download installers through a web browser. As part of this audit, I addressed issues with applications that were returning download errors to ensure they could be successfully deployed on our production machines. Moreover, I received admin level clearance to the MECM server, allowing me to explore the available applications and deploy numerous fixes. Some of these fixes included upgrading applications to the latest releases and modifying their detection methods from file names to registry key values to ensure successful installation verification. Additionally, I added new applications, such as the R programming language, to provide graduate researchers with more resources. Being entrusted with administrative access to our MECM server reflects the confidence my superiors have in my

ability to manage the active production environment. With these elevated privileges, it would be easy to accidentally disrupt critical infrastructure, so I must exercise extreme caution when making changes. To prevent any catastrophic mistakes, I first test all updates and deployments on a virtual machine made specifically for testing changes, ensuring that applications function correctly before they are pushed to the production systems used by faculty and researchers. This careful approach highlights the responsibility involved in managing MECM and reinforces the importance of thorough testing in maintaining a stable IT environment.

What made me the most proud within these last 50 weeks was that I was given the opportunity to move my workstation from Dragas Hall to the Engineering and Computational Sciences Building (ECSB). For context, Dragas Hall is where the newer and less experienced Consultants have their office, while ECSB is for the higher level system administrators and engineers. My new desk will be right beside our Systems Engineer and current Windows Admin, Dakota Dunn. This opportunity will allow me to work directly under him in our Windows environment, increasing my involvement in production changes and providing an excellent learning experience. When my superiors reviewed my transition, they unanimously agreed that I was ready, which confirmed just how much I had grown since my first semester with the team. In summary, experiencing both the challenges of ensuring all my consultants felt welcome at CS Systems and the positive milestone of being promoted to a new building taught me the important lesson that not everything will go as planned. What matters most is learning from mistakes and continuing to give your best effort. By committing fully to my work, I can achieve the results I am striving for.