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Individual Reflection

The COVA CCI Cyber Clinic Internship turned out to be much more enriching than I had expected. The entire process from start to finish involved valuable experiences and learning opportunities. Being able to take part in this internship gave me a new perspective on the risk management niche and offered me interactions that furthered my scope and knowledge of the cybersecurity field.

Throughout my group project, conducting a risk assessment on the company CM Technology Inc., there were positive and negative takeaways from the experience. There are several things that went right, beginning with client communication. Our company was exceptionally supportive and provided any information we requested. Emailed updates were promptly responded to and an open line of communication was kept. Next, our process of delegating tasks as a team was simple, and before beginning our report, we made it clear which sections each member was responsible for. Finally, our ability and willingness as a group to meet early before class to get a head start on assignments, meet with our client, or get on the same page made the process much easier for each of us. As with any project, there tend to be a few bumps in the road. One thing that went wrong with our project was initially understanding the structure of CM Technology Inc. and its sister companies. CM Technology shares resources and shareholders with several other companies but acts as an independent business. Understanding this architecture and making sure we were completing the report as requested by our company

held us back slightly from getting immediately started. From these successes and challenges, I've learned that communication with your team and your client makes large projects such as this one much easier. You can never double-check your information enough and you should always be sure to ask questions when needed. If I could do this project over, I would keep most of our choices the same. I believe that we worked very well as a team and produced results that we were proud of. However, the addition of firm checkpoints for completing our assignment might have assisted our team in staying on task and relieving stress with deadlines.

I outlined several objectives in my Memorandum of agreement, including an application of in-classroom knowledge, gaining hands-on experience with a cyber career, learning industry best practices, making professional connections, and establishing myself as a competent cyber professional. Being able to apply in-classroom knowledge and gain hands-on experience was fulfilled by our time spent with Valor Cybersecurity and being able to take our knowledge out to small businesses in a structured format. Making professional connections was fulfilled through the many speakers we met with as well as our clients. These meetings gave us an opportunity to learn from and connect with industry professionals. And finally, learning industry best practices and establishing myself as a competent cyber professional was achieved through our final project and the process of research and client interaction. Some of the most exciting aspects of this internship were hearing from speakers and more importantly, being able to apply our knowledge to our final project. Having valuable client interaction and getting hands on in conducting a risk assessment was one of the most rewarding experiences from this internship. On the other hand, there were a few challenging aspects including being rejected for our risk management services and limiting our final project recommendations. Being rejected for offering the Valor Risk Assessments taught us resiliency and perseverance, and the challenge of limiting our

recommendations to our business ensured that we were providing them the best possible solutions that were tailored to their company.

For future interns coming into this internship, they should be sure to participate in class. While it may feel like another lecture, this is an internship and you will gain more from it if you show up and actively involve yourself. Future interns should also be prepared to work closely in a group setting. Most of the work in this clinic is group-project based, so collaboration is key. To be prepared before starting the internship, students should brush up on their professionalism skills. Be sure you know how to format a good email and how to look the part. Future interns should also be prepared to accept criticism. This class is oriented around helping each other to improve, so criticism should be welcomed and built upon. I hope that future interns are able to benefit from this internship as much as I have. My main takeaway from this experience is to never underestimate yourself. In all honesty, I came into this clinic not knowing at all what I was doing and very skeptical as to how I was going to conduct a risk assessment on a REAL company. However, I successfully completed the assessment with the help of my team and am proud to say I was able to have that experience.

This internship gave me many valuable lessons that I will take with me throughout the remainder of my time at ODU and into my career. The knowledge I gained from research and hearing from speakers will help support and guide my studies at ODU. I am now able to look at Cybersecurity topics from a clearer risk management angle. As for my professional planning, I can safely say that I feel more confident in my risk assessment capabilities and will not rule out the career from my prospects. While I'm not sure I will follow the path completely, I have faith that it's a job I CAN do, and well. This course has shaped me in many ways. For future sessions of the COVA CCI Cyber Clinic, the many speakers and group interactions are very successful.

The valuable knowledge from the guest speakers was very helpful in learning more about risk management. The group projects allowed us to become closer as classmates and get to know each other better which I felt was important. If anything, I would recommend more groups and require more intermingling before being locked into our groups for the final project. The changes I would recommend implementing would be introducing the risk assessment report sooner, and allow the students to get more comfortable with the structure, different aspects and what makes it good or bad. Finally, better online organization would alleviate some confusion with assignments. If there are individual student assignments, they should be submitted through canvas, and any group work should be through google drive. This way duplicates of assignment can be eliminated and submissions and file locations can be clarified.