

TJ Oliver

Reflection Paper 1

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Stafford County Fire and Rescue

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Internship Reflection Paper

First 50 Hours

Working as an IT Support Technician for 50 hours has given me insight into the intricacies of an organization and the many technological tools used in synchronization to accomplish goals and needs. In an organization responsible for emergency response and 24/7 operation, having computer systems, mobile devices, communications, and applications readily available and working is a necessity.

There is a responsibility and a derived pride from supporting many coworkers. They each have unique goals and their tools range from normal laptops and desktops to specific systems and applications only seen in emergency response. With a combination of over 500 career and volunteer individuals, each day comes with a new adventure and problems even my boss has not seen in his eight years with the company. This kind of diversity can be overwhelming and thus begs certain approaches be taken.

The value of organization and communication are the most important things I've learned. Organization is vital on multiple aspects of my day. Maintaining organized work and stock areas

makes hardware repairs and replacements easier and more time efficient. Also, organizing my schedule is important to ensure that high priority items are taken care of before menial tasks.

The value of communication across a medium to large company ensures people understand the timeline and needs between departments. While I understand how a computer works and even have developed an understanding of how some of our systems work, I cannot assume how an individual intends to use their device or application. I also cannot assume to know the time schedule the repair needs to be made. Thus, it is important to communicate to the users and figure out how to best suit their needs while remaining within the guidelines and policies of the company.

In addition to work, there has been a wonderful lesson in being a unique part of a company. In previous jobs it could seem that I was just one in a sea of employees. At this location I have learned my experience and education are vital tools appreciated by everyone. Many people lack the intricate knowledge I have just as I lack the knowledge of how to fight a fire or pay out salaries. This addition I have brought to the team, even in an introductory role has been appreciated and empowered me to explore solutions to problems without relying on direct instruction for every step.

Overall, the first 50 hours have built the confidence I was worried about. Moving to a new career after years of studying and working full time, it was easy to worry this was all for nothing. I was worried I was getting too old. I was worried the things I thought I knew wouldn't be enough to help a company, let alone an emergency response organization. My skills and values have allowed me to not only start to grow but to thrive in tasks as simple as taking careful notes of where assets are or helping someone log into their email. I look forward to the rest of this experience.