

Reflection on My Interview with Engr. Leonard De Leon

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2. Introduction (1 paragraph)

As part of our Computer Engineering journey, we had the privilege of interviewing Engr. Leonard De Leon, a proud alumnus from the Class of 2016. In our conversation, he shared his inspiring career path from the challenges of being a fresh graduate to his accomplishments today. Engr. De Leon also offered insights drawn from real-world experiences, along with valuable advice to guide current Computer Engineering students in shaping their own futures.

3. Summary of the Interview (1–2 paragraphs)

The alumnus, whose current role is an Senior Application Engineer at Accenture, began his career as a Quality Assurance Engineer at Globe Telecom. The alumnus gave a clear look at what it takes to manage big network systems. The alumnus' main job on his first job involved checking data centers and making sure contractors install equipment tracks correctly. They also check connections and look for issues like loose or "sogging" wires to make sure clients can connect to servers. The alumnus said the work is tough but enjoyable, stating, "It's hard but it's enjoyable as long as there's something to resolve." Getting the job was hard because many companies prefer people with experience. The alumnus failed to get hired twice at his current company, but after gaining six months of experience, earning a network certificate elsewhere and having experience from staying for a year in one of his previous companies, the alumnus was successfully hired on their third try and got promoted quickly after only a year.

A major challenge the alumnus shared was the need for constant learning, especially getting certifications in scripting and programming to keep up with the technology. The alumnus noted that being a leader is easier when you know what

your team goes through, sharing the insight "You'll realize how to handle subordinates because you were once in that position." The alumnus learned a lesson about school versus the field, admitting that "when you get to the field, even if you're excellent in school, it's useless, because you're gonna be using different tools, you're still gonna have to learn new things." The alumnus said that the most useful skill from college was basic troubleshooting. The final advice the alumnus said for current computer engineering students was to "Finish your program and your preferred skills like programming, hardware, or networking and focus on it," so it won't be so difficult on students' end.

4. Personal Reflection (2–3 paragraphs)

What struck us most from the interview was how real and honest the alumni was about his journey as a Computer Engineering graduate. Hearing someone from the same course share his struggles, especially during his early years, felt very relatable even though we are just freshmen. His story about starting from the lowest positions, dealing with multiple works/studies, and constantly having to study because the IT field never stops changing opened our eyes to what the future might actually look like. It wasn't a glamorous or instant success story, it was about patience, continuous learning, and resilience.

As freshmen, his experiences really shaped how we now view our own academic and career goals. We used to think that doing well in school alone would be enough, but his story made us realize that real growth happens beyond the classroom through skills, certifications, and hands-on experience. The part where he failed multiple times applying to Accenture but still tried again was honestly inspiring. It reminded us that setbacks don't define a career, what matters is how you respond to them. His long-term commitment to staying in the company for 23 years and climbing from the bottom to Senior Engineer shows that effort pays off, just not immediately.

The biggest lessons we plan to apply are to focus early on the skills we genuinely want to pursue and to prepare ourselves for continuous learning. His advice about choosing a specialization programming, networking, hardware and building skill in that area really resonated. It made us think more seriously about exploring which direction in CPE we want to take as early as now. We also appreciated how he highlighted soft skills like presenting projects and managing time and budget, which are things we usually overlook. His story encouraged us to be open to challenges, not fear failures, and invest in ourselves as early as possible. Overall, the interview gave us both a clearer picture of the road ahead and a stronger motivation to start building our future step by step.

5. Connection to Course or Program (1 paragraph)

The interview has some connections to our learning experience in Computer Engineering. It indicates that the very things we are taught in school like programming and systems will matter eventually, but the IT field will be mainly about the skill of doing things practically and learning perpetually. The engineer's journey continuously reminds us that in addition to academic success, this profession will require possessing many qualities like patience, flexibility, and providing ongoing skill development. However, it also creates doubts about our expectations because not everything that is taught in school will be applicable in the workplace right away, and advancement in this field often means starting from the bottom, gaining experience, and proving your worth through real problem-solving and continuous improvement.

6. Conclusion (1 paragraph)

We therefore conclude that, an engineer's path is never an easy one, college makes us more resilient for what's in hold for us in the future. Engr, De Leon's interview about his experiences, and knowledge teaches us that being an engineer not only requires that you have to be smart but rather you have to be consistent and understand everything that you can before going out in the real world. It gives us an idea of what our future profession really is and what challenges we are going to face. This interview was very successful, we learned the experiences of a senior engineer. Now, it is our turn to experience such things, how will these aspiring engineers tackle such problems?

7. Appendices



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