
Joe McLaughlin

Platform, Site Reliability, DevOps, Security, and IT Leader

joe.mclaughlin.it@gmail.com | (410) 490-4940 | <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jmclaughlin10/>

Summary

Infrastructure and DevOps leader with proven expertise scaling cloud-native platforms in high-growth environments while maintaining enterprise-grade security and compliance.

Experience

Director of Engineering, Infrastructure

Employ, Inc. | Denver, CO (remote) | May 2025 - PRESENT

- **AI Infrastructure** – Led the platform buildout of IBM Cloud to power WatsonX.gov AI governance infrastructure, a key component of compliance and brand strength in the recruiting industry.
- **Budget and Cost Optimization** – In the first 6 months, Identified over \$1M in annual cost savings opportunities in our AWS infrastructure and set a roadmap to realize those gains. Empowered line management to own the costs of their product domains by refactoring cost reporting systems and data.
- **Security & Compliance** – Oversaw the implementation of new endpoint protection and SIEM solutions across all enterprise cloud systems. Successfully led engineering evidence collection and coordination with the Security team to maintain SOC 2 and ISO 27001 compliance.
- **Product and Engineering Strategy** – Key contributor to overall product and engineering strategy, balancing cloud infrastructure and security roadmaps across feature innovations and legacy upkeep initiatives. This ensured the successful prioritization of the above accomplishments.
- **Team Leadership** – Stabilized 2 teams distributed across North America, Europe, and India after a long period of leadership turbulence by actively listening to team feedback, empowering ownership at lower levels, re-aligning management structure, and changing from top-down to collaborative team culture with silos broken down.
- **Architectural Summary** – AWS, GCP, IBM Cloud, Microsoft Server, Javascript/Typescript, PHP, Python, MySQL, Postgres, MongoDB, Kafka, Redis, OpenSearch, Airflow, Kubernetes, Helm, ArgoCD, Terraform, Github, Github Actions, New Relic, Datadog.

Director of Engineering, Infrastructure & Security

Niche.com | Pittsburgh, PA | February 2014 - May 2025

- **High Impact DevOps** – Fostered a mature DevOps culture where developers were empowered to ship quickly and own their product domains. CI/CD, observability, development automation tooling, and architectural improvements contributed to *75% cycle time reduction, 15% increase in deployments*.

- **Site Reliability Practice** – Led Site Reliability Engineering as a focus area and shared responsibility among product development teams, establishing 99.9% site uptime, effective incident response practices, continuous improvement on observability platforms, and blameless post mortem culture.
- **Remote-First Enterprise Solutions** – Best in class employee experience from day one for every remote employee through implementation of zero-trust architecture, centralized access controls through SSO, high SLA and CSAT scoring IT team, and a focus on minimal employee downtime.
- **Growth Management** – Grew with the company from 25 to 350 employees, including years of 100% YoY growth, building a department of Site Reliability Engineering, DevOps, Security, and Enterprise IT. Coached ICs and managers with clear career progression plans and performance management.
- **Efficiency and Goal Setting** – Utilized various Agile, OKR, product management, strategic planning and prioritization methods to set clear goals aligned with business objectives. Member of several leadership groups influencing infrastructure, security, and compliance throughout the organization.
- **Budget and Cost Optimization** – Owned all IT and Cloud expensing, cost forecasting, vendor management, and contract negotiations. Continual cost optimization analysis to balance growth requirements and efficiency. Typically ~5-10% under budget each year.
- **Information Security Leadership** – Led multiple extensive compliance initiatives in response to data privacy laws, SOC 2 preparation, and higher education requirements. Author of many organization-wide policies and procedures and a key partner to Legal, HR, and Finance teams.
- **Architectural Summary** – AWS, GCP, Javascript/Typescript + Golang microservices, Python, Postgres, Kafka, Redis, Elasticsearch, Docker, Airflow, Kubernetes, kOps, Helm, FluxCD, Linkerd, Terraform, Github, Github Actions, Grafana, Sumo Logic, New Relic, Vault, Okta, Zscaler zero-trust.

Niche.com - All Positions

- Director of Infrastructure | July 2019 - May 2025
- Manager of Infrastructure Engineering | July 2018 - July 2019
- Lead Infrastructure Engineer | July 2017 - July 2018
- Web Systems Administrator | February 2014 - July 2017

Systems Administrator

Decision Software | Washington, D.C. | October 2011 - January 2014

Systems Administrator, Manager

The Knowland Group | Salisbury, MD | May 2009 - October 2011

Education & Certifications

B.S. Business Administration, Management

Salisbury University