On the 29th of September we interviewed Jon O’Shea about his job as a Data Administrator. He gave us many insights into his daily work life, working with large databases. During the interview we touched on points such as: databases, what a data administrator does, how to work well in a team and how to get a job in IT.

Analysing Data is one the most import roles a data analyst can do and with the help from Gartner many projects can be put together. Gartner is the leading research and advisory company around the globe. They have ever expanded research to provide to companies around the world, providing advice and tools they need to achieve their goals and build a great organisation. When data analysis receives projects, they get asked questions on how the project will be developed. Gartner is a great company to visit to identify and evaluate trends in a database which can help data analysis proceed with their project.

Being a data analysis requires understanding users and predicting what they will do or what they need for the job and problem and if the data stops working due to user input the data analysis must be good at problem solving and resolving the issue. It is important to have attention to detail when manipulating data, so the quality of the data stays decent and spotting mistakes other users make. Backing up files is a must because technology is not 100% reliable and files can become corrupted or the data in the file has been edited incorrectly crashing the file. This can also be avoided by branching off from the main project editing it in a separate branch. When projects are branched off it creates a copy of the project in a different timeline allowing the user to manipulate it however, they seem fit. The most challenging part of the job is implementing new systems but working together as a team with more communication can make this job easier for everyone. Try and look for a way to challenge yourself within the company to learn new things and to improve your quality of work. When you are confident enough you can go even further and look for improvement in your work by making managing projects more efficiently and try cutting corners with keep the quality in tacked, making it easier for yourself and the end user. Don’t plan too far ahead of the project because technology is changing rapidly in the recent years changing up the structure and systems of the company.

Most IT projects are done in teams. Every team is different and will face challenges. Mr O’Shea spoke about main components that make teams run better. Trust was the first one, meaning that we need to trust each other’s abilities and each other. Doubting someone can make them feel incompetent that could lead to low work ethic. Another part is diversity. Keeping a team diverse opens it to new ideas and concepts as every person has a different perspective. Similarly, to trust communication plays a large role in team performance. If people do not communicate ideas or opinions well it could lead to conflict and missed opportunities with concepts. Jon also mentioned the importance of being open to other ideas and allowing equal space to share their opinions. Letting your teammates be heard helps the team be cohesive with all parts of the project and will aid in accord. Seeking regular feedback and allowing people to make mistakes further assists in improving the quality of work output by each individual member of the team. Letting your team know about your views and vice versa will help the overall flow of the project.

Getting into the IT industry has evolved a lot since it’s initial conception. Although you are not required to have certification there is an advantage to having one as it shows you have understanding to a certain level. With studying you can find many apprenticeships hosted by small and larger companies. The benefit to this is that you can study and work at the same time and your employer may want to hire you after the completion of your degree. Cadet ships are also a good option that facilitates on-site learning and growth. It tends to be more hands on and done at the completion of your degree or if you have no degree at all. Graduate programs, much like the name suggests, are for students who have graduated and are ready to begin one of their first jobs in the field. It often is supported by larger companies, and you get a mentor to help you to along the way. Tertiary holiday programs are run so that students can gain experience with full time work without the additional stress of study. It is a great way for employers to see that you are eager and are actively looking to learn more. Finally, unpaid work and volunteering is great to get both experience and notoriety that will hopefully lead to an employer reaching out to you for job opportunities. However, unpaid work is very easily turned into free labour so letting them know you will not work over 6 months without getting paid is optimal experience. There are several ways to get into the IT industry and it depends on the person to pick which route is best for them.

Overall, IT is a very broad blanket term used for many niches but important roles in modern society. Interviewing a professional about their field allowed a better understand on what a job in IT really looks like. Learning about data analyst specifically, teamwork, and getting into the industry itself.