While searching for careers that fit my areas of study the best, MIS and CS, I found a handful that interest me in a few different sectors. When performing my search, I used general titles since I don’t have specific companies in mind at the moment, and I also used Seattle as the search area because I feel like my lifestyle would be accommodated well by the area. The first title I looked into was data analyst. There are plenty different data analyst jobs in the Seattle area which mostly look for a general set of skills including: coding experience in Python, R, and SQL, interpersonal skills to work well with teams, organizational skills to meet goals and deadlines, an aptitude to learn, quantitative skills, and an interest in whatever the company specializes in whether it be tech, medical, law, or any other industry.

Similar to data analytics I also looked into jobs for business analytics. The same general set of soft skills such as interpersonal and organizational skills are included here, but more specialized skills include things such as experience in forecasting, planning, data analysis, and data science. It seems like this would be an easier role to step into having worked as a data analyst first, and then combining those skills along with more of a finance background which does interest me somewhat.

The next job I looked into was database administrator. This position seemed the most in line with what I’ve learned so far at WSU with a focus on Python and SQL being used to automate data updates, as well as designing interfaces and web applications for editing and interacting with databases. This job seemed to have a more general set of skills than the specific knowledge for the other two I looked into, or maybe it’s just that what I have been learning for the past four years seems so natural at this point that it doesn’t come across as having too much specific knowledge.

In the Seattle area there are plenty of open job positions that relate to my job interests. One of the first that caught my eye was for Business Analyst position for Port of Seattle. One of the merits that stuck out for me was the job satisfaction that other people had working for this company which I value highly. I don’t believe that the most important thing about a job is the salary, but how tolerable it is to actually work there. Salary is great, but that doesn't matter as much if the work and environment is miserable to be in. This job seemed fairly straightforward where the responsibilities include eliciting, analyzing, documenting, and validating the business requirements, managing the business needs of technology project stakeholders, including customers and end users. The company culture seems very employee focused since unlike many other job postings they don’t just list the requirements and responsibilities, but they also have a “why you’ll love it here” section where they talk about the benefits of being an employee including parental leave, tuition reimbursement, paid vacation, and the diverse and mission driven culture they strive towards.

Another job that caught my eye in the Seattle area was Market Data Insights Analyst for Apple, specifically working with Apple Music. I have always had a passion for music and an interest in the music industry but didn’t see that as a viable career, or something I’d want to work full time with. I hadn’t considered that there might be career opportunities to work with data and information systems within a part of the music industry that Apple specifically has cornered with one of the world’s most prominent streaming platforms. The main technical experience for this position includes experience with data, financial, or business analysis using SQL, and macros. This is something that would be natural to work towards with other jobs in the IS and data analytics sector first, since they would provide much of the desired qualifications and experience for this and many other jobs. With Apple being one of the tech giants and music being a personal passion of mine, this seems like it would be a pretty cool job to have. They already have an established work culture and brand image that comes off as positive, although the job posting is a bit colder than the previous one I talked about since the majority of this posting just lists key qualifications and a description of the job rather than listing an benefits for working for the company.

The main list of skills I need to develop and reinforce are technical skills and knowledge. Languages such as SQL, R, and Python came up the most with the group of jobs that I looked into. I’m not sure how to practice my SQL skills much besides working through the assignments we have in this class, but it would be possible to practice this own my own if I found some data sets that I could work with. For the final project in this class, I know we need to find a dataset, so it would be possible to use that project and all that we do with it as a reference to my skills with SQL in the future.

I have some experience with R and believe that it would be good in conjunction with other desired skills by a lot of firms such as being knowledgeable with Tableau and Power BI in order to present data. Since we will be using Power BI and Tableau later in the course it would also be possible to save any projects as reference in the future, but also apply these skills to personal projects.

Python is the final common language that I saw was desired for a lot of jobs and is a skill that I’m currently developing. Since I am almost finished with my minor in computer science, I have plenty of practice coding at this point and have picked up several languages such as C, C++, and Python that are useful for both front and back-end development. Over the weekend I spend over a dozen hours working on both front and back-end development for an assignment in another class that was done using Python as the main language, as well using a SQLAlchemy wrapper for Flask for the majority of the project. This project would be good to save for reference in the future since it demonstrates good organization and implementation, as well as knowledge of Python, Flask, Bootstrap, HTML, and CSS.

about doing that would also demonstrate my abilities is creating a new webpage for the WSU Plant Growth Facility where I currently work since it is pretty old and outdated. Besides giving it a general UI overhaul to make it more aesthetically pleasing, I don’t believe their current system has any sort of database in place to keep track of materials requests which could be useful. The PGF manages a system of greenhouses where users are able to use their website to request different pots, soil, or other materials. Right now, this requisition form is simply forwarded to the manager who then fills the requests, but it could be useful to store these requests in order to analyze trends based on the time of year for example. There is currently a storage problem where materials are pilling up and not being used. Being able to stock the right materials at the right time of year based on trends from previous users could help clear up this problem. By taking on a project like this, I believe it would demonstrate my passion for business solutions, coding in general, and work ethic. By the end of this semester, I hope to have enough knowledge and experience to be able to implement at least a test site that is able to store this information and create a test data set that I could then use my SQL knowledge to perform analysis on.