# CSE 300 – Informational Interview Report

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## Instructions

During this semester you need to complete three informational interviews. Once you have completed an interview, use this form to report on it.

## Basic information

Fill out the following information:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Who did you interview? | Curtis Fowler |
| Where do they work? (or are they self-employed) | Capital One |
| What is their current position? | Software Engineer |
| When did you meet? (date) | 5/28/2025 |
| How did you meet?  (in person, Zoom, etc.) | Discord |

## Questions

1. In 1-2 paragraphs, describe their story. How did this person get to where they are now?

Curtis was a student at Midlothian High School in Virginia taking a web master class using Dreamweaver to make websites when he discovered his passion for coding. He ditched dreamweaver to learn html, css, and javascript by hand. After doing a little bit of that, he got into coding a discord bot, and soon after got a contract position at Capital One while going to school at VCU for Computer Science. Because of his previous work at Capital One, when he graduated he was offered a job as a full time Software Engineer.

2. What are the three most valuable insights you learned from this interview?

A) Tenacity is important.

B) A lot of learning has to be done on your own.

C) Passion projects get you into jobs.

3. What was this person’s first position in this field and how did they get started with it? (For example, they might be a vice president now, but how did they first get started in this area?)

The first position was the contract position for Capital One, and he got started by applying and showing some results from his passion project of a discord bot that he had been working on.

4. What does this person do that you find exciting?

He likes to learn and spend time coding even when he isn’t at work, as well as learning new technologies as a hobby.

5. What does this person do that you might not enjoy?

He says that his work is very boring as he just improves a system that is already in place, and he doesn’t really enjoy the work anymore, just the money.

6. When you asked for an assignment from them, what did they say?

He said that working on passion projects and leetcode would help, but especially a project that solves a real world issue that I am passionate about is good.

7. What are your plans for following up with them after the interview?

We went to high school together, so I will be able to reach out to him on discord, and he even talked about gaming together. Sadly, I don’t really game anymore, so just messaging with how things are going is probably the most likely way.

8. (Optional) Is there anything else from this experience that you would like to share?

Me and Curtis were actually in AP CompSci together our senior year of high school, and we even were chosen to represent our school in a competition that year. We didn’t do very well, but it looks like we both have devoted a lot of time to getting better.