# IT Work

When discussing as a group who we would like to interview, we fortunately had a few choices. We decided to interview Scott Peckover who is a web developer for the Australian government. In the government they have different work level standards known as the APS (Australian Public Service) level. Scotts’ title is an APS level 5 developer.

## What kind of work is done by the IT Professional?

Scott works as a front-end web developer. The front-end web developers’ job is to write code using HTML, CSS and JavaScript to create a website that a user will see and interact with. Whether it be the drop-down menus or the text on the screen, it is all done by a front-end web developer (Wales, 2019).

The office Scott works in, is currently using a technology called angular. Angular is an open source JavaScript framework. Whenever you log in to your myGov account you will see some of Scott’s work as he builds the front-end web applications that you see in government online services such as Centrelink or Medicare.

One of the biggest projects Scott has worked on was building the web application on the National Redress Scheme. Scott’s task in this was to build out both portals for the applicants of the National Redress Scheme and for the institutions involved.

Due to child sexual abuse in institutions such as churches, orphanages, schools and others the Australian government formed the National Redress Scheme following recommendations of the ‘Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse’ (About the National Redress Scheme, 2019).

## What kinds of people does the IT professional interact with?

Depending on what Scott is asked to do he can either work alone or with a multitude of different people. For the most part he works with other front-end developers in teams of up to five, each with their own specific tasks. He is also required to work with the back-end developers who deal with the Application Programming Interface (API) Layer, which accesses the data needed for an application. If need be, he also must work with analysts and user experience (UX) developers to understand the requirements of the task which he is assigned. On top of that Scott reports to a project manager who oversees and is responsible for the entire project.

Communication in teams is key to delivering a desired result any group project and it is no different here. Scott interacts with the entire project team through many channels such as email, skype and face to face conversations. All communication is thought of as an ongoing conversation with the only real set meetings being a quick five-minute morning meeting between the whole team to skim through what today will look like, allowing the team to contact each other throughout the day as need be.

## Where does the IT professional spend most of their time?

Visual Studio Code is the source code editor in which Scott spends most of his time creating the web applications. Scott spends a lot of his time speaking to other developers through the various channels listed above trying to figure out the best ways to implement certain features into their application which they may have never used before. When working as a team with other developers the office uses GitLab as their choice of version control. Depending on the project the team will all use a single mono-repository or multiple repositories which will talk to each other through a server.

Project management is also necessary for Scott and the team to manage a project efficiently and to complete it in the time allocated. Jira is the project management tool that they use which manages employees’ tasks and their workflow status.

## What aspect of his position is most challenging?

For Scott he finds using Angular difficult to use as it is still a quite new web framework to use as there is a major update every six months. This makes him feel as though he and the team he works with are on the forefront of web development. This is not a bad thing as he feels it keeps him sharp and keeps the work interesting.

Whenever any of the developers are stuck with Angular, he tells me that google, and Stack Overflow are your best friends! He does feel that as Angular matures as a platform there are more and more senior authorities on the subject such as Angular University on best practices.

## What skills are necessary to succeed in his workplace?

Being able to work as a team and the ability to communicate are the foundational skills required to be able to succeed in Scott’s workplace. On top of that a problem-solving mindset thinking creatively helps developers find solutions to problems they encounter daily.

Documentation is often overlooked but is a required skill for a front-end developer. Writing out good documentation in reports or even in Git is important so that supervisors and colleagues can understand clearly what Scott has completed or is completing.

Understanding the core concepts of programming is essential to be a successful developer. Technologies change so very quickly these days, but the core concepts remain and knowing them inside out helps developers like Scott learn new languages faster and easier.

Scott is eager to progress in his workplace, so having leadership skills is an integral part of Scotts journey. Working with people isn’t always easy and having the skills to be able to handle different personalities will help Scott grow in his career.

## What does he enjoy the most about his position?

Scott loves the fact that he feels like he is a constructor of the software industry as the front-end developers get the plans from the architects, the analysts and the UX developers and they build those plans. He works with the back-end developers to get it all working, and when nothing goes wrong, and all the links come together it is really satisfying for Scott to be a part of.

## How does the IT professional think his workspace will evolve over time?

Scott points to the fact that even though the government is using such a new technology like Angular, it is the exception not the rule. Things still move very slowly in the public sector compared to its private counterpart. Something Scott predicts to happen in his workplace is the adoption of more open source software and products, but not anytime soon.

## Does the IT professional have many conflicts within his team?

The team work well together for the most part but when things don’t, they try to think of it as roadblocks rather than all out conflict. They are trained to see road blocks from other perspectives then their own and to work through them as one team.

These road blocks usually arise from missing requirements (the software requirements for what the team is building), a wrong interpretation of what those requirements ask for or implementation of development specific details (programming methodology, project architecture, specific technologies being used etc.). Scott reports that most of the time a resolution can be found just by communicating with each other but if not, the project manager is there and will determine the outcome.

## What goals have been accomplished by the IT professional?

Scott has achieved many personal goals since he started his time with the Australian government. Being part of a team that successfully released a major consumer product was a highlight for Scott. He has been certified by Oracle in Java technologies and some of the work he has completed are common components and libraries, which are being used across other important government projects by other developers.

## Where does the IT professional see himself in 5 years?

He has spent a lot of time with CI/CD (continuous integration and continuous delivery) especially with GitLab lately that he would like to use to a further extent as well as working more with security. Scott would also love to branch into other areas like API development and back end development.

Overall Scott would also like to become more independent as it is still early into his career, but he would love to give it a go alone in the future if the opportunity ever presents itself.

# Bibliography

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