Interview with Bliss Lee - BI Developer at HackerOne

Most Familiar Tools

- Tableau

- Lookr (current, 1 month)

- Power BI (2 years)

- Apache Preset (open sourced BI tool)

The company is moving away from Power BI or Lookr due to limitations with interactivity and pop-up tool tips.

When you hover over it, something can pop up.

Role at HackerOne

- A lot to do with communication skills

- Understand what people want; often what they want isn't what they say

- They might not know the capability of the tools, even if they worked with them before

- Understand the business side of things and the frustration people want to resolve

- Often, it's about the time it takes to access insights

- VPs and CEOs want quick insights

- People want to connect variables efficiently

- Build out the visualization first, but also have on hand other variables that connect with the existing visualization

- Half the time spent as a BI developer is design: getting data in and making it look nice

- Lots of UI/UX concepts involved

- Cannot be frustrated; must be willing to receive feedback, even if the issue is very minor

- Much of the work is selling a story, and it must be easy to consume so people are willing to use it

Common Challenges in BI Development

People are used to consuming perfected things.

A common experience is that people don't use your visualization, and yet you have to spend a lot of time polishing it.

It depends on who you are working for:

- For VPs, the story is important

- For colleagues or analysts, the visualization can include a lot of data if that helps them

- They want whatever helps them save time

- The job is to help optimize other teams and save time

- Example: a finance person building 40 tabs on spreadsheets manually

- VBA (Visual Basic/coding language, similar to C#) can save time by automating tasks

Building BI Tools

- Find the end goals and starting positions, beyond what people initially request

- Help people save time and find answers

- Most of the time it's like building an application/webpage that people can interact with

- The BI developer creates an automated pipeline that feeds data into the visualization software so people can look at the data themselves

Technical Considerations

Scalability and data updates:

- Consider data update frequency and how data is streamed in

- Some people need new data on a daily basis

- The BI developer only comes in when new features need to be added

Cloud considerations:

- Cloud servers are more secure but subscription-based

- Cloud service costs can increase, and moving data out can be expensive

HackerOne Overview

- Bounty hunter system for hackers to find bugs on others' platforms

- Example: If hackers find Amazon bugs, Amazon pays them a bounty

- HackerOne is a platform for bug-hunting transactions and also provides standard cyber security services (e.g., penetration testing)

- Data comes from revenue, customer info, hacker data, bounty transactions, hacker contracts, Workday data (HR), and Salesforce data

Career Path

- Started off doing data entry for agriculture

- Began to explore data independently

- Last job before HackerOne was mostly storytelling with data

- Self-taught most of the tools and learned on the job

- BI tools are essentially the same; if you know one, you can pick up another quickly

- Learning on the side is good, but don't stress about learning everything at once

HackerOne Interview Process

- Technical interview: build a Power BI dashboard in a week and present it

- Technical interview: SQL questions to find specific answers

- Technical interview: describe your thought process