Kubernetes Observability: Deployment&conifguration of ELK vs EFK(fluentbit) stack on EKS with Terraform & eksctl

Check GitHub for helpful DevOps tools:

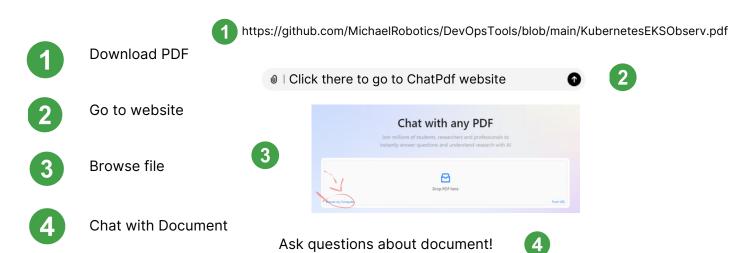


Hi, I'm Michal. I'm a Robotics Engineer and DevOps enthusiast. My mission is to create skill-learning platform that combats information overload by adhering to the set of principles: simplify, prioritize, and execute.



https://github.com/MichaelRobotics

Ask Personal Al Document assistant to learn interactively (FASTER)!



Complety new to Linux and Networking?

Essential for this PDF is a thorough knowledge of networking. I highly recommend the HTB platform's networking module, which offers extensive information to help build a comprehensive understanding.

HTB - Your Cyber Performance Center

We provide a human-first platform creating and maintaining high performing cybersecurity individuals and organizations.

https://www.hackthebox.com/



What is Kubernetes?

Kubernetes is an open-source platform that automates the deployment, scaling, and management of containerized applications. It helps manage clusters of nodes running containers, ensuring efficient and reliable operation.

How Kubernetes clusters are made?

Kubernetes clusters consist of a control plane and multiple worker nodes. The control plane manages cluster operations, while worker nodes run the actual container workloads.

Why and When use Kubernetes

Kubernetes is ideal for deploying scalable, resilient, and automated containerized applications. It is used when managing multiple containers across different environments is necessary.

Example: Running a microservices-based e-commerce platform that scales up during peak hours.

System Requirements

- RAM: 2 GB per node (1 GB can work for testing but may lead to limited performance)
- 10 GB free storage
- Ubuntu

Kubernetes: Main components & packages

- kube-apiserver: Central management component that exposes the Kubernetes API; acts
 as the front-end for the cluster.
- etcd: Distributed key-value store for storing all cluster data, ensuring data consistency across nodes.
- kube-scheduler: Assigns pods to available nodes based on resource requirements and policies.
- kube-controller-manager: Manages core controllers that handle various functions like node status, replication, and endpoints.
- kubelet: Agent that runs on each node, responsible for managing pods and their containers.
- kube-proxy: Manages networking on each node, ensuring communication between pods and services within the cluster.

Kubernetes Observability: Intro

1) What is Observability

Observability helps you understand what's happening inside a system, like a website or an app.

It has three main parts:

Metrics

Thoser are Numbers that show how well a system is working—like how busy the system is

(CPU usage), how many requests it's handling, or how often errors happen.

Metrics are like a health check. They help you see if something's wrong, track changes over

time, and set up alerts if things go off track.

Logs

Its detailed diary of events, recording what happened, when it happened, and where. This

could include error messages or records of what users did.

Logs are super helpful when something breaks. They help you figure out what went wrong,

when it happened, and why.

Traces

A step-by-step map that shows the path a request (like clicking a button on a website) takes

through different parts of the system.

Traces help you spot slowdowns or problems in the system, especially when it's made up of

many connected parts.

Kubernetes Observability: Deployment&conifguration of ELK vs EFK(fluentbit) stack on EKS with Terraform & eksctl

4

2) Why use observability stacks

The biggest reason to use observability stacks is to quickly identify and fix issues, reducing

downtime. For example, if an e-commerce site like Amazon's checkout slows down,

observability tools can pinpoint whether it's a server load spike (metrics), a payment error

(logs), or a slow API call (traces).

Without them, you're left guessing and manually sifting through logs, which takes much longer

and increases the chances of missing the root cause.

6) EFK(F-FluebtBit) vs ELK(L-Logstash) stack

Fluent Bit runs as a DaemonSet on all nodes, collecting logs from various sources. It acts as a

lightweight log forwarder, efficiently shipping logs to Elasticsearch for storage and indexing.

Kibana serves as the visualization layer, providing dashboards and generating queries to

retrieve logs from Elasticsearch.

Fluent Bit forwards logs, while Logstash aggregates and processes them with tasks like

filtering and parsing. However, in most cases, the EFK stack (Elasticsearch, Fluent Bit, Kibana)

is enough, as Fluent Bit's lightweight design minimizes resource usage, making Logstash

unnecessary unless advanced processing is required.

Deployment&conifguration of ELK vs EFK(fluentbit) stack on EKS with Terraform & eksctl

Kubernetes Observability: EFK deployment&configuration on EKS

1) Create EKS cluster:

Firstly set your cluster name and zones

```
eksctl create cluster --name=observability \
--region=us-east-1 \
--zones=us-east-1a,us-east-1b \
--without-nodegroup
```

configure the EKS cluster to allow the use of IAM roles with Kubernetes service accounts

```
eksctl utils associate-iam-oidc-provider \
--region us-east-1 \
--cluster observability \
--approve
```

Setup eks nodes specification and proper k8s context in your terminal

```
eksctl create nodegroup --cluster=observability \
--region=us-east-1 \
--name=observability-ng-private \
--node-type=t3.medium \
--nodes-min=2 \
--nodes-max=3 \
--node-volume-size=20 \
--managed \
--asg-access \
--external-dns-access \
--full-ecr-access \
--appmesh-access \
--alb-ingress-access \
--node-private-networking
```

aws eks update-kubeconfig --name observability --region us-east-1

2) Deploy observability stack

This command creates an IAM role for the EBS CSI controller, allowing it to interact with AWS resources to manage EBS volumes in the Kubernetes cluster, and will be attached to a service account.

```
eksctl create iamserviceaccount \
--name ebs-csi-controller-sa \
--namespace kube-system \
--cluster observability \
--region us-east-1 \
--role-name AmazonEKS_EBS_CSI_DriverRole \
--role-only \
--attach-policy-arn arn:aws:iam::aws:policy/service-role/AmazonEBSCSIDriverPolicy \
--approve
```

This command deploys the AWS EBS CSI driver as an addon to your Kubernetes cluster, using the previously created IAM service account role to securely manage EBS volumes.

```
ARN=$(aws iam get-role --role-name AmazonEKS_EBS_CSI_DriverRole --query 'Role.Arn' --output text)
```

```
eksctl create addon --cluster observability --region=us-east-1 --name aws-ebs-csi-driver --version latest \
--service-account-role-arn $ARN --force
```

Let's create a namespace to be used when the stack is deployed.

kubectl create namespace logging

This command installs Elasticsearch in the logging namespace, configuring the number of replicas, specifying the storage class, and enabling persistence labels to ensure data is stored on persistent volumes.

```
helm repo add elastic https://helm.elastic.co
helm install elasticsearch \
--set replicas=1 \
--set volumeClaimTemplate.storageClassName=gp2 \
--set persistence.labels.enabled=true elastic/elasticsearch -n logging
```

Check if everything works:

```
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes$ kubectl get pods -n logging
NAME
                                            RESTARTS
                                  STATUS
                                                        AGE
                         READY
elasticsearch-master-0
                         0/1
                                 Running
                                                        72s
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes$
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes$ kubectl get pods -n logging
                         READY
                                 STATUS
                                            RESTARTS
                                                       AGE
                                                       3m39s
elasticsearch-master-0
                         1/1
                                 Running
                                            0
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes$
```

Kibana provides a user-friendly interface for exploring and visualizing data stored in Elasticsearch and is exposed as a LoadBalancer service for external accessibility.

helm install kibana --set service.type=LoadBalancer elastic/kibana -n logging

This command retrieves the base64-encoded password for the Elasticsearch cluster's master credentials from the Kubernetes secret, which needs to be decoded before use

```
# for username kubectl get secrets --namespace=logging elasticsearch-master-credentials - ojsonpath='{.data.username}' | base64 -d # for password kubectl get secrets --namespace=logging elasticsearch-master-credentials - ojsonpath='{.data.password}' | base64 -d
```

Download repo from github:

git clone https://github.com/MichaelRobotics/Kubernetes.git cd Kubernetes/EFK

Modify Fluentbit configuration to access Elasticsearch in the EFK stack using the fluentbit-values.yaml file.

Add the Elasticsearch username and password, which should be retrieved from the secrets created earlier."

Install fluentbit

helm repo add fluent https://fluent.github.io/helm-charts helm install fluent-bit fluent/fluent-bit -f <path_to_cloned_repo>/Kubernetes/EFK/fluentbit-values.yaml -n logging

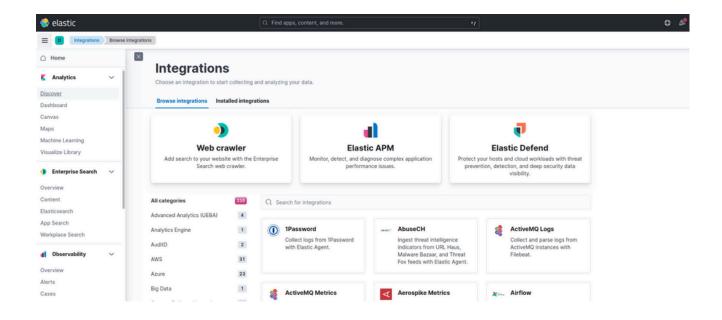
Retrieve the LoadBalancer address and pass the LoadBalancer external IP along with its port to access Elasticsearch.

kubectl get svc -n logging

Paste url into your web browser



Log into Elasticsearch using the credentials retrieved from secrets, then navigate to the Discover bar. Since no app is deployed, Elasticsearch will not find any data yet.



3) Deploy Application

kubectl create ns dev
<path_to_cloned_repo> kubectl apply -k .

```
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/EFK/app$ kubectl create ns dev
namespace/dev created
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/EFK/app$ kubectl apply -k .
service/a-service created
service/b-service created
deployment.apps/service-a-deployment created
deployment.apps/service-b-deployment created
```

Check if pods are running and check if they generate any logs

kubectl get pods -n dev

kubectl logs pod/<pod_name> -n dev

```
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/EFK/app$ kubectl get pods -n dev

NAME READY STATUS RESTARTS AGE

service-a-deployment-565d5c86d5-s297h 1/1 Running 0 6m16s

service-b-deployment-7b466747cf-98xc5 1/1 Running 0 6m16s

laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/EFK/app$ kubectl logs pod/service-a-deployment-565d5c86d5-s297h -n dev

Tracing initialized

Service A is running on port 3001

::ffff:192.168.115.127 - - [09/Feb/2025:15:07:53 +0000] "GET / HTTP/1.1" 200 26
```

Check if fluentbit captures any logs:

kubectl logs pod/<fluentbit_pod> -n logging

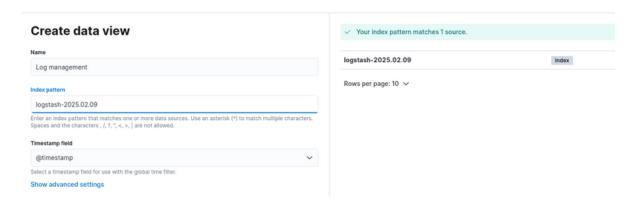
```
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/EFK/app$ kubectl logs pod/fluent-bit-2j8d2 -n logging
Fluent Bit v3.2.4
* Copyright (C) 2015-2024 The Fluent Bit Authors
* Fluent Bit is a CNCF sub-project under the umbrella of Fluentd
* https://fluentbit.io
```

Search for info message with path to logs inside any pod of deployed application:

```
[2025/02/09 15:05:23] [ warn] [engine] failed to flush chunk '1-1739113471.508903373.flb', retry in 17 seconds: task_id=3, input=systemd.1 > output=es.1 (out_id=1) [2025/02/09 15:05:25] [ info] [filter:kubernetes:kubernetes.0] token updated [2025/02/09 15:05:25] [ info] [Input:tail:tail.0] inotify fs add(): inode=29559363 watch_fd=17 name=/var/log/containers/service-a-deployment-565d5c86d5-s297h_dev_serice-a-dd086b43bbbf76274bf52a5a3ddd14d6af7ab77b79aeb7f6ce812962e99708.log [2025/02/09 15:05:27] [error] [output:es:es.1] HTTP status=401 UR1=/ bulk, response: ["error":("root_cause":["type":"security_exception", "reason":"unable to authenticate user [elastic] for REST request [/_bulk]", "header":("WWW-Authenticate":["Basic | "Basic |
```

4) Connect Application

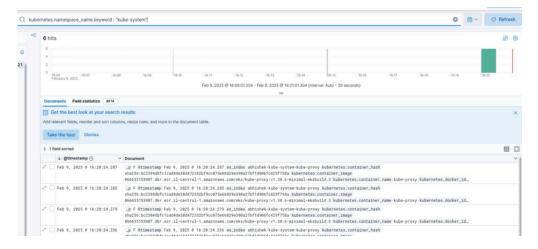
Back to elasticsearch. Create new data view, name it as you wish and in "index patterns" write any index pattern which elasticsearch found inside captured logs:



Apply configuration. Kibana dashboard should become visible. By default grafana presentes timestamped logs graph and all logs messages sorted in predefined order:



Kibana have its own query language. For example we queried only logs from namespace "kube-system":



5) Customize Fluentbit

Fluentbit is vendor-neutral because it uses Lua, allowing users to easily switch to other platforms like Splunk or Logstash without being locked into a specific vendor's ecosystem. This flexibility makes Fluentbit a versatile choice for log management and data processing.

There are 4 most important parts of fluentbit configuration:

Service

The Service section in Fluentbit defines global settings like logging behavior and runtime options, ensuring it operates under the desired conditions. It configures the service environment and specifies the configuration file location.

```
config:
    service: |
        [SERVICE]
        Daemon Off
        Flush {{ .Values.flush }}
        Log_Level {{ .Values.logLevel }}
        Parsers_File /fluent-bit/etc/parsers.conf
        Parsers_File /fluent-bit/etc/conf/custom_parsers.conf
        HTTP_Server On
        HTTP_Listen 0.0.0.0
        HTTP_Port {{ .Values.metricsPort }}
        Health_Check On
```

Input

The Input section specifies the data sources that Fluentbit will collect logs or metrics from, such as files, system logs, or network ports. It configures how and where Fluentbit retrieves the log data before processing.

Output

The Output section defines the destinations where Fluentbit will send the processed log data, such as cloud platforms, databases, or other log collectors like Elasticsearch or Splunk. This section determines where your logs will be forwarded after they are parsed and filtered.

```
outputs: |
[OUTPUT]

Name es
Match kube.*
Type __doc
Host elasticsearch-master
Port 9200
HTTP_User elastic
HTTP_Passwd wihUATeKeOPujkNn
tls On
tls.verify Off
Logstash_Format On
Logstash_Frefix logstash
Retry_Limit False
Suppress_Type_Name On

[OUTPUT]

Name es
Match host.*
Type __doc
Host elasticsearch-master
Port 9200
HTTP_User elastic
HTTP_Passwd cbTOjlqxRIPNFSuc
tls On
tls.verify Off
Logstash_Format On
```

Filters

The Filters section allows Fluentbit to modify or enrich logs before they are sent to the output. Filters can be used to add metadata, change the log format, or remove unnecessary data, ensuring the output meets specific requirements or standards.

Fluentbit can execute Lua scripts during log processing, allowing for tailored log handling. In this case, the setIndex.lua script sets the es_index field based on the Kubernetes namespace and container name, and skips logs from the "logging" namespace.

Kubernetes Observability: ELK deployment&configuration on EKS

1) Intro

The ELK Stack consists of Elasticsearch (for storing and searching data), Logstash (for processing and transforming logs), and Kibana (for visualizing data). Filebeat acts as a lightweight log shipper, scraping log files and sending the data to Logstash for further processing or directly to Elasticsearch. Logstash processes and enriches the data before forwarding it to Elasticsearch, where Kibana retrieves and visualizes the stored information.

2) VPC and EKS terraform files

Download git repo

git clone https://github.com/MichaelRobotics/Kubernetes.git cd Kubernetes/ELK

Setup is compsed from provider.tf where we can choose AWS region for our cluster an main.tf with eks & vpc configuration.

You can customize parameters like cluster_name, endpoint_public_access, instance_types, cluster size, and node instance types. Remember to change key_pair to existing key pair in uswest-1 region in your AWS account.

```
source
                        = "./modules/eks"
aws_public_subnet = module.vpc.aws_public_subnet
              = module.vpc.vpc_id
= "module-eks-${random_string.suffix.result}"
vpc id
cluster_name
endpoint_public_access = true
endpoint_private_access = false
public_access_cidrs = ["0.0.0.0/0"]
node_group_name = "michaelrobot
                        = "michaelrobotics"
scaling desired size = 1
scaling max_size
                        = 1
scaling min size
instance types
                        = ["t3.large"]
                        = "TestKeyPair"
key pair
```

Customizable VPC parameters include vpc_cidr (VPC IP range), public_cidrs (subnet IP ranges), access_ip (allowed IPs for access), public_sn_count (number of public subnets), and map_public_ip_on_launch (controls public IP assignment for instances).

```
module "vpc" {
 source
                         = "./modules/vpc"
                         = "michaelrobotics"
  tags
                         = "default"
 instance tenancy
 vpc cidr
                         = "10.0.0.0/16"
 access ip
                         = "0.0.0.0/0"
 public sn count
                        = 2
 public cidrs
                         = ["10.0.1.0/24", "10.0.2.0/24"]
 map public ip on launch = true
  rt route cidr block
                       = "0.0.0.0/0"
```

in directory ELK, initialize and apply configuration.

```
terraform init
terraform apply
```

3) ELK stack yaml files

Each stack component is deployed as a deployment.

Elasticsearch 1 replica deployment

```
apiVersion: apps/v1
kind: Deployment
metadata:
   name: elasticsearch
   namespace: elk
spec:
   replicas: 1
```

Filebeat 1 replica deployment

```
apiVersion: apps/v1
kind: Deployment
metadata:
   name: filebeat
   namespace: elk
   labels:
        app: filebeat
spec:
   replicas: 1
```

Kibana 1 replica deployment

```
apiVersion: apps/v1
kind: Deployment
metadata:
   name: kibana
   namespace: elk
spec:
   replicas: 1
   selector:
   matchLabels:
   app: kibana
```

Logstash as 1 replica deployment

```
apiVersion: apps/v1
kind: Deployment
metadata:
   name: logstash
   namespace: elk
spec:
   replicas: 1
   selector:
   matchLabels:
    app: logstash
```

It's important to note that Filebeat is deployed as a Deployment, meaning it won't run on every node and won't scrape logs from all pods. Filebeat configurations are set via a ConfigMap, collecting logs from /var/log/*.log on the node and forwarding them to the Logstash service on port 5044.

Logstash configurations are mounted as a ConfigMap. It listens on port 5044 for logs from Filebeat agents and forwards them to the Elasticsearch service on port 9200. Logs are indexed based on the pattern specified in the "index" setting.

The configurations for both Filebeat and Logstash are fairly basic. To modify them or deploy Filebeat as a DaemonSet, refer to the documentation and customize the project to fit your needs.

now create elk namespace

kubectl create ns elk

laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/ELK/modules\$ kubectl create ns elk namespace/elk created

Depploy application and check if everything work just fine.

kubectl apply -f elk/

```
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/ELK/modules$ kubectl apply -f elk/
deployment.apps/elasticsearch created
service/elasticsearch created
clusterrolebinding.rbac.authorization.k8s.io/filebeat-cluster-role-binding unchanged
clusterrole.rbac.authorization.k8s.io/filebeat-cluster-role unchanged
configmap/filebeat-config created
deployment.apps/filebeat created
serviceaccount/filebeat created
deployment.apps/kibana created
service/kibana created
configmap/logstash-config created
deployment.apps/logstash created
service/logstash created
```

After a few seconds all pods were created.

kubectl get pods -n elk

```
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/ELK/modules$ kubectl get pods -n elk
NAME
                                  READY
                                          STATUS
                                                               RESTARTS
                                                                          AGE
elasticsearch-5495ddc97c-qxtv2
                                          ContainerCreating
                                                                          14s
                                  0/1
                                                               0
filebeat-79674fc44d-kz5df
                                          ContainerCreating
                                                                          12s
                                  0/1
                                                               0
kibana-7dd6fd6fcc-dqgtk
                                  0/1
                                          ContainerCreating
                                                               0
                                                                          11s
logstash-5fd545c6c8-rn5zn
                                  0/1
                                          ContainerCreating
                                                               0
                                                                          9s
laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/ELK/modules$ kubectl get pods -n elk
                                  READY
NAME
                                          STATUS
                                                    RESTARTS
                                                                AGE
elasticsearch-5495ddc97c-qxtv2
                                  1/1
                                          Running
                                                                111s
                                                    0
filebeat-79674fc44d-kz5df
                                                                109s
                                  1/1
                                          Running
                                                    0
kibana-7dd6fd6fcc-dqgtk
                                                    0
                                                                108s
                                  1/1
                                          Running
                                                    0
                                                                106s
logstash-5fd545c6c8-rn5zn
                                  1/1
                                          Running
```

Now get kibana service and navigate towards its GUI in web browser

kubectl get svc -n elk

laptopdev@laptopdev2:~/Kubernetes/ELK/modules\$ kubectl get svc -n elk					
NAME	TYPE	CLUSTER-IP	EXTERNAL-IP	PORT(S)	AGE
elasticsearch	LoadBalancer	172.20.49.83	a30a3ec8d88d6476f87e0d15e6c67836-634110686.us-west-2.elb.amazonaws.com	9200:32425/TCP	2m35s
kibana	LoadBalancer	172.20.152.208	ab9dccla071634fb2abd3b2ab7a3f03e-1973390940.us-west-2.elb.amazonaws.com	5601:30618/TCP	2m31s
logstash	ClusterIP	172.20.85.120	<none></none>	5044/TCP	2m30s

Voila! Kibana now displays graphs and logs scraped by Filebeat. Run your queries to search for logs containing useful information.



common troubleshooting

1) Logs Not Appearing in Kibana (ELK Stack)

Cause: Filebeat is not forwarding logs to Logstash or Logstash isn't connecting to Elasticsearch. **Solution**: Check Filebeat logs with kubectl logs <filebeat-pod> -n <namespace>, verify Logstash is listening on port 5044, and ensure Elasticsearch is reachable at port 9200

2) Fluent Bit Not Forwarding Logs (EFK Stack)

Cause: Incorrect output configuration or network issues between Fluent Bit and Elasticsearch. **Solution:** Validate Fluent Bit configuration (output section), check logs with kubectl logs <fluent-bit-pod>, and ensure the Elasticsearch service is accessible.

3) Elasticsearch Pods CrashLoopBackOff

Cause: Insufficient memory or disk space leading to resource exhaustion. **Solution**: Check pod events with kubectl describe pod <es-pod>, increase resource limits in the deployment, and monitor disk usage with df -h inside the pod.

4) Kibana Fails to Connect to Elasticsearch

Cause: Incorrect Elasticsearch endpoint in Kibana config or Elasticsearch service is down. **Solution**: Verify Kibana config (elasticsearch.hosts setting), check service status with kubectl get svc -n <namespace>, and ensure Elasticsearch pods are healthy.

5) Check my Kubernetes Troubleshooting series:

Michael Robotics

Hi, I'm Michal. I'm a Robotics Engineer and DevOps enthusiast. My mission is to create skill-learning platform that combats skill information overload by adhering to the set of principles: simplify, prioritize, and execute.





Learn more about Kubernetes

Check Kubernetes and piyushsachdeva - great docs!

Setup a Multi Node Kubernetes Cluster

kubeadm is a tool to bootstrap the Kubernetes cluster

https://github.com/piyushsachdeva/CKA-2024/tree/main/Resources/Day27



Kubernetes Documentation

This section lists the different ways to set up and run Kubernetes



https://kubernetes.io/docs/setup/



Share, comment, DM and check GitHub for scripts & playbooks created to automate process.

Check my GitHub

Michael Robotics

Hi, I'm Michal. I'm a Robotics Engineer and DevOps enthusiast. My mission is to create skill-learning platform that combats skill information overload by adhering to the set of principles: simplify, prioritize, and execute.



https://github.com/MichaelRobotics

PS.

If you need a playbook or bash script to manage KVM on a specific Linux distribution, feel free to ask me in the comments or send a direct message!