

## Why are you pursuing a career in cyber security?

There are a multitude of reasons why I am pursuing a career in the cyber security field. Some of them are the typical ones like for the money, which oddly seems to be the main reason for a few cyber security engineering students. However, the main reason that I want a cyber career stem from a personal family experience where some random person inexplicably changed our home address one day. That moment was eye-opening and made me deeply want to help protect people from similar threats. This feeling then paired well with my interest in programming and technology and caused me to realize that information security was the perfect occupation for me. Then, I took my first steps learning about security in high school and further learned why I had to work within the field.

I can still remember the time when apparently my home address changed randomly. One day, my family got a letter in the mail from the post office that at the top said something like, "Official Change of Address". According to the post office, both my mom and I were changing our address to Florida of all places. This was utterly terrifying to see as I suddenly started questioning if I even live in my house anymore. Then, more questions just start reeling through my head wondering how this could be happening or who could be able to change my address. This was just as frightening and confusing for my mom as it was for me, if not more. I then had a front row seat to the miniature ordeal that my mother had to go through and her having to fix and explain the issue to the post office.

Experiencing this transaction unfold caused me to open my eyes and recognize that there is a real threat of people trying to steal others' and my information. I could see this issue occurring in front of me with my own two eyes. This awakening made me realize that I wanted to prevent these dreaded moments from happening again and make sure that people's personal information isn't in the wrong hands like my family's. This moment developed a feeling within me that I wanted to protect others from these kinds of wrong doings. Today, this feeling is still a driving force of why I am pursuing a cyber security career and going to college in the first place. As well, this protective drive makes me think that working within this field will provide meaningful work that will allow me to fulfill my sense of purpose by protecting others.

Ever since I had realized that I wanted to help protect others, I knew that I should pursue a career in the cyber security field. At the time in high school, I was just learning the basics of programming and was really enjoying it so much so that I was planning on majoring in computer science. However, once my family's own information was stolen, I figured that there must be a way that could have prevented this. That's why my mind switched towards cyber security. As an occupation, it seemed like a natural choice by this point. I knew I wanted to prevent others from stealing information while also getting to work with what I enjoyed doing. This made me think that information security would be both a fulfilling and interesting line of work for me. That way I would always be extremely engaged with my occupation.

Because of a new-found decision to pursue security, I decided to take a course in security through a special program my senior year of high school. This ended up making my decision to pursue cyber career completely unchangeable. The course went over the basics of security, such as risk management and the OSI model. These ideas are interesting and important in their own right. However, the key highlights I took from the course were the major issues plaguing the cyber security field. The main one being that there are millions of unfilled security careers in United States. Learning about this

was another moment that shook me but much less so than my family's information being stolen. I just couldn't believe that such a highly needed and depended upon field still needed so many people. This little bit of shock therapy has caused me to think of pursuing cybersecurity as less of something I want to do and more of something I need to do.

When it comes down to it, I am only pursuing cyber security because one experience I had that scared me straight and changed the way I saw the world. This experience showed me that I want to help and protect people. I decided from my love of technology and programming that I should then decided to look into and learn about information security. From then on, I planned on learning so that I will be able to make sure that people's information won't get stolen and misused. To start my pursuit of security, I took a course in high school over the subject and my eyes were opened even further than before. This course, in a sense, told me that I need to pursue a career in security, so that progress will be made to help adequately secure our nation. All in all, I wouldn't know exactly what I should do with my life, if it wasn't for another man who stole and used information about my family to change my home address.