**Personal Specialisation Project**

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# **SCOPE**

The aim of this research is to

# **Main Question**

### **How can Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) certificate prepare me to become a network engineer?**

## Sub Questions

### What network fundamentals do I need to take the exam?

### What is IP address and what does it offer?

### What security skills do I need to pass the exam?

### What is Automation and Programming in the CCNA?

# **My Plan**

# Results

## What network fundamentals do I need to take the exam?

After browsing Cisco website, I found the content of the CCNA exam. Therefore, I will be relying on that website to study step-by-step for the exam. (<https://learningnetwork.cisco.com/s/ccna-exam-topics>).

From the website above, here is the content of the current CCNA version:

Graphical user interface, text, application, email

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### Network Fundamentals

#### Network Topologies

There are many types that people used to design networks. Some of them are:

* Bus Topology
* Ring Topology
* Star Topology

#### Bus Topology

The internet started with 2 devices that were connected using the same cable, this is called Bus Topology. It can handle more than 2 devices as long as they are connected to the same cable.

A picture containing text, sign

Description automatically generated

This design shows that the 3 devices can talk to each other because they use the same cable.

This design is outdated and not used nowadays.

#### Ring Topology

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Ring topology is creating a circle with the devices that are connected with each other.

Advantages:

* Network Management: devices can be replaced/removed from the network without shutting it down.
* Cost: Twisted pair cabling is inexpensive and easily available. Therefore, the installation cost is very low.
* Reliable: It is a more reliable network because the communication system is not dependent on the single host computer.

Disadvantages:

* Difficult troubleshooting.
* Delay

#### Star Topology

This design is the most used design these days. The shared device is in the middle, and a cable is going out from it to each device.

Advantages:

* Efficient troubleshooting: troubleshooting is easier than the other designs.
* Easily expandable: more devices can be easily connected to the centered device using its own cable.

Disadvantages:

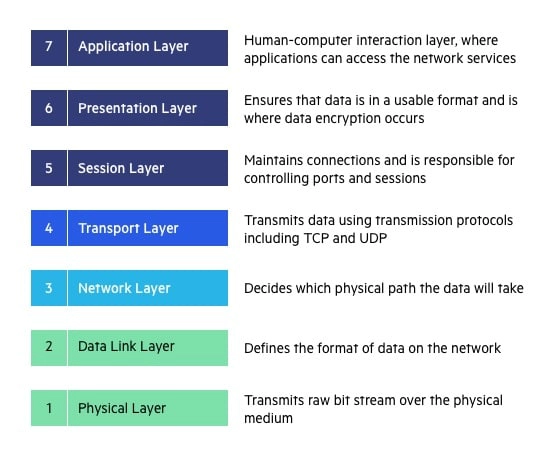
* A Central point of failure.
* So many cables.

(*Computer Network Topologies - Javatpoint, n.d.)*.

#### OSI MODEL

The Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) is the model that is being used by the modern devices to communicate to other devices on the internet.

The OSI model consists of 7 layers that share the steps of encapsulation/decapsulation.



([*https://www.imperva.com/learn/application-security/osi-model/#:~:text=The%20Open%20Systems%20Interconnection%20(OSI,companies%20in%20the%20early%201980s*)](https://www.imperva.com/learn/application-security/osi-model/#:~:text=The%20Open%20Systems%20Interconnection%20(OSI,companies%20in%20the%20early%201980s)).

Let’s start from the top:

**Layer 7 – Application Layer:**

This layer is where the end-user interacts with a software. Such as, HTTP/S for when visiting a website as in our scenario.

**Layer 6 – Presentation Layer:**

This layer is responsible for encoding, encrypting, and compressing the data that is being sent and received.

**Layer 5 – Presentation Layer:**

It ensures to create communication channels (sessions) to allow the devices to talk to each other. It also ensures that these channels are not being interrupted.

**Layer 4 – Transport Layer:**

This layer turns the data into ordered segments to make sure the data is in the correct order.

It also ensures that the specific segment has been received to send the next one. If a segment was not received, the layer would send it again.

**Layer 3 – Network Layer:**

Network layer breaking up the segments into network packets. Also, it routes the packets to the best path towards the destination.

**Layer 2 – Data Link Layer:**

This layer receives the network packets and turn them into frames, then it sends them to the destination using the Media Access Control to route the frames.

**Layer 1 – Physical Layer:**

It takes care of the physical cables and how the devices are connected and talking to each other.

#### TCP/UDP

TCP requires 2 devices to be connected for them to send packets, therefore TCP is considered connection-based protocol. The following are some of the services that the TCP protocol brings:

* The server ensure that the client received the packets, if not, the server will keep sending the same packet until it is received.
* It uses three-way-handshake to establish a connection.
* Ordered packets
* Reliable

UDP, on the other hand, doesn’t require a connection between the receiver and the sender, therefore, people call it “connectionless”. The UDP has many pros, such as:

* Smaller packets
* Less bandwidth
* Fast

(BasuMallick, 2022).

##### TCP

Let’s talk about how TCP works.

Scenario 1:

Let’s assume that I am on my PC, and I want to access git.fhict.nl.

I open google and I type:

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated

It will send me to the git page that I asked for. However, I want to discuss what happens behind the scenes that led to showing the page.

After pressing Enter, a PDU information that consists of 7 layers will be sent to the destination server. What is inside the 7 layers?

**Layer 7:**

Layer 7 will tell the server that I sent HTTPs request, this helps the server to route me to the web page.

The PDU will look like this after this layer:

Graphical user interface, application

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This means that application layer completed its data, and the other layers are waiting.

**Layer 4:**

Transport layer is where the port information is stored. As we are requesting a web page, layer 4 will carry TCP as header + the port that we are connecting to:

Graphical user interface, text

Description automatically generated

Now this is called a segment.

**Layer 3:**

The network layer carries the information about the source IP address and the destination IP address.

Text

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Now this packet has all the previous information PLUS the IP addresses.

**Layer 2:**

Layer 2 will take all the information before and add the MAC addresses. After adding the Layer 2 header and trailer, it will be called “Frame”.

Text

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Now all these information are stored in one “envelope” this letter is ready to be sent using the Ethernet cable which we cover in the next layer.

Layer 1:

Physical layer is the connection cable that will take all the previous information and send them to the internet.

After the message is received by the destination, then it will **decapsulate** the letter to reveal the layers information.

The web server will **decapsulate** the layers just to find out that they carry information for the server itself. The server will find its MAC address in layer 2, its IP address in layer 3, port TCP in layer 4, and HTTPs in layer 7, then it will send back the web page. (NetworkChuck, 2020a)

# References

* BasuMallick, C. (2022, April 18). *TCP vs. UDP: Understanding 10 Key Differences*. <https://www.spiceworks.com/tech/networking/articles/tcp-vs-udp/>
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* NetworkChuck. (2020a, August 6). *REAL LIFE example!! (TCP/IP and OSI layers) // FREE CCNA // EP 4*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kfO61Mensg