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Recording Your Actions

Recording your actions

When you are going to make changes in a machine, it's very important to have a clear plan of what you are going to do and to store the actions that you actually took.

A common practice for system administrators that work with bug queues or ticketing systems is to include the commands executed and the output obtained in the corresponding bug or ticket. This is recommended if the commands that need to be executed are few and straightforward.

However, there are situations where you don't yet know which commands exactly you'll need to execute because there's some investigation that needs to happen. In cases like that, it can be helpful to use a command like script for Linux or Start-Transcript for Windows.

script

In the case of script, you can call it like this:

```
script session.log
```

This will write the contents of your session to the session.log file. When you want to stop recording, you can write **exit** or press Ctrl-D. The generated file will be in ANSI format which includes the colors that were displayed on screen. In order to read them, you can use commands like ansi2txt or ansi2html to convert it to plain text or HTML respectively.

Start-Transcript

In the case of Start-Transcript, you can call it like this:

```
Start-Transcript -Path C:\Transcript.txt
```

This will write the contents of the session to C:\Transcript.txt. When you want to stop recording you need to call **Stop-Transcript**. The file created is a plain text file where the commands executed and their outputs are stored.

Recording Graphical Sessions

Performing system administration actions through a Graphical user interface is less common (as it's harder to automate and to perform remotely), but it's still something that may happen sometimes.

If you are going to be performing an action that needs to be done graphically and you can document what you are doing, you can use a specialized tool like recordMyDesktop for Linux, or general video tools like OBS or VLC.

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