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	2023-2024

## **Activity 5: Consolidating Playbook plays**

# 1. Objectives:

- 1.1 Use when command in playbook for different OS distributions
- 1.2 Apply refactoring techniques in cleaning up the playbook codes

#### 2. Discussion:

We are going to look at a way that we can differentiate a playbook by a host in terms of which distribution the host is running. It's very common in most Linux shops to run multiple distributions, for example, Ubuntu shop or Debian shop and you need a different distribution for a one off-case or perhaps you want to run plays only on certain distributions.

It is a best practice in ansible when you are working in a collaborative environment to use the command git pull. git pull is a Git command used to update the local version of a repository from a remote. By default, git pull does two things. Updates the current local working branch (currently checked out branch) and updates the remote-tracking branches for all other branches. git pull essentially pulls down any changes that may have happened since the last time you worked on the repository.

# Requirement:

In this activity, you will need to create a CentOS VM. Likewise, you need to activate the second adapter to a host-only adapter after the installations. Take note of the IP address of the CentOS VM. Make sure to use the command *ssh-copy-id* to copy the public key to CentOS. Verify if you can successfully SSH to CentOS VM.

## Task 1: Use when command for different distributions

Preparation: Creation of new repository for this activity.

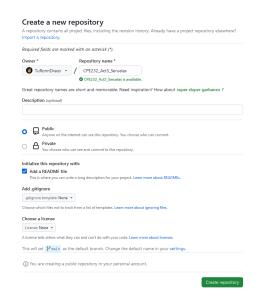
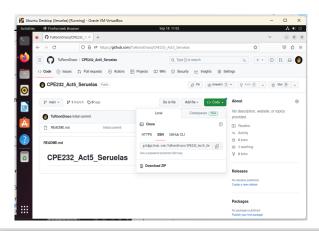


Figure 0.1 - Creation of new repository.



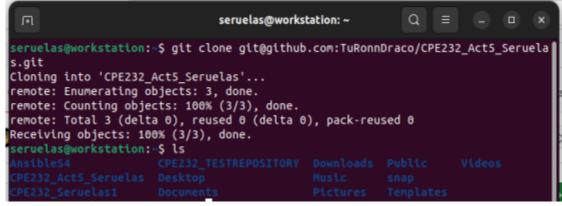


Figure 0.2-0.3 - Connection of new repository to manage/control node.

```
seruelas@workstation: ~/CPE232_Act5_Seruelas Q = - □ ×

seruelas@workstation: ~$ cd CPE232_Act5_Seruelas
seruelas@workstation: ~/CPE232_Act5_Seruelas$ git status

On branch main
Your branch is up to date with 'origin/main'.

Inothing to commit, working tree clean
```

Figure 0.4 - Successful creation of a new repository.

1. In the local machine, make sure you are in the local repository directory (*CPE232\_yourname*). Issue the command git pull. When prompted, enter the correct passphrase or password. Describe what happened when you issue this command. Did something happen? Why?

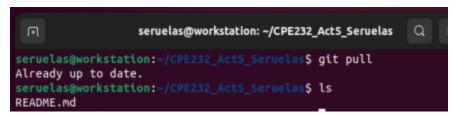


Figure 1.1 - Execution of the git pull command. When the command is executed, it was prompted that the local repository was already up to date. The git pull command's purpose is to fetch and download all the files that are present in the repository, and to update the files in the local repository located at the control or manage node.

2. Edit the inventory file and add the IP address of the Centos VM. Issue the command we used to execute the playbook (the one we used in the last activity): ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install\_apache.yml. After executing this command, you may notice that it did not become successful in the Centos VM. You can see that the Centos VM has failed=1. Only the two remote servers have been changed. The reason is that Centos VM does not support "apt" as the package manager. The default package manager for Centos is "yum."

Figure 1.2 - Execution of playbook for installation of apache2, with the failure of the CentOS VM installation or run.

3. Edit the *install\_apache.yml* file and insert the lines shown below.

```
seruelas@workstation: ~/CPE232_Act5_Seruelas
GNU nano 6.2
                                             install_apache.yml
hosts: all
become: true
   name: update repository index
    update_cache: yes
   when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

    name: install apache2 package

   apt:
   name: apache2
   when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

    name: add PHP support for apache

   apt:
    name: libapache2-mod-php
   when: ansible distribution == "Ubuntu"
```

Figure 1.3.1 - Editing the install\_apache.yml file and inserting the new lines provided. The new lines provided focused on adding a specific ansible distribution, specified for Ubuntu.

Run ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install\_apache.yml and describe the result.

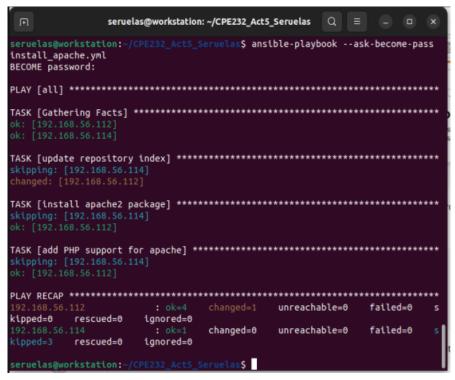


Figure 1.3.2 - Executing the modified install\_apache.yml playbook. Once executed, it skipped the CentOS server and has only executed its list of commands to the Ubuntu based ansible systems.

If you have a mix of Debian and Ubuntu servers, you can change the configuration of your playbook like this.

name: update repository index
 apt:
 update cache: yes

when: ansible\_distribution in ["Debian", "Ubuntu]

*Note*: This will work also if you try. Notice the changes are highlighted.

4. Edit the *install\_apache.yml* file and insert the lines shown below.

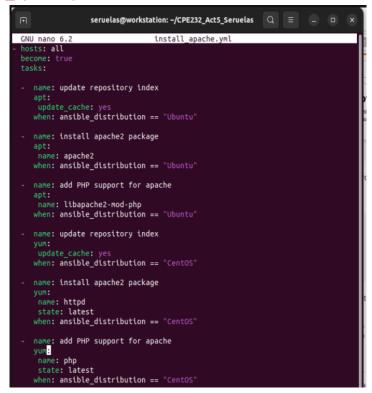


Figure 1.4.1 - Modification of the install\_apache.yml playbook. Modification included the ansible distribution for CentOs.

Make sure to save and exit.

Run ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install\_apache.yml and describe the result.

Figure 1.4.2 - Execution of the modified playbook. It was able to install the apache2 and php to both ansible distributions, as we were able to specify where to install.

 To verify the installations, go to CentOS VM and type its IP address on the browser. Was it successful? The answer is no. It's because the httpd service or the Apache HTTP server in the CentOS is not yet active. Thus, you need to activate it first.

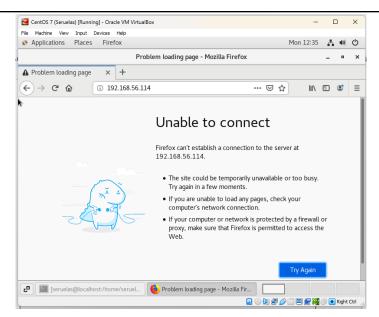


Figure 1.5.1 - Verifying the installation of apache and php in CentOS. It was unsuccessful as CentOS settings are not configured yet.

5.1 To activate, go to the CentOS VM terminal and enter the following: systemctl status httpd

The result of this command tells you that the service is inactive.

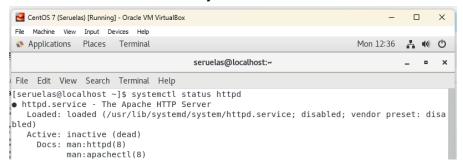


Figure 1.5.2 - Checking of the system status of httpd.

5.2 Issue the following command to start the service:

sudo systemctl start httpd

(When prompted, enter the sudo password)

sudo firewall-cmd --add-port=80/tcp

(The result should be a success)

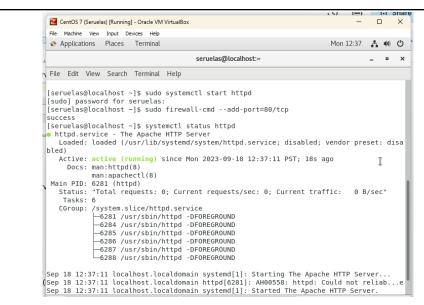


Figure 1.5.3 - Execution of the following commands allowed the system httpd to be enabled and to run at the background of the server.

5.3 To verify the service is already running, go to CentOS VM and type its IP address on the browser. Was it successful? (Screenshot the browser)

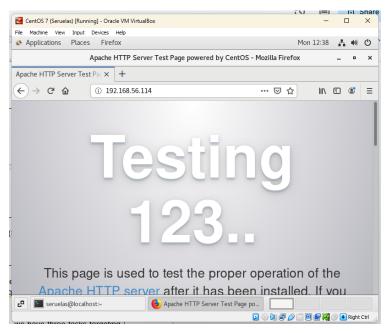


Figure 1.5.4 - Verification of the service through browser search. We can see that the httpd service is running as we have successfully accessed the httpd through the browser.

# Task 2: Refactoring playbook

This time, we want to make sure that our playbook is efficient and that the codes are easier to read. This will also makes run ansible more quickly if it has to execute fewer tasks to do the same thing.

1. Edit the playbook *install\_apache.yml*. Currently, we have three tasks targeting our Ubuntu machines and 3 tasks targeting our CentOS machine. Right now, we try to consolidate some tasks that are typically the same. For example, we can consolidate two plays that install packages. We can do that by creating a list of installation packages as shown below:

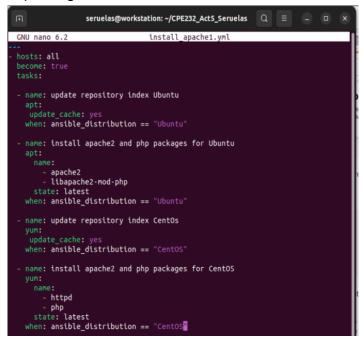


Figure 2.1.1 - Modifying the playbook, in order for it to be able to execute its three tasks over two ansible distributions, the Ubuntu and the CentOS.

Make sure to save the file and exit.

Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install\_apache.yml* and describe the result.

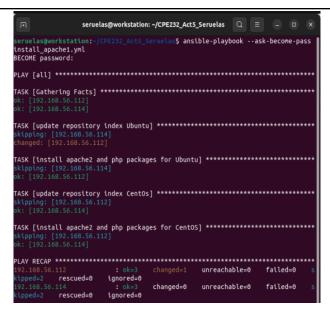


Figure 2.1.2 - Execution of the modified playbook. In this execution, we can see that it successfully installed the apache and the php over the two ansible distributions after the consolidation of the playbook.

2. Edit the playbook install\_apache.yml again. In task 2.1, we consolidated the plays into one play. This time we can actually consolidated everything in just 2 plays. This can be done by removing the update repository play and putting the command update\_cache: yes below the command state: latest. See below for reference:

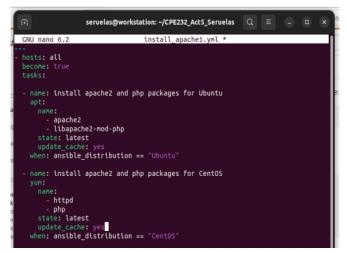


Figure 2.2.1 - Modification of the playbook where every task has been consolidated into one, allowing to not only install apache and php, but also to update the local repository's cache.

Make sure to save the file and exit.

Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install\_apache.yml* and describe the result.

Figure 2.2.2 - Executing the modified playbook. By executing the modified playbook, it successfully executed its tasks from installation of apache and php, and also updating the repository cache, even after the consolidation or simplification of the playbook.

3. Finally, we can consolidate these 2 plays in just 1 play. This can be done by declaring variables that will represent the packages that we want to install. Basically, the apache\_package and php\_package are variables. The names are arbitrary, which means we can choose different names. We also take out the line when: ansible\_distribution. Edit the playbook install\_apache.yml again and make sure to follow the below image. Make sure to save the file and exit.

```
GNU nano 6.2 install_apache1.yml

- hosts: all
become: true
tasks:

- name: install apache and php
apt:
name:
- "{{ apache_package }}"
- "{{ php_package }}"
state: latest
update_cache: yes
```

Figure 2.3.1 - Modification of the playbook, by consolidating the playbook's tasks into its most simplified form, where it is efficient, and also minimal for the playbook's memory.

Run ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install\_apache.yml and describe the result.

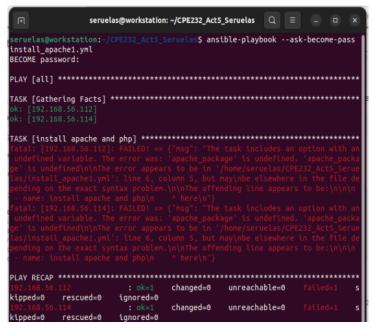


Figure 2.3.1 - Execution of the modified playbook. The result of the execution was a failure, as there was a syntax problem or an undefined variable.

4. Unfortunately, task 2.3 was not successful. It's because we need to change something in the inventory file so that the variables we declared will be in place. Edit the *inventory* file and follow the below configuration:



Figure 2.4.1 - Modification of the inventory file, where we have corrected the proper variables for the hosts, allowing them to execute the new playbook.

Make sure to save the *inventory* file and exit.

**Finally**, we still have one more thing to change in our *install\_apache.yml* file. In task 2.3, you may notice that the package is assign as apt, which will not run in CentOS. Replace the *apt* with *package*. Package is a module in ansible that is generic, which is going to use whatever package manager the underlying host or the target server uses. For Ubuntu it will automatically use *apt*, and for CentOS it will automatically use *dnf*. Make sure to save the file and exit. For more details about the ansible package, you may refer to this documentation: <a href="mailto:ansible.builtin.package">ansible.builtin.package</a> — Generic OS package manager — Ansible Documentation

Figure 2.4.2 - Modification of the playbook, where we are to replace the syntax *apt* into *package*, allowing any of the ansible distributions to execute and be able to install the packages.

Run ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install\_apache.yml and describe the result.

Figure 2.4.3 - Execution of the modified playbook. With the new modification, we are able to successfully execute the playbook, allowing us to not only consolidate the contents and the tasks of the playbook, but also making it executable for other ansible distributions.

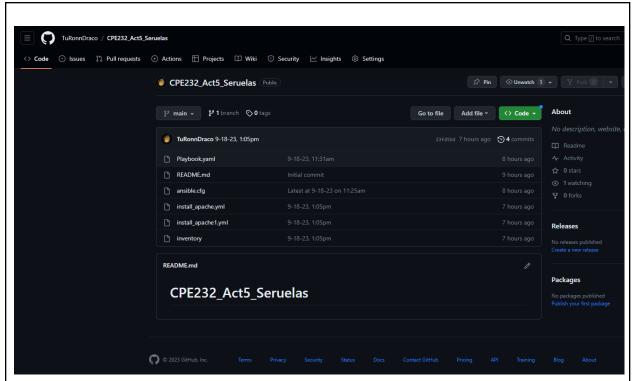


Figure 2.5 - Verification of the changes and the tasks done in the repository, located at github.

https://github.com/TuRonnDraco/CPE232\_Act5\_Seruelas

#### Reflections:

Answer the following:

- 1. Why do you think refactoring of playbook codes is important?
  - Refactoring of playbook codes or content is important as it allows to save more memory or space inside of the playbook. It also allows the playbook to be executed more efficiently without using too much memory. Consolidation or refactoring the playbook codes also allows us to make a more simpler playbook that is more understandable and readable to human eyes.
- 2. When do we use the "when" command in a playbook?
  - We can use the command "when" in a playbook when we want to write a code that needs a conditional statement, in which it will only execute the task at hand when it meets the condition set for the task. It can also be used as to organize a set of conditions in a playbook, in which it can only be executed when the condition of the task is met.

### Conclusion:

In conclusion, The students have educated and learned about consolidation and the refactoring of the playbooks and what benefits it can give to a system administrator. In this activity, the students were able to learn on how one can consolidate or refactor a playbook by simplification of codes, and also how the students can set conditional statements that the playbook can meet. By finishing the activity, not only that the students have learned or educated themselves on the benefits of consolidating or refactoring a playbook, in which it creates a more efficient and memory saving play, but also they were able to apply what they have learned by creating a consolidated playbook, that was to install apache and php, and to also update the local repository cache, that was to install these packages into a certain ansible distribution. Finally, The students are able to say that they are able to learn and to apply the consolidation and the conditional statements in creating their own playbooks.

"I affirm that I have not received or given any unauthorized help and that all work is my own."