Situation

I’m currently working at LHS Productions Inc., d/b/a VideoBank. The company’s main line of business is providing software systems to work with large amounts of mission-ready data to multiple different clients and governmental organizations. The software systems are mainly for saving, accessing, sharing, and analyzing of the huge amount of data with various data formats with our known formats (like video, image, word, and others) and the custom format (like taskit). The company has a main software department and management department for finance and human resources. As far as I know about my software department, there are 2 product engineers who mainly interact with customers, one project manager or company technological consultant who is just working for part time and 5 software engineers. Most of the tasks are individual tasks and I only must communicate with one product engineer, one project manager and one senior software engineer. My supervisor is that senior software engineer. Her job title is the same with me as a Software Developer for now, but she is in the appraisal for Tech Lead position. My job title is also a Software Developer. I have been working for 3 months and half as I joined the company on June 1st.

Task

I was assigned to implement a desktop application (which is called installer tool) once I’m finished onboarding on my first week of joining the company. My supervisor explained how the systems are working together with system diagrams because there are many frontend applications, backend WCF services, APIs, and windows services to make the whole main system fully worked. Then, one other software engineer made a demo to show me the deployment of the whole main systems from scratch with many steps. It took over one hour to fully deploy on windows server. The desktop application I was assigned is to run all those manual steps from one installer tool. They provided me a reference project which was developed by the previous developer, but it didn’t work well. There is no deadline for that project because they assigned me other tasks too while I am in that installer tool.

Actions

Once they assigned me to work for that installer tool, I realized that I must have overall knowledge of all individual applications or services. So, I decided to learn what are the purpose of them and how they will work. I asked my supervisor and she redirected me to other who are mainly responsible for those individual applications or services. I communicated with them and collected information of each. And I did practical deployments from scratch by my own like the one they made demo after my on-boarding. The reason why I do that practice is because of our Software Engineering’s Software Development Life Cycle concept. I believe that I must know what we want and how we will design to meet the requirement before thinking how we will implement or do coding.

After I got overall knowledge of all systems, I tried to frame the installer tool. As it is not only related with programming language, but also need to configure application pool, website, SSL certificate, DNS and more, so I needed to learn more about IIS server in detail and windows server. Mostly I researched about them from google and made notes for them. I also learned the old incomplete project as a reference how it structured.

Then, I felt confident to start the code implementation for that installer tool. I implemented that tool by writing simple clean and compact code by following the design principles/patterns like DRY (Don’t repeat yourself), SRP (Single Responsibility Principle) and more. I could release the very first version of that installer tool within first month.

There are multiple clients and multiple use cases. But my first release is fully worked only for some clients because the first demo they presented was only for those some clients. They started to use my first release installer tool for those clients first. Then they asked me to work for other clients with other use cases. So, I had to learn new cases and added or modified my installer tool again and again. I had to release once I had done one new case and made checkpoint meeting or demo with my supervisor and one product manager. Then I continued by following their feedbacks.

Results

As a result, I could release the final installer tool with 10th versions on the middle of my third month from my join date. I think it would be done in one and half month to finish that tool because I was assigned to other urgent tasks based on the availability of the other developers and tasks’ priorities. With the latest release version, the installer tool can deploy for every current client with full functionalities. After that final one is released, I had a demo presentation to company’s owner together with the product managers, project manager and other senior developers. While it took over one hour if we deployed everything manually, that installer tool can be done in 7 mins. So, they were really surprised and appreciated to my own best work because it can save time a lot and more accurate in updating config files with related URLs and custom directory paths.

Secondly, as I must communicate with every developer to get the overall knowledge, I could have change to show my communication skills, presentation skills, even English skills and we became familiar in the short time, making workplace happier and enjoyable.

For the last one, I became the one who knows every system how they worked and how we must configure to make it work. So, whatever they need in any system, I was being able to be ready to start the task. My supervisor told me that that would be a great effect to my future’s promotion or benefits. Because of the challenging task to build an installer tool, I got a lot of confidence on my own work done and also for my future tasks.