IT Research and Writing – Company Research Paper

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Would you believe that coding isn’t what you spend most of your time doing in an IT position? An odd question considering that our class will be entering the IT field soon, but it’s true. Or at least, it’s true for the company BlueWolf (recently acquired by IBM), coding isn't everything. BlueWolf, as stated above, is a consulting company, that works on SalesForce, a “…Customer Relationship Management (CRM) platform.” (What is Salesforce?). They have over 16 years of experience, with a customer satisfaction rating of 9/10, 1,200 Salesforce certifications, and 37 global offices. BlueWolf is the pioneer of cloud consulting, and “…ensures that employee and customer experience align to industry-specific needs across Sales, Marketing, Service, and IT. Bluewolf’s expertise and services support your entire customer lifecycle, from implementation through ongoing innovation.” (bluewolf.com). They also “hire thinkers and doers with a passion for solving problems. Our team and clients thrive in the now — where past experience merges with future possibility, and opportunity and action align to exceed expectations.”

# Field of Interest

The people who were requested for interviews were Russell Small, a Developer II, and L M, a Software Quality Engineer Specialist. They provided information on what a day to day is like in their respective companies, what benefits there were, and how an aspiring college student or graduate could enter into an IT focused company.

## Company Researched

The Company researched for this paper is BlueWolf, an IBM consulting company. Although both interviewees didn’t work for BlueWolf, they still provided relevant information for the IT industry in general. BlueWolf’s mission statement is: “As a company, we admire independence and independent thinking. We thrive on the discomfort of a challenge and see opportunity in ambiguity. We’re bound to each other by a passion for finding answers. We love personalities that don’t fit molds”.

Surprisingly, BlueWolf doesn’t have very much coding done in a Developer II position. “75 percent of the job is communication, the other 25 percent is understanding design structures and patterns, and how they can be used in solutions” (Russell Small). In response to “What’s something that would surprise people about your day-to-day”, Mr. Small responded “Don’t write much code. Can spend an entire week and not write anything” (Russel Small). While a Developer II does do coding, it’s “…solutions that are scalable and efficient.” (Russell Small).

BlueWolf knows Salesforce “Each year, we produce The *State of Salesforce*, an award-winning report that distills usage data from 1,800+ Salesforce customers and uncovers key trends and insights on how the best companies use Salesforce.” (bluewolf.com).

BlueWolf also has many industry awards, such as “Global Leader IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Salesforce Implementation Services 2017 Vendor Assessment Global leader Gartner 2016 Magic Quadrant for CRM & Customer Experience Implementation Services

2015 IDC MarketScape A worldwide leader in the Salesforce Implementation Ecosystem

HfS 2015 Salesforce Services Blueprint Report Winner's Circle

T-Mobile Salesforce Partner Innovation Award

The Cloud Awards Best Cloud Consultancy

CRN Solution Provider 500

Fast Company’s 2016 Innovation by Design Awards

IBM ranked a leader in the IDC’s MarketScape 2017 Vendor Assessment”

BlueWolf has worked for such companies as: Stanley Black & Decker, “…a Fortune 500 leader known for supplying high-quality household and industrial tools.” “Stanley’s Industrial & Automotive Repair (IAR) division provides professional and industrial tools for engineering and infrastructure needs.” They had a problem though “While values, culture, and brand sentiment were widely shared across the organization, business systems were not. Inside Stanley’s IAR division, business processes were disconnected, automation was minimal, and the company lacked a way to track customer interactions across different business units. They needed to standardize their systems onto a single platform and create internal collaboration between distinct groups; otherwise, duplicate information would drag down employee productivity and customer satisfaction would suffer. They had a vision of connecting their tools, businesses, and suppliers, but needed a partner to help them achieve success.” What BlueWolf did was “partnered with Stanley’s IAR division to implement Salesforce Service Cloud in their MAC Tools call center. This call center supports MAC Tools franchisee distributors who maintain their own inventory, and sell tools to customers at garages and auto shops. Paying careful attention to change management, we devised a plan that aligned Stanley’s leadership goals with distributor needs, while maintaining a tight focus on mitigating the risks of a new technology deployment. The new solution immediately boosted service capabilities by supplying teams with a surplus of customer data. They went from logging 20 percent of their customer service calls to logging 100 percent, and used data patterns to better understand and respond to common customer service issues.”

A few reasons to consider BlueWolf over a video game company is “Making video games is hard, and the video game industry sucks.” (Russell Small). In the video game industry, you don’t make a lot of money, so you might go hungry (Russel Small). But with consulting, you get “Fat paychecks” (Russell Small), flexible hours, with some availability expectations, only having to go into the office 4 times a week, and “Consulting is not the horror story you hear from retail.” (Russel Small). In general, Mr. Small has only had good experiences with customers. The worst he’s had to deal with were passive-aggressive customers who pushed hard and had high expectations. (Russell Small).

Although these are great benefits, a person in the IT industry shouldn’t become too stagnant “Inner mobility is hard” (Russell Small). For example, let’s say you make 100k a year. The company you’re currently working for gives you a raise of 8-10k. That sounds pretty good right? Well, if an IT industry person looks at another company for the same position, they might offer 130k starting salary (L M).

If you wanted to still apply and become a Developer (I, II, or III) at BlueWolf, this is what Mr. Small recommended. Take it seriously, recognize the overhead. The job is more than just writing code, and one needs to realize how important communication is in this type of job (Russell Small). One also needs to “Build a portfolio” Build stupid web based application that does what you want it to do, as well as following best practices (Russell Small).

### Opinion

Given the information by Mr. Small, and general information about the IT industry from L M, I think it is highly important now to practice my communication skills. This, as well as just previously mentioned, build a portfolio of things that shows I can make things, but not only just make them, but make them well. Compatibility is also something that is a requirement for working at BlueWolf. While it may not be listed, those employees who share similar interests and get along with each other are much more likely, and almost required, to get a job there (Russell Small).

#### Conclusion

Given BlueWolf’s benefits, the way they structure their work hours, being able to bounce in and out of the office as well as not having to be there 5 days a week (only 4). Bluewolf’s “fat paychecks” (Russell Small), and how well IT people tend to fit together, mostly people who play and enjoy video games (L M), BlueWolf is a company many college graduates or students should consider for applying to.

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