

# Informational Interview Form

## General Information

Your Name: Ali Kalakish

Date: April 23, 2025

Employee's Name: Sarah Mansour

Position: Cybersecurity Analyst

Company: SecureTech Solutions

### What do you do? What are your job duties/functions/responsibilities?

I monitor and protect the company's digital infrastructure from cyber threats, perform vulnerability assessments, investigate security breaches, and implement security protocols.

### Why did this type of work interest you, and how did you get started with your career?

I've always had an interest in technology and security. I started with an internship during college, then earned certifications like CEH and CompTIA Security+ to build my skills.

### What type of education and training prepared you for this career field?

A Bachelor's degree in Computer Science and several cybersecurity certifications helped me a lot. Hands-on training and online labs were key.

### How did you get your job? What jobs and experiences led you to your present position?

I started as an IT support intern, then moved into a junior network security role before landing this job through LinkedIn networking and a recommendation from a former colleague.

### Does your work relate to any experiences or studies you had in college?

Yes, especially in networking, operating systems, and my final-year project on intrusion detection systems.

### What challenges did you have to overcome to get to your position?

Getting certified while working full-time was tough. Also, learning to keep up with rapidly changing threats in cybersecurity required continuous learning.

## Informational Interview Form

**What do you look for in a quality employee?**

Curiosity, attention to detail, strong analytical skills, and the ability to communicate technical issues clearly.

**What personal qualities do you believe contribute most to being successful in your job?**

Patience, persistence, and being calm under pressure. Also, a love for learning is essential.

**What skills or talents are essential to being effective in your job?**

Knowledge of firewalls, SIEM tools, scripting (like Python), and an understanding of network protocols.

**What are the types of entry-level positions that you/your company typically hire?**

We often hire for roles like Security Analyst I, IT Support Technician, and SOC Analyst.

**What are the typical entry-level job functions?**

Monitoring alerts, performing basic security assessments, writing reports, and assisting with incident responses.

**Do you think there are some entry-level tasks in your area of work that I would be able to do if I were to start working here today? Please list some.**

Yes: log analysis, password policy audits, basic phishing simulations, and network scanning with tools like Nmap.

**In your experience, what are the top three reasons why young people have difficulties being hired?**

Lack of hands-on experience, poor soft skills (like communication), and not customizing resumes for specific roles.

**In your experience, what are the top three reasons why young people have challenges keeping their jobs?**

Not adapting to team culture, missing deadlines, and not taking initiative.

**What advice do you have for young employees who want to advance in their career?**

Always be learning, seek mentorship, and say yes to new challenges outside your comfort zone.

## Informational Interview Form

**What sorts of changes are occurring in your occupation?**

There's more automation in threat detection, growing importance of cloud security, and increased use of AI in cybersecurity tools.

**With the information you have about my education, skills and experience, what other fields or jobs would you suggest I research further?**

You could also look into roles like Network Engineer, Systems Administrator, or even Penetration Tester if you enjoy offensive security.

**How much demand is there for people in this occupation? Can you estimate future job openings?**

Very high. Cybersecurity is one of the fastest-growing fields. Openings are projected to increase significantly over the next decade.

**What are the salary ranges for various levels in this field?**

Entry-level starts at around \$40,000-\$60,000/year. Mid-level can go up to \$90,000, and senior roles can exceed \$120,000.

**Do you know of other organizations/places of work that do similar kinds of work or use similar skills?**

**Do you know of other people I might be able to talk to who have similar jobs?**

Yes, you can look into companies like DarkMatter, Booz Allen Hamilton, or Cisco. I can introduce you to a colleague who works in threat intelligence.

**What's the best advice you'd give to someone interested in this field/seeking to qualify for this position?**

Get certified, build a lab at home, attend conferences or webinars, and never stop learning.

**I am told that Linux, Networking, and Programming are my strongest assets. Where would these skills be helpful in this organization?**

Those are very valuable here. We use Linux daily in our servers, networking knowledge is key to threat

## Informational Interview Form

detection, and Python is used for automating tasks and analyzing logs.

**Would you mind taking a look at my resume/CV?**

Sure, I'd be happy to give you feedback.