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Ann Liberman 2/26/2021
CISC 3140

Lab #3

Goal: To obtain the role of Software Engineer at Palantir

This role has the below requirements:

- You can write clean, effective code and learn new languages quickly
    - This is a skill that I feel I already possess, and continue to improve on a weekly basis. One of the ways I like to practice my coding skills is by challenging myself to solve new problems. Currently my two favorite platforms for doing this are LeetCode and Edabit.
- Proficiency in programming languages, such as Java, C++, Python, JavaScript, or similar languages.
    - Currently I would consider myself to be proficient in Java, and is the language I use most when coding. I am also currently learning Unity for my Game Design and Development Course, which requires me to learn C#. Additionally, I am spending some time on my own trying to learn JavaScript, mainly from youtube tutorials and reading *A Smarter Way to Learn JavaScript* by Mark Myers.
- Knowledge of Go (for back end), and Typescript (for front end).
    - Currently I have no experience with Go or Typescript. Just by performing some simple Google searches, I have found that Typescript is a kind of compiled language, which is used in NodeJS and wedUI (user interface) development. It appears to be fairly similar to JS, Java, C#, or Cpp, so as I know 2 of those languages fairly decently, I would assume it would not be too hard of a language for me to pick up. With that said, as I have a lot on my plate right now with school, I may have to wait until the summer time to get started learning it.
- Knowledge of open-source technologies like Cassandra, Spark, ElasticSearch, React, and Redux
    - This is probably the platforms I am least familiar with, but it is my understanding that open source technology means that the platform provides code freely, which can be used, modified, and distributed in order to make coding at a large scale more efficient, and in order to save time. Using these platforms would likely require someone to be able to pick up languages and concepts quickly, so I feel my current practices of coding and learning new languages will eventually get me more comfortable with open-source.
- Knowledge of industry-standard build tooling, including Gradle, Webpack, and Github
    - Github is a platform that I became most comfortable with only after starting this course. Prior to the start of CISC 3140, a career counselor told me that I should make a Github and make an effort to publish some of my projects there, however, when I first made my Github I was confused about how to use it and how best to showcase my work. At that point I basically closed Github forever and moved on to more pressing things. When I realized that we would need to use Github for this course I was hesitant at first, but ultimately am glad that I was pushed out of my comfort zone so that I could learn this new platform and become more comfortable with showcasing my work. I also noticed that most of the internships I have been applying to ask for a link to my Github, so I think it's best that I got comfortable with it sooner than later.
- Strong engineering background in fields such as Computer Science, Mathematics, Software Engineering, and Physics.
    - Currently I am a senior at Brooklyn college. I have only a handful of courses left before I graduate, and so far have been able to maintain a 3.8 major GPA. I think that as I continue to learn and approach graduation my skills will be even stronger, and I can showcase my strong GPA on my resume in order to stand out among my peers.

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- Familiarity with data structures, storage systems, cloud infrastructure, front-end frameworks, and other technical tools.
    - I took data structures last semester, and feel I have a fairly decent grasp of the concepts and ideas related to hash tables, linked lists, binary trees, stack, and queues. However, as for cloud infrastructure, and front-end framework, I am less familiar. You Don't Know JS Yet by Kyle Simpson is on my shortlist of readings this summer, but I would like to add something else that could help with cloud / front end knowledge.
- Ability to collaborate and empathize with a variety of individuals.
    - This is a skill I feel I have, and tend to work well with others in both technical and non-technical environments. Usually with group work I do tend to gravitate more towards a leadership role within the group. However, I would like to try to work on taking more of a back seat at times, as it can sometimes come off as “bossy-ness” at times. Things like this do require balance, and it's something I am aware of about myself and am working on.
- You can iterate with users and non-technical stakeholders and understand how your technical decisions impact them.
    - Prior to studying computer science, I worked for several years as a project manager for a real estate events company. The role required me to learn a lot of deeply technical knowledge about the real estate industry, and to communicate this high-level knowledge to both laypersons and extremely senior / c-suite level people in the industry. Although this past job of mine may not sound like it has much relation to the computer and data science industry, in reality, it taught me a lot about working with, and talking to many different types of people while garnering their respect. I feel this is an area I have many strengths in and will serve me in all future roles.

To summarize, I feel that the technical knowledge I have currently is fair, but can always be stronger. At the same time, the computer and data science industry is so vast, and there is so much to learn, that I feel it is important to laser focus on a specific area with the goal of specializing, rather than attempting to learn everything there is (as this is impossible). The role of Software Engineer at Palantir is kind of broad / a little bit vague, but I feel if I was able to achieve this role and work in it for several years, that I would be able to carve out a more specialized path for myself. It does feel overwhelming sometimes to think about how far I have yet to go, but breaking it down like this makes the steps feel more attainable.