**Informational Interview Assignment for CMPE 294, Spring 2017**

**Interviewee Details**

Name: Suraj Doddi

Designation: Software Development Engineer

Company: Amazon

Interview Date: 23-March-2017

Interview Type: Telephonic interview

**Interviewer Details**

Name: Ch Prabhu Tej Pulagam

Class Time: Thu 12pm – 2.45pm

Class: Section 5

Course number: CMPE 294

Student Id: 011419070

Term: Spring 2017

**Introduction:**

I have a great passion for software development and one of my dream companies to work for is Amazon. It is because Amazon is a huge company and it has entered into almost every field that affects our lives. I am always curious about the fast paced environment and the scale of operations that takes place at Amazon. I am particularly interested to work in Business Intelligence Roles after my graduation. I have networked on LinkedIn and contacted Suraj, SDE at Amazon working in a DW/BI Team.

The interview session details are listed below:

**Q) How long have you worked at this company and where else have you worked previously?**

ANS) I have been working at Amazon since 3 years and this is my first company to work for. I have completed my masters from University of Texas, Arlington and received an offer from Amazon.

**Q) What kind of writing and how much writing are required on the job?**

ANS) As an SDE Engineer, we mainly focus on rapid code development and deployment. However, when you move into senior levels, you need to prepare Design Documents, Process Flow Documents.

**Q) How important are oral communication skills as compared to written?**

ANS) I can’t stress the importance of communication skills more. We have daily scrum meetings where we interact with the team about the issues caused and the pending tasks for that particular sprint. Communicating your ideas to the team in an effective way makes sure that you are building the right product and mitigates common errors. It also gives you the confidence to move forward into your workspace.

**Q) How much time is spent working in teams and what skills are needed to work in a team?**

ANS) As a whole, you always work in teams. The whole team works on a module and there are sub-modules which are assigned to each of us. You are completely responsible for the task assigned to you but you also need to be a part of the integration of all the modules. You need to communicate well among your teammates and share the updates constantly .

**Q) How does the company value independent thinking and leadership skills?**

ANS) Companies always value independent thinking but the scale varies according to company and team. In my present team, there is a lot of room for new ideas and my managers always encourage us to come up with some new ideas. Also, there are various kinds of recognition that can be received at organization level too if you have contributed a new idea to the organization.

**Q) What are the skills that are most important to excel in DW/BI roles?**

ANS) I would say that you really need to be strong in your database fundamentals (Sql and No Sql). You would also need bash shell scripting skills to write automated scripts.

**Q) What are the prospects in Business Intelligence Domain?**

ANS) It is a very interesting field. Lot of innovation has already been done in this space and slowly we are adapting to the cloud technologies. I would say that the prospects are bright in this space but you need to hone your skills in the Cloud Technologies areas to build a strong career.

**Q) What is the work culture like at Amazon?**

ANS) I can say that the work culture is really good here. The kind of office spaces built and the outlook of the company towards employees is very good . This will put yourself in a place where you can enjoy your work without any pressure. You can find people from literally all over the world and it would be a great learning experience for you.

**Q) What are the biggest challenges you faced working there?**

ANS) The biggest challenges generally faced by most of the software engineers is when the project is about to go live. The period before the go live is really hectic. We tend to spend extra time in solving the build issues and we need to be very sure that there won’t be any problems when it goes into production. The challenge will be when different teams need to get together and work on getting the product into production without any conflicts.

**Q) Can I change my work and join a different team which I think I can do better?**

ANS) Yes, there is a policy to switch teams without much hassle. I too have moved to a different team after working for 2 years. It will give you an opportunity to work in different technologies and provides exposure to many other aspects of software engineering.

**Q) What are the most important skills that I can learn when I’m a student at SJSU to excel in software engineering field?**

ANS) I would suggest you to take courses which align to your interest under good professors and do challenging projects which you can showcase on your resume. I would also want you to learn about the software engineering principles so that you do not feel any difficulty starting from Day 1 at work. The last thing I want to tell you is that you need to master the art of time management. Being a master student, I know it will be tough to manage all the tasks at the same time. So, you need to manage your time wisely and that would also help you when you join the software industry.

**Conclusion:**

I would like to thank Suraj for his time to patiently answer my questions in a detailed manner. I have a clear idea now about the skills which I need to acquire in my area of interest. I have also learnt about the other aspects of software industry like the work culture, future prospects of the field I’m interested in. I will take the suggestions given by Suraj and work my way towards my goals .