#3 Alex Reyes – AWS Software Engineer

> I want to hear your story on how you got started in pursuing the Software field? (Did you start as a Bootcamp Grad)

Alex came from the Music field in Audio Production but more and more of his job became automated. It got to a point that all he would do was to press a button and every knob, button, slider on the soundboard would set itself to the last saved settings instantly. So, since he realized his job was being taken over by automating software, he decided to switch fields to learn Software.

> How was the transition from (Bootcamp, Degree, Self taught) to your first job in the Software field?

Alex was already a ComSci student in the Philippines working at FFUF, he first checked on a Facebook Page called Startup PH and reached out to the Admin. He knew some Python, JavaScript and once he reached out to the Admin who posted the job post.They replied and gave him an interview that led to a job.

He said the hardest part initially was adjusting and learning the development process, team collaboration with the Git workflow and learning Agile.

> How long did the process take to land your first job in the US? How many Job applications?

Applied before graduating college to a Startup through Angelist for 6 weeks. He sent 12-24 job applications and made sure to research about the companies before reaching out, answering how much he was interested in the company, and what he liked about the company. He also stated how he can contribute, with his previous experience from FFUF where he learned the development process, coding standards, teamwork. He also contributed to open source in Selenium and found typo in the Doc while he was reading it, he then created a separate branch and asked for a pull request which was approved. 

> What are some benefits that you really enjoy being in the Software field?

Alex said he enjoys learning and building Software projects even though if he wasn’t paid. He enjoys it not only for work but as a hobby. He enjoys the culture of web developers and listening to code related Podcast. He said he didn’t really mind the remote opportunities and that sometimes he prefers being in the office because it is easier to collaborate.

> As a Software Engineer how much of the breakdown would you say would be Front End Development or Backend Development?

Depends on the company and their tasks, but if they know you specialize in an area you may be the goto guy/girl people go to when learning about a task relating to what you specialize in. There’s no real breakdown, whatever the company needs gets assigned even if you aren’t that familiar with the tech yet.

> Did you already know the technologies you now work with when you first joined the job? If not, how did you go about learning those new skills for the role you are in now?

He had to do a task recently on Terraform, he had no idea how to complete the task because he never used Terraform before his approach was to Google specifically what he needed instead of learning the whole stack then go to a person who knows more about Terraform when he was stuck. Sometimes he would check the Official Docs as well.

> When choosing a company between other companies that may want you as well, what are the strongest factors that help you confirm that choice?

Tech Stack, their Development Process, how their Team presents themselves, Interview Process, how their team members respond when being asked how they enjoy working there. How the boss is, he researches the company beforehand for information. Checks Glassdoor reviews.

> Since the tech industry is constantly changing, how do you learn new skills? Does your work allow you to study new skills or would you have to learn it on your own?

Depending on the company, sometimes he said he learned some skills outside company time, but there are training programs like his company’s AWS classes to help Software Engineers learn more about DevOps. He said that the companies he works for doesn’t usually allow you to do a course on the topic on their time, and says that with tasks that are new to you with a tech that’s not familiar you need to be good with forming your questions on Google.

> What would you say helped you prepare for interviews the most?

He didn’t practice for the Code/ Technical part much even though he may do some problems here and there. Mainly he focuses on the Conversational Part, watching Youtube on how Developers conduct themselves in interviews and mimicking those parts. He focuses mainly on presenting himself and how he can market his skills according to the company’s needs.