University of Brighton

Computer Science (Games)

Placement Year - CI282

Reflective Report

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University of Brighton

Introduction

1.1 H2

1.1.1 H3

H4

Disaster Data Recovery Training

2.1 H2

2.1.1 H3

H4

What? (description) Each year the infrastructure team take part in data recovery training at the IBM server site in Greenford, this is for multiple reasons; it ensures that data being stored off site via Magnetic tape is intact and all accounted for, to account for any variation in the recovery process since the last recovery session and to ensure everyone knows how to restore key systems as quickly as possible to reduce downtime a server failure may cause.

What happened? Who was involved? During the two days I shadowed several members of the team to observe each role and see how each persons dedicated knowledge is essential to the recovery process. There were many steps involved with most being dependent on several other aspects. The initial step involved was simply a matter of loading the tapes to begin the data copy a process that took a while but allowed time for other to begin spinning up servers and the virtual machines that run upon them. As with most things in IT this did not go smoothly with several unforeseen issues occurring, first and foremost was with the contract with IBM where the external broadband connection within the contract had lapsed resulting in no external internet access which was required to connect to Crawley site.
There were also issues with configuring the virtual machines as they failed to detect the hardware support for virtulaisation and required some research and applying a work around found by the server architect. There were also

several issues with restoring some data to the server once it had been started, however this was not critical data and was not seen as immediate issue. At the end of the first day after starting at around 9am and calling it a day at just past 6pm all critical systems were back up and running with some extra systems started and most data restored at which point it was decided it was time to head off and pick up where we left off the following day. Under a real situation this would not have been the situation however and the team would have worked through the night to fully restore the system. In the evening we went for a meal as a team and had time to talk and relax before the next day, it was especially nice for me to be able to talk to members of the team who I often would have not get a chance such as with someone who works from home usually.

So what? (interpretation)   Failures do happen, a key point I feel I could take away from this trip; the key thing to remember is working on them logically and resolving each issue one at time as any task can be broken down into smaller issues and ultimately everything was completed with just one day required to restore the critical components along with several others for the entire European and emerging markets network.

IBM were able to fulfill mostly any need required and were quickly able to provide the broadband access needed; this alone made it clear to me performing these sessions were crucial to outline any issues in the recovery process. Anything and everything can potentially go wrong and it is critical to have processes and reviews of those processes in place not just for large companies but any company as disasters can happen in any situation.

Team work is important and this has been told to me since as early as I can remember and with the couple of days I spent on the recovery session it was plain to see this is the case. Everyone has there own specialities and experiences, helping each other troubleshoot and resolve issues. Using documentation of the process alone would eventually get the systems back up and running but with the amount of problems that can occur the time taken to resolve these issues would cause a huge time delay and in a company that spans multiple time zones every minute really does count.

What is most important/interesting/relevant/ useful aspect of the event/idea/situation?   Everyone has their own skills and abilities and it wouldn't be feasible to expect one person to be able to maintain and

support all of them. The issue arises if someone is unable to attend and therefore it is also paramount that documentation of the process be produced by each member of the team, doing so is also good way to act as a reminder when a disaster does occur but documentation can quickly become outdated in the field of IT. Performing these data recovery processes highlights any missing information and anything that has changed and allows each member to update anything as necessary and by keeping detailed and up to date instructions can be a great help for everyone.

How can it be applied in the future? #### How is it similar to/different from others? #### What next? (outcome) #### What have I learned? I've learned that with lots of different aspects and areas in the field of IT and computing it isn't feasible to be an expert in all of them, however knowing the basics for each will of great help; with a basic understanding of a system it's beneficial to know what is expected to be entered in and receive by output

2.1.2

What? (description) What happened? Who was involved? So what? (interpretation) What is most important/interesting/relevant/ useful aspect of the event/idea/situation? How can it be explained? How is it similar to/different from others? What next? (outcome) What have I learned? How can it be applied in the future?
What to include
Here are some tips on what to include in your reflective writing:
Don't just describe – explore and explain what happened. Be honest – it's ok to admit to making mistakes as well as success. But you should also show how you understand why things happen and what you are going to do to improve. Be selective – you don't have to write about everything that happened, just key events or ideas. Look to the future – reflect on what happened in the past and how it will have an impact on future ideas or activities.