I studied at the University of South Alabama. My major was chemical engineering. After graduation I moved to Houston Texas to find work. I found a job as an arsonist. In short, I burned people’s property and they payed me for it. The longer version, the company that I worked at specializes in industrial chemical tank cleaning. More specifically my branch was vapor control. Volatile organic material, VOCs for short, are gases that can accumulate within chemical tanks. Typically, inhaling these gases can lead to chronic illnesses or immediate death. You can’t go in with spray it a hose and you certainly can not let the VOCs vent out into the facility. That is where my company’s services come in. Essentially, we stick a hose in the tank. Then we pump the gases into our equipment. Our equipment chemically alters the VOC into to harmless byproducts carbon-dioxide, water, and a couple of other trace compounds. This chemical reaction is called combustion. So yeah, we burn the VOCs in 10 ft by 10 ft “thermal oxidizer”.

My responsibility were basically, figure out if we could burn stuff, oversee the setup for our thermal oxidizers, maintain and repair the equipment, run data analysis on the process, report said data to the EPA and our clients, train new hire on how to operate the machinery, and general be a local google for any oddball questions that my arrive from time to time.

There were a lot of thing I enjoyed working there. Namely the opportunities to solve new problems with new solutions. However, as you can probably figure out, I no longer work there. Let’s keep it brief and say inadequate financial compensation. I’m now here studying software engineering, because, I strongly believe coding and other skills unique to software engineering complement any career path, seemingly for the foreseeable future. The most effective defense against an unknown future is versatility.