

ished in DevOps Dudes

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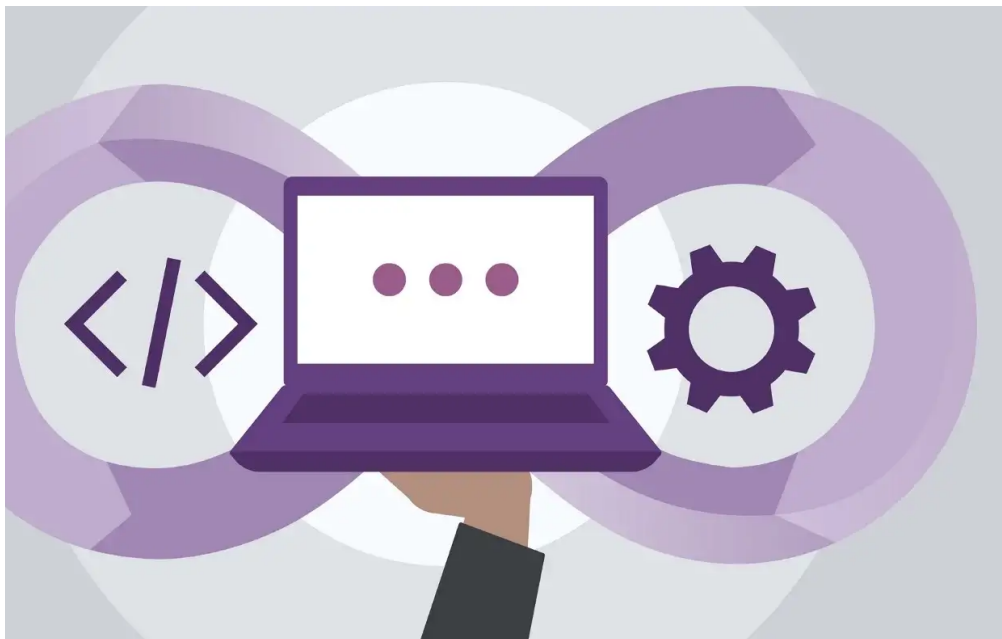
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## Differences Between Junior DevOps and Senior DevOps Engineers

focus on in order to develop your technical skills and level up your career



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dition with my [posts](#), let me start by defining what DevOps means:

is a **culture** that encourages collaborations among all leaders including development and operations teams and the

ement of processes through automation to increase the quality of software delivery.

evOps heavily emphasizes the need for cultural change within a y, the industry has most definitely adopted a job title for “DevOps r.” As with most job titles and roles within a company, there are unior, experienced, and senior members that focus on that role.

at my entire career focusing on DevOps and working in multiple 500 companies. Here I’ll share my experience with what the ce is between junior DevOps Engineers and senior DevOps :s and which key technical (and non-technical) skills you should to progress your career.

## ical Skill #1: Configuration Management



configuration management as such: it’s the *discipline* of ensuring *software and hardware* assets which a company owns are **known** and at all times — any future changes to these assets are known and You can think of configuration management like an always up-to-

entory for your technology assets, a single source of truth.

is actually is implemented within an I.T. department is more of an science. There are many different aspects in which must be ed and tracked from the process in which change is introduced, what ly changed, and how that change might relate to many other nt systems.

ost important aspects for DevOps engineers and configuration ment are:

ing your confi

ring repeatable idempotent changes regardless of enviro  
rstanding the impact changes to one part of a system can  
ier

ing our networks-as-code

e into each of these topics a little more and I'll explain th  
how a junior DevOps engineers view it and how a senior DevOps  
: would approach it.

ing the installation and configuration of OS and Middleware layer

here folks who have an operations background would be most  
You have a technical understanding of multiple operating systems  
dleware that applications run on top of. You know what an  
ts file is and what it does and in most cases, you prefer the  
id line over the GUI.

evOps Engineers Tasks

: You need to install some monitoring agent software on tens to  
s of servers

: You write a powershell/bash script that can install and configure  
t with a given input of hostname(s) and credentials. If the

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on fails you write the failure to a log for later review.

## DevOps Engineer Approach

Look at the operating systems and versions that this particular rare needs to be installed on and try to standardize to a minimal set of supported versions.

Install the software in base images so the software comes installed by default for any new servers

Utilize a configuration management tool such as Chef or Ansible instead of writing a custom script that will have to be managed and maintained

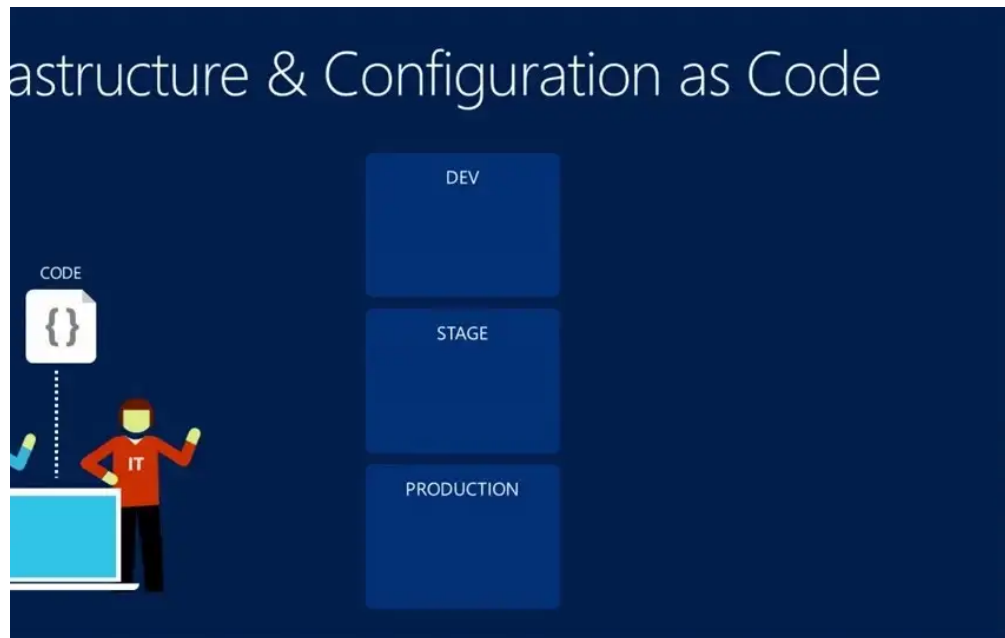
Think about and extrapolate environment variables from the configuration scripts so that changes to the installation can be tested in production environments before rolled out to 100's of servers at a

Utilize a source control system, typically GIT-based, have a continuous integration tool to test changes to your code

**Why:** At its core, a senior DevOps Engineer is looking at any given change in a holistic manner and trying to understand how this change can be implemented at an enterprise-scale and not simply trying to solve the given problem one time. Frankly, this skill is less technical and more about big picture thinking and problem-solving.

## Configuration-as-code

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more about your technical skill in regards to some configuration management tools such as Ansible or Chef and how you actually implement configuration in your tool of choice.

### DevOps Engineers Tasks

**Junior:** The standard RHEL configuration requires an additionally 1-storage drive with a `/mount` location having 100gb of disk space.

**Senior:** You utilize Ansible tasks that attach a disk drive, expand the logical mount and creates the `/mount` FS. You assume this will only be run on provisioned virtual machines and as such, may result in failures if not existing servers.

### DevOps Engineer Approach

**Junior:** create an Ansible Role for standard RHEL configuration deployment  
 use `set_fact` module to define a variable with existing mount points  
 if `mount` is not available with the given disk space, your script will create

**Senior:** Like the different development languages (java/.net/javascript) has its own way to implement certain logic in the code. Senior DevOps

to understand the logic of how code should be implemented in order to cover multiple possibilities the configuration is running against, while senior DevOps engineers are most likely solving the problem for the first time with the given tool/language of choice and thus simply trying to solve the problem at hand.

## Conclusion

We've seen several differences between how junior and senior DevOps engineers go about solving day-to-day problems at work. The first technical difference we outlined focuses on configuration management. In part 2 of this series (coming soon), we'll look at the differences in **Logging and Monitoring**.

These examples provide some food for thought about how to grow as a DevOps Engineer!

Career Development

Configuration Management

Infrastructure As Code

Engineering



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