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Activity 5: Consolidating Playbook plays

1. **Objectives:**

1.1 Use **when** command in playbook for different OS distributions

1.2 Apply refactoring techniques in cleaning up the playbook codes

2. **Discussion**:

We are going to look at a way that we can differentiate a playbook by a host in terms of which distribution the host is running. It's very common in most Linux shops to run multiple distributions, for example, Ubuntu shop or Debian shop and you need a different distribution for a one off-case or perhaps you want to run plays only on certain distributions.

It is a best practice in ansible when you are working in a collaborative environment to use the command git pull. git pull is a Git command used to update the local version of a repository from a remote. By default, git pull does two things. Updates the current local working branch (currently checked out branch) and updates the remote-tracking branches for all other branches. git pull essentially pulls down any changes that may have happened since the last time you worked on the repository.

Requirement:

In this activity, you will need to create a CentOS VM. Likewise, you need to activate the second adapter to a host-only adapter after the installations. Take note of the IP address of the CentOS VM. Make sure to use the command *ssh-copy-id* to copy the public key to CentOS. Verify if you can successfully SSH to CentOS VM.

Task 1: Use when command for different distributions

1. In the local machine, make sure you are in the local repository directory (*CPE232_yourname*). Issue the command git pull. When prompted, enter the correct passphrase or password. Describe what happened when you issue this command. Did something happen? Why?
2. Edit the inventory file and add the IP address of the Centos VM. Issue the command we used to execute the playbook (the one we used in the last activity): *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_apache.yml*. After executing this command, you may notice that it did not become successful in the Centos VM. You can see that the Centos VM has failed=1. Only the two remote servers have been changed. The reason is that Centos VM does not

support "apt" as the package manager. The default package manager for Centos is "yum."

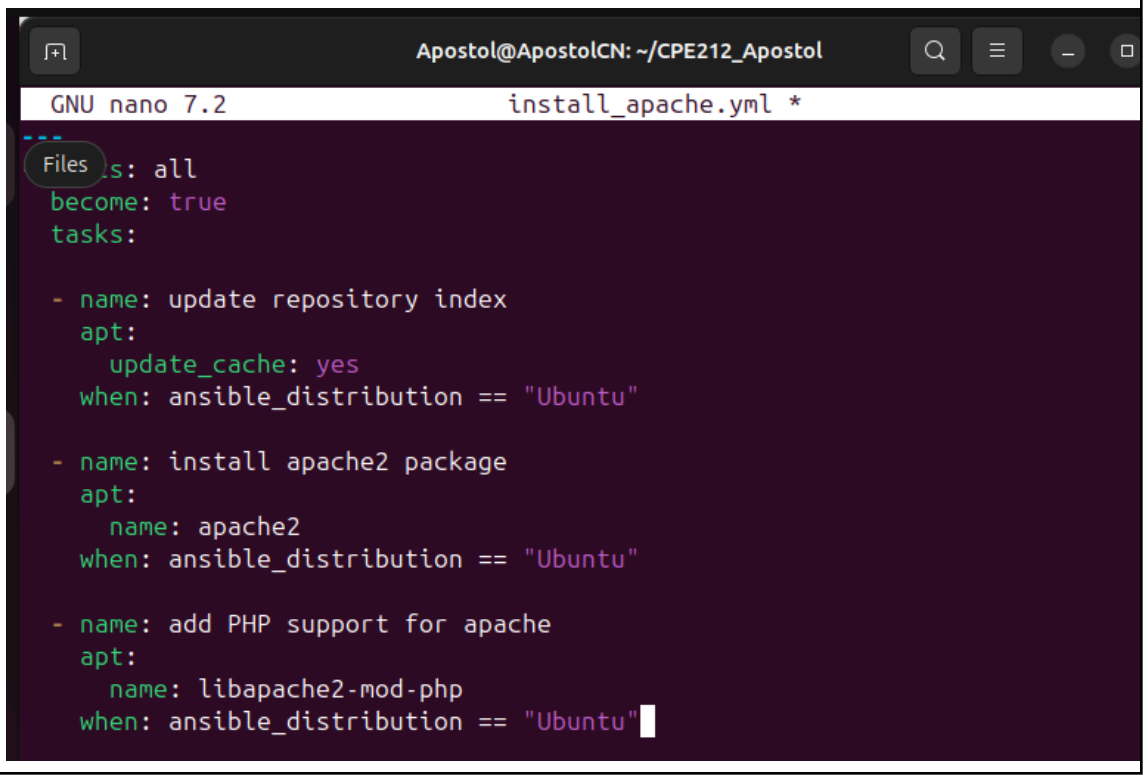
```
Apostol@ApostolCN:~/CPE212_Apostol$ ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_a
pache.yml
ERROR! the playbook: install_apache.yml could not be found
```

3. Edit the *install_apache.yml* file and insert the lines shown below.

```
---
- hosts: all
  become: true
  tasks:

  - name: update repository index
    apt:
      update_cache: yes
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: install apache2 package
    apt:
      name: apache2
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: add PHP support for apache
    apt:
      name: libapache2-mod-php
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"
```

Make sure to save the file and exit.

Output:



Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_apache.yml* and describe the result.

Output:

```
Apostol@ApostolCN:~/CPE212_Apostol$ ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_a
pache.yml
BECOME password:

PLAY [all] *********************************************************************

TASK [Gathering Facts] *********************************************************
ok: [server2]
ok: [server1]

TASK [update repository index] *************************************************
changed: [server1]
changed: [server2]

TASK [install apache2 package] *************************************************
changed: [server2]
changed: [server1]

TASK [add PHP support for apache] **********************************************
changed: [server1]
changed: [server2]

PLAY RECAP *********************************************************************
server1                    : ok=4    changed=3    unreachable=0    failed=0    s
kipped=0    rescued=0    ignored=0
server2                    : ok=4    changed=3    unreachable=0    failed=0    s
kipped=0    rescued=0    ignored=0

Apostol@ApostolCN:~/CPE212_Apostol$
```

If you have a mix of Debian and Ubuntu servers, you can change the configuration of your playbook like this.

```
- name: update repository index
  apt:
    update_cache: yes
  when: ansible_distribution in [“Debian”, “Ubuntu]
```

Note: This will work also if you try. Notice the changes are highlighted.

4. Edit the *install_apache.yml* file and insert the lines shown below.

```
---
- hosts: all
  become: true
  tasks:

  - name: update repository index
    apt:
      update_cache: yes
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: install apache2 package
    apt:
      name: apache2
      stae: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: add PHP support for apache
    apt:
      name: libapache2-mod-php
      state: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: update repository index
    dnf:
      update_cache: yes
    when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"

  - name: install apache2 package
    dnf:
      name: httpd
      state: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"

  - name: add PHP support for apache
    dnf:
      name: php
      state: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"
```

Make sure to save and exit.

Output:

```
 GNU nano 7.2                    install_apache.yml *
---
- hosts: all
  become: true
  tasks:

  - name: update repository index
    apt:
      update_cache: yes
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: install apache2 package
    apt:
      name: apache2
      state: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: add PHP support for apache
    apt:
      name: libapache2-mod-php
      state: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

- name: update repository index
  dnf:
    update_cache: yes
  when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"

- name: install apache2 package
  dnf:
    name: httpd
    state: latest
  when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"

- name: add PHP support for apache
  dnf:
    name: php
    state: latest
  when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"
```

Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_apache.yml* and describe the result.

```
Apostol@ApostolCN:~/CPE212_Apostol$ ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_a
pache.yml
BECOME password:

PLAY [all] *********************************************************************

TASK [Gathering Facts] *********************************************************
ok: [server1]
ok: [server2]

TASK [update repository index] *************************************************
changed: [server2]
changed: [server1]

TASK [install apache2 package] *************************************************
ok: [server1]
ok: [server2]

TASK [add PHP support for apache] **********************************************
ok: [server1]
ok: [server2]
```

5. To verify the installations, go to CentOS VM and type its IP address on the browser. Was it successful? The answer is no. It's because the httpd service or the Apache HTTP server in the CentOS is not yet active. Thus, you need to activate it first.

   5.1 To activate, go to the CentOS VM terminal and enter the following:
   systemctl status httpd
   The result of this command tells you that the service is inactive.

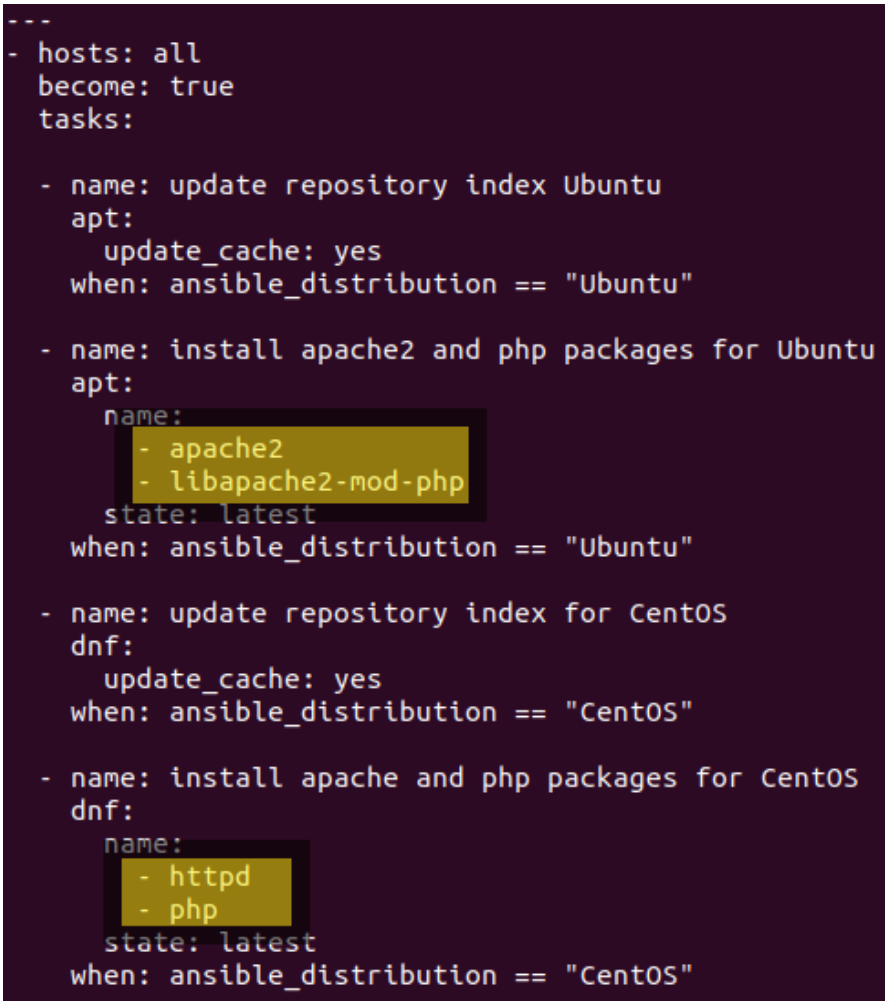
   5.2 Issue the following command to start the service:
   sudo systemctl start httpd
   (When prompted, enter the sudo password)
   sudo firewall-cmd --add-port=80/tcp
   (The result should be a success)

   5.3 To verify the service is already running, go to CentOS VM and type its IP address on the browser. Was it successful? (Screenshot the browser)

Task 2: Refactoring playbook

This time, we want to make sure that our playbook is efficient and that the codes are easier to read. This will also makes run ansible more quickly if it has to execute fewer tasks to do the same thing.

1. Edit the playbook *install_apache.yml*. Currently, we have three tasks targeting our Ubuntu machines and 3 tasks targeting our CentOS machine. Right now, we try to consolidate some tasks that are typically the same. For example, we can consolidate two plays that install packages. We can do that by creating a list of installation packages as shown below:



```
---
- hosts: all
  become: true
  tasks:

  - name: update repository index Ubuntu
    apt:
      update_cache: yes
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: install apache2 and php packages for Ubuntu
    apt:
      name:
        - apache2
        - libapache2-mod-php
      state: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

  - name: update repository index for CentOS
    dnf:
      update_cache: yes
    when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"

  - name: install apache and php packages for CentOS
    dnf:
      name:
        - httpd
        - php
      state: latest
    when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"
```

Make sure to save the file and exit.

Output:

```
- name: install apache2 package
  dnf:
    name:
      - httpd
      - php
    state: latest
  when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"
```

```
- name: install apache2 package
  apt:
    name:
      - apache2
      - libapache2-mod-php
    state: latest
  when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"
```

Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_apache.yml* and describe the result.

2. Edit the playbook *install_apache.yml* again. In task 2.1, we consolidated the plays into one play. This time we can actually consolidated everything in just 2 plays. This can be done by removing the update repository play and putting the command *update_cache: yes* below the command *state: latest*. See below for reference:

```
---
- hosts: all
  become: true
  tasks:

   - name: install apache2 and php packages for Ubuntu
     apt:
      name:
        - apache2
        - libapache2-mod-php
      state: latest
      update_cache: yes
     when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

   - name: install apache and php packages for CentOS
     dnf:
       name:
         - httpd
         - php
       state: latest
       update_cache: yes
     when: ansible_distribution == "CentOS"
```

Make sure to save the file and exit.

Output:

```
 - name: install apache2 package
   apt:
     name:
       - apache2
       - libapache2-mod-php
     state: latest
     update_cache: yes
   when: ansible_distribution == "Ubuntu"

 - name: add PHP support for apache
```

```
   when: ansible_distribution == "Cen

 - name: install apache2 package
   dnf:
     name:
       - httpd
       - php
     state: latest
     update_cache: yes
```

Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_apache.yml* and describe the result.

3. Finally, we can consolidate these 2 plays in just 1 play. This can be done by declaring variables that will represent the packages that we want to install. Basically, the apache_package and php_package are variables. The names are arbitrary, which means we can choose different names. We also take out the line when: ansible_distribution. Edit the playbook *install_apache.yml* again and make sure to follow the below image. Make sure to save the file and exit.

```
---
- hosts: all
  become: true
  tasks:

  - name: install apache and php
    apt:
      name:
        - "{{ apache_package }}"
        - "{{ php_package }}"
      state: latest
      update_cache: yes
```

Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_apache.yml* and describe the result.

4. Unfortunately, task 2.3 was not successful. It's because we need to change something in the inventory file so that the variables we declared will be in place. Edit the *inventory* file and follow the below configuration:

```
192.168.56.120 apache_package=apache2 php_package=libapache2-mod-php
192.168.56.121 apache_package=apache2 php_package=libapache2-mod-php
192.168.56.122 apache_package=httpd php_package=php
```

Make sure to save the *inventory* file and exit.

Output:

```
Apostol@ApostolCN: ~/CPE212_Apostol
 GNU nano 7.2                    inventory.ini *
[servers]
192.168.56.108 apache_package=apache2 php_package=libapache2-mod-php
192.168.56.113 apache_package=httpd php_package=php
192.168.56.104 apache_package=apache2 php_package=libapache2-mod-php
192.168.56.106 apache_package=apache2 php_package=libapache2-mod-php
```

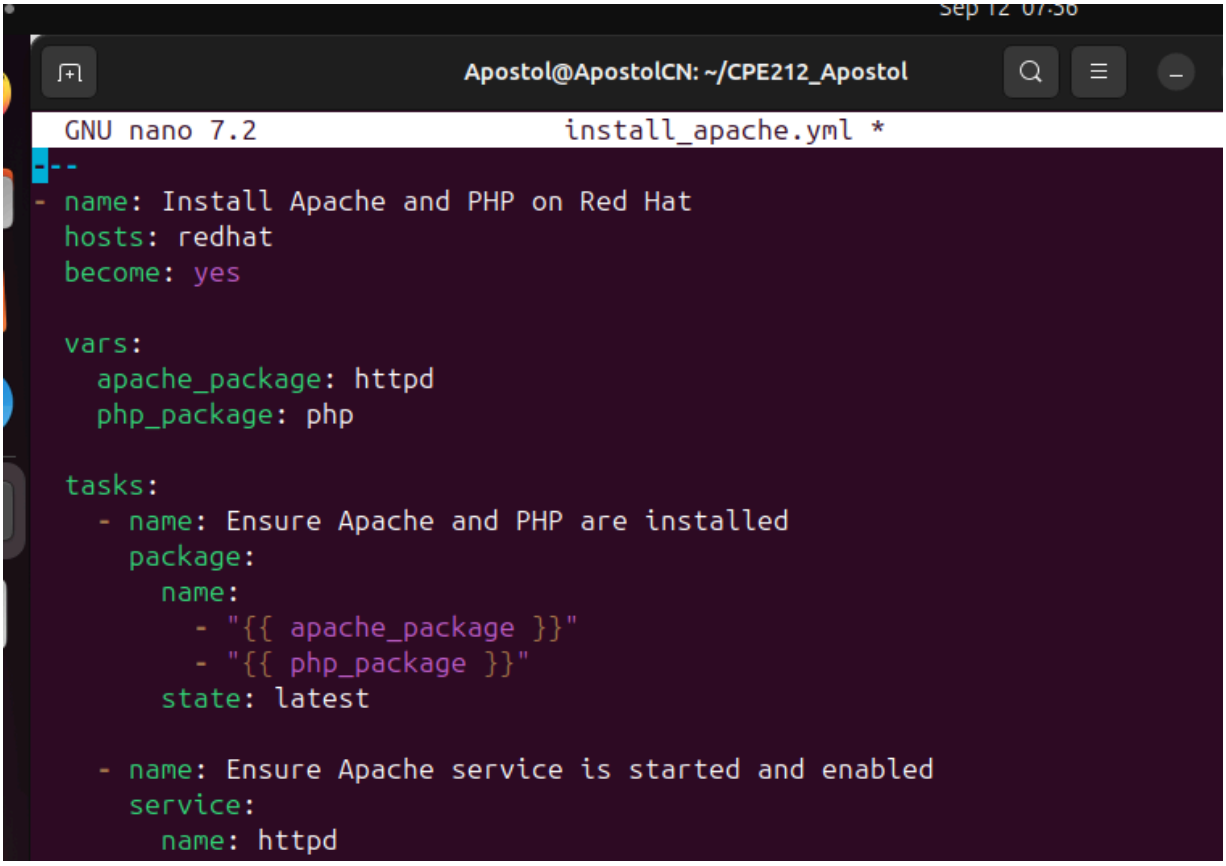
Finally, we still have one more thing to change in our *install_apache.yml* file. In task 2.3, you may notice that the package is assign as apt, which will not run in CentOS. Replace the *apt* with *package*. Package is a module in ansible that is generic, which is going to use whatever package manager the underlying host or the target server uses. For Ubuntu it will automatically use *apt*, and for

CentOS it will automatically use *dnf*. Make sure to save the file and exit. For more details about the ansible package, you may refer to this documentation: ansible.builtin.package – Generic OS package manager — Ansible Documentation

Run *ansible-playbook --ask-become-pass install_apache.yml* and describe the result.

Supplementary Activity:

1. Create a playbook that could do the previous tasks in Red Hat OS.



```
GNU nano 7.2                    install_apache.yml *
  - name: Ensure Apache and PHP are installed
    package:
      name:
        - "{{ apache_package }}"
        - "{{ php_package }}"
      state: latest

  - name: Ensure Apache service is started and enabled
    service:
      name: httpd
      state: started
      enabled: yes

  - name: Allow HTTP through firewall
    firewalld:
      port: 80/tcp
      permanent: yes
      state: enabled
      immediate: yes
```

Reflections:

Answer the following:

1. Why do you think refactoring of playbook codes is important?
   - **Refactoring playbook code is crucial because it improves readability, maintainability, and efficiency, making code easier to understand, debug, and update over time.**
2. When do we use the “when” command in playbook?
   - **You use the when command in an Ansible playbook to execute a task only if a specific condition is met, allowing for dynamic control over playbook execution based on system facts, variables, or other criteria.**