1. Reflect on learnings from our first class meeting.

I really enjoyed attending our first class meeting and learning more about the professors, course contents, course timeline, and my classmates. The survival activity that we participated in was very engaging and it provided us with an opportunity to understand the importance of effective communication while also learning about each other's communication styles. Knowing this will specifically be essential when working together on a team project with my classmates as we can then get a better understanding of our experience, skills, and working styles. Having a good mix of businesspeople, engineers, and lawyers in the class highlights the different perspectives and strengths that these interdisciplinary fields bring to a collaborative space. Effective communication within cross-functional teams leads to a deeper understanding of the problems and allows us to come up with more effective solutions.

Additionally, this week, we also learned about the contents we will be covering throughout this course. This course provides a robust and comprehensive curriculum which includes three main aspects of reflecting on 1) what we learned through the lectures regarding various cybersecurity, business, and legal concepts, 2) working collaboratively with our teams to come up with a product and run a business, 3) independently research a topic of interest while providing interdisciplinary perspective. The introduction to the concepts of data privacy, cybersecurity, and AI governance provided by the professors will allow us to focus on understanding the real-life application of these concepts in a business setting. With further information that we will learn about these fields and concepts we can better relate to each other and take part in meaningful conversation by empathizing with each other's perspectives.

2. What five adjectives did you use to describe your strengths during our class introductions? What words might you add or change?

The five adjectives I used to describe my strengths during our class introductions included Friendly, Empathetic, Ambitious, Intuitive, and Adaptive. I would also like to add Curious and Self-Aware as my strengths as I always keep a growth mindset and have a curiosity to learn new things. As for Self-Awareness, I am usually very good at reflecting on my skills and actions so I can improve on them. Being self-aware allows me to understand my strengths and areas of growth which helps with improving myself and learning new skills. These attributes collectively make me more assertive and be kind at the same time whenever I am faced with any issues or challenges.

3. Read Chapter 7 (Creating Safety) in Crucial Conversations (3rd Ed).

- How do **you** define safety in a work environment?

I understand safety at the workplace as a subject related to the emotional safety of employees. It often tends to be challenging to ensure that everyone feels welcomed and comfortable being themselves around the office, sharing their opinions and suggestions without facing negative judgments and more importantly being heard by others. These aspects are fundamental to humans, especially when we interact with each other. However, communication gaps and misunderstandings can create tension and disrupt relationship dynamics, making it harder for employees to trust each other and work toward common goals. In this case, leaders of the organizations play a crucial role in setting the tone by encouraging honest dialogue, addressing conflicts constructively, and ensuring that feedback is met with empathy rather than defensiveness. When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to engage openly, collaborate effectively, and contribute creatively to the team's success.

- Describe a situation where safety was a barrier to effective communication (in a work environment or another class). Was the safety issue addressed? If so, how? How might you adapt your description of the issue to a colleague based on their role (e.g. engineer, businessperson, lawyer, or other role)?

A recent interaction at my workplace highlighted how safety can be a barrier to effective communication during our monthly team meeting. In these meetings, each attendee brings their agenda and wants to share their opinions about the team's processes and workflows. Since our team includes people from various fields working on different projects, our perspectives on these processes often differ, making it challenging to reach a quick solution. This is expected in a collaborative setting, as any change to the workflow can impact how others carry out their tasks. Differences in opinion can create tension or hesitation to speak up, which may limit the effectiveness of the conversation.

Despite these challenges, our team has done a good job of fostering a safe space for open communication. After listening to the person presenting the issue, we took time to reflect individually on potential solutions before sharing suggestions that could help resolve the problem or offer an alternative approach. This process ensured that everyone felt heard and valued, leading to a more thoughtful and strategic response to the problem. The person who raised the issue gained valuable insights and feedback from different perspectives, which helped create a more effective solution. When communicating with people from different fields, it's essential to ensure that they understand the depth of the issue. Asking questions and seeking clarification while explaining helps confirm that our thoughts are

accurately understood and allows for more informed and meaningful contributions from others.

- Think about how you would explain the key ideas of this chapter to your classmates versus a child. List key talking points you would cover in an oral explanation.

Classmates: When communicating with others, it's important to pay attention to social cues, such as body language and tone of voice, to understand how the other person is feeling. When disagreements arise, people may either shut down or become defensive about their perspective. Recognizing these reactions allows you to adjust your approach and keep the conversation productive. Actively listening to the other person without interrupting or judging helps build trust and ensures they feel heard. Once they've shared their thoughts, you can calmly explain your own point of view and reasoning. It's important to remember that you are both working toward the same goal or project, so rather than escalating the conflict, focus on working together to find a solution. Mutual respect and collaboration will lead to a more effective resolution.

Child: If you and a friend don't agree on something, try to listen to what they are saying before sharing your idea. If your friend seems upset or stops talking, it might mean they feel hurt or ignored, so try to be kind and ask how they feel. Once they've finished talking, you can calmly tell them your idea and explain why you think it could help. Remember that you're both trying to solve the same problem or having fun together, so instead of arguing, work together to figure out a solution that works for both of you.

4. For our team projects, describe some preferred characteristics of team members with whom you collaborate.  Did your classmates share any useful language during our first class that helps to articulate this?

I would love to work with people from different ba   ckgrounds so they can provide a better perspective on our project work and our strategy to complete our project successfully. Yes, I did see a lot of peers being assertive and making educated decisions during our survival activity. They were patient in hearing what everyone on their teams had to say and then collectively came to a decision. This skill is very important when working in a team as we might not know all the information related to the problem or challenge we are facing and others can bring in their experiences to analyze the issue better so we can come up with an efficient solution.

5. Identify additional learning objectives or desired outcomes you have for this course. Brainstorm and list possible topics of interest for your self-directed research project.

I would like to explore more of the interactions within the legal and business side for my self-directed research project.

**Optional**:

Feel free to share more about your background, interests, and goals.

This class fits very well with my experience and skill set. I have a bachelor's in computer science, and I previously did an internship as an Information Security Analyst. I am currently working as a consultant in Healthcare IT, so I deal with a lot of sensitive patient data which makes me very interested in learning more regarding data privacy.