

## **A computer science career that I wish to pursue & a list of the specific skills**

I am already pursuing a career as a software engineer, and I will continue it. My focus is the design and development of software for large enterprises. During my career, I tended to prefer versatility over specialization because that was the demand in my area. Times have changed, I am more mature, and, in the future, I would like to specialize myself to excel in solving one specific problem. I see several possibilities. Two high-level topics with a remarkable increase in demand are artificial intelligence and data science. Some niches that may also grow are assistive technologies, blockchain applications, cloud computing, not to mention all the many small technologies that need to be improved to make the post-pandemic world a better place.

I do not know what I will focus on, but I know what skills are essential.

Technical skills are a must. It is vital to have competencies that are in demand and master them to deliver value. I already master all the aspects of software development in Java Enterprise, including supporting software, architecture design, and project management. Of course, it remains essential to keep the knowledge up-to-date and I am always eager to expand in this area.

Critical thinking is fundamental to evaluate facts and draw conclusions. A task such as collecting requirements from a customer is simple only on the surface. The customer may need help to frame his own problem and discover what his needs are. Mastering critical thinking means questioning everything, including our own

assumptions. "I always did it this way" is my personal alarm: when I say it, it's time to stop for a moment.

Empathy is a soft skill that is rarely mentioned, but it is what makes the difference between an average engineer and a great one. Being able to see the problem from the customer's perspective, having an attachment for the project, and acting accordingly, make the difference in the final quality of the work. I love to craft good software and I always had the tendency to overdeliver.

Last, but not least, there is the ability to connect with people. Making a good impression in an interview, building a network of contacts, establishing a relationship based on trust, are necessary skills to practice the profession. It is true for an employee as well as for a freelance or an entrepreneur. Marketing myself has never been my forte, and this is a point of improvement, but I am a very responsible and respectful person and that is what counts in a team. I have worked in different contexts (also internationally) and I covered roles with high responsibilities. It was never an issue and I always found the most diverse experiences very enriching.