

# **Internship: Reflective Paper #2**

by

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A Reflective Paper

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Since my initial weeks at the ITS Help Desk, where I was primarily focused on learning the ropes, I have shifted from a phase of adaptation to growing proficiency. Early on, the variety of systems and the complexity of some user issues were overwhelming; however, now, I can use these same challenges to refine my skills. Familiarity with the procedures, systems, and tools has allowed me to respond more quickly and effectively to incoming tickets. This transition has given me the confidence to tackle more complex tickets, and I feel better equipped to handle unexpected challenges that arise each day.

The sheer number of systems and applications I've encountered within an enterprise environment continues to surprise me. I've made it a point to deepen my knowledge of the systems we support, whether through formal training or personal research. Personal research can include scouring our website and internal knowledge base or asking users who have resolved their problems independently. I've started taking notes and compiling a small unofficial guide for some of these niche issues, which helps me out and contributes to my team's overall knowledge base. This process has significantly increased my understanding of the organization's IT infrastructure, making me more confident.

Working through the VHS merger has been a complex but invaluable learning experience. With the retirement and absorption of several VHS applications, along with the introduction of new ones, I've had to collaborate more frequently with other departments to resolve issues. One such situation involved a ticket where computers on EVMS' campus, which ODU now manages, and a user attempted to connect using VHS's specific VPN agent rather than ODU's GlobalProtect agent. This seemingly simple problem was complicated by fragmented, outdated documentation that failed to outline the new connection procedures clearly. After some time, I contacted IT colleagues from VHS for clarification. Together, we were able to pinpoint

the issue. The collaborative moments have taught me the importance of teamwork and resourcefulness, especially when navigating uncharted territory with limited documentation. Underlining how solving problems isn't just about technical knowledge but about combining resources and working across departments to achieve a solution.

As the volume of tickets has increased, especially with the VHS merger, time management has become more critical than ever. As I have developed a stronger proficiency in communication, I've created a system for prioritizing tickets based on urgency and complexity, improving my ability to manage a high volume of requests quickly. For instance, I've learned to quickly assess whether a ticket can be resolved within a few minutes or if it requires further research; at that point, I can delegate an appropriate time to address the ticket. Throughout my internship, I've also learned to adapt my communication style based on the assumed technical expertise of the person I'm helping. In the early stages, I often over-explain technical concepts to individuals already in IT, leading to frustration. However, with time, I've learned to read the user's technical level early in the conversation. For less experienced users, I explain processes in simple terms, using analogies when necessary, while for more knowledgeable users, I focus on quickly addressing their issues without unnecessary explanations. These new approaches to troubleshooting have allowed me to maintain focus while ensuring that critical issues are addressed promptly, improving the efficiency of my interactions and enhancing my customer service skills, which has made every interaction more positive and productive.

In conclusion, my experience at the ITS Help Desk has been both challenging and rewarding, leading to significant personal and professional growth. Transitioning from a phase of simply learning the ropes to achieving a level of proficiency has empowered me to tackle complex issues with confidence. The ever-evolving enterprise environment has kept me on my

toes, continually pushing me to expand my knowledge and adapt to new systems. Collaborating during the VHS merger has highlighted the importance of teamwork and the collective effort required to navigate uncharted territories successfully. Furthermore, developing effective time management and tailored communication strategies has enhanced my ability to provide exceptional customer service. As I move forward, I am eager to embrace new challenges, knowing that each experience enriches my skills and prepares me for a future in the dynamic field of IT support.