April 30, 2018

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Here is a short submission for answering questions posted for this year's NACE Workshop. Due to seeing call of ideas late, I have only some ideas for consideration that I can expand should the committee want to hear more.

After teaching at George Mason University (GMU) and Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) cyber and information assurance programs, students appear to lack the models and direction needed to develop into cyber professionals that have the foundations needed for success. Having a Model Activity Path (MAP) where students would see how the skills, classes, experiences link to actual work and needs in cybersecurity would make sense versus the traditional academic plans. Cybersecurity is truly a multifaceted domain that can be separated into areas such as policy, forensics, research, hardware, and other areas along with technical skills. Having MAPs developed by industry that features the skills and experiences employers foresee now and for the future would make the time, cost, and effort more relevant to students.

While many educational institutions have career paths and program curriculums, mapping those to actual work and careers is a challenge. As a hiring manager for a science and technology company, I have hired former GMU and NVCC graduates who perhaps use 20% of their education toward meeting client needs. As college is an exploratory along with development time for students, having MAPs developed along the lines of professional tracks would give students a visualization of where they can be upon matriculation. The MAPs would be developed through engaging industry to understand what is needed to "future-proof" the skills while helping educational institutions plan resources and classes. MAPs would also help level set the perceptions of cybersecurity toward reality versus fictional Hollywood versions of cybersecurity. For example, not all cybersecurity professionals are hacking or doing technical work.

An example of the MAP could be a Cyber Security Policy Analyst (CSPA). The MAP would encompass building skills in writing, legal research, sociology, and some technical courses. CSPAs would then help address the gap between the law and technology. Keeping MAPs current would show how the students could work toward real issues and adjust as companies seek new and current talents. MAPs would not be vocational nor prescriptive guarantee for job placement. However, the MAPs would show how the educational institutions are tuning the courses, content, and instructors to meet metrics for matriculations, rising stars with strategic companies for building institutional reputations, and doing relevant technical research.

My brief bio:

Published in IEEE and certified as a PMP, Mr. Hon proactively helps Federal clients with challenging projects and vendor management issues in Cyber Security, Cloud Computing, and Foreign Assistance areas for over 20 years. As a CISSP, Mr. Hon has also taught Cyber hacking and other technology courses for 17 years. He has spoken internationally and at numerous law enforcement

Thank you for your consideration!

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