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1. Introduction

I chose to intern at Intellidyne LLC for several reasons that aligned closely with my professional and academic goals. First and foremost, they offered to sponsor my security clearance. This was a major opportunity, as holding a clearance opens up career paths within the government and defense contracting sectors. Second, having internship experience at a company that works directly with federal agencies would strengthen my resume. And third, during the interview process, I was genuinely impressed by how much the management seemed to care about employee growth.

They weren't just filling a role; they wanted someone who could grow with the company and learn from the team.

Going into the internship, I had three main learning goals. First, I wanted to gain real-world IT experience. I had worked on projects and labs in school, but I wanted to understand how IT support functions in a fast-paced environment with real users. Second, I wanted to get a feel for what it's like to work in a government setting. This includes understanding professional expectations, structure, and security protocols. Third, I wanted to learn from experienced IT professionals by observing their workflows and asking questions. I hoped that by the end of the internship, I would have a clearer idea of the career path I want to pursue within the field.

Intellidyne LLC is a government contractor that delivers advanced IT solutions to federal agencies. They focus on areas such as Enterprise Infrastructure Management, Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, Application Development, and Analytics. Their work enables secure and efficient operations for government organizations. They are known for their ability to modernize systems while staying compliant with strict security standards.

My supervisor, Daniel Powers, was supportive from day one. He explained that mistakes would be part of the learning process, and I appreciated how patient he was throughout my onboarding. During orientation, I was introduced to the help desk environment, shown how to handle incoming tickets, and provided with a checklist of responsibilities. I shadowed senior team members to observe how they resolved issues and interacted with users. My first impression of the company was overwhelmingly positive. I expected a strict and stressful environment because of the government work involved, but what I found was a relaxed, encouraging atmosphere where questions were welcomed, and growth was prioritized.

2. Management Environment

The management environment at Intellidyne was one of the most unique and effective aspects of my internship experience. From the beginning, I was impressed by the balance between autonomy and support. Instead of being micromanaged, I was encouraged to take the initiative and figure out solutions on my own. This approach not only helped me grow technically but also gave me the confidence to trust my judgment.

My direct supervisor, Daniel Powers, played a key role in shaping my experience. He consistently emphasized that mistakes were part of the learning process and created a space where I felt safe asking questions and admitting when I didn't understand something. Daniel checked in with me frequently not to evaluate me, but to offer support, guidance, and encouragement. He ensured that I was never left without direction but gave me the space to learn through doing.

Linda, the assistant manager, brought a different but equally important dynamic to the team. She had a strong eye for detail and provided careful oversight of the tickets we completed. I appreciated how she always offered constructive feedback, helping me understand how to improve the quality of my work. She also taught me the importance of clear, concise documentation; an essential part of working in IT, especially in government environments where records must be accurate and auditable.

The overall management structure was lean but highly effective. Daniel functioned as the strategic leader, frequently in meetings but always available when we needed him. Linda acted as the operational supervisor, staying hands-on with the team to ensure everything ran smoothly. This two-tiered leadership system worked well because it allowed for both big-picture guidance and day-to-day coaching.

What stood out most was the culture of learning and collaboration that management encouraged. I never felt like I was “just an intern.” My input was taken seriously, and I was treated like a valued member of the team. I was also invited to sit in at meetings, observe how decisions were made, and even provide feedback on process improvements. This level of inclusion helped me better understand how IT departments operate within a larger organizational structure and made me feel personally invested in the success of the team.

Overall, the management environment at Intellidyne was one of the most impactful aspects of my internship. It pushed me to develop professionally, take ownership of my work, and recognize the kind of leadership I hope to find or even embody throughout my future career in IT.

3. Major Work Duties, Assignments, and Projects

My day-to-day responsibilities at Intellidyne LLC revolved around Tier 1 IT support, where I served as one of the first lines of technical assistance for end users. A significant portion of my time was spent managing and responding to support tickets via the ServiceNow platform. These tickets included a range of common issues such as account creation, password resets, Microsoft 365 troubleshooting, BIOS updates, VPN connectivity problems, remote desktop setup, and resolving permission errors within Active Directory. Each issue required careful attention to detail and strong documentation skills to ensure that steps taken were clearly recorded for both internal team tracking and client compliance.

One of the most recurring tasks involved account management. I frequently created user accounts for new employees, assigned appropriate roles and permissions, and ensured access to essential drives, applications, and services. With each ticket, I became more comfortable using Active Directory, learning how different security groups and policies affected user capabilities within our network. I also became proficient at unlocking accounts, resetting credentials, and helping users securely regain access while adhering to security best practices.

Software installation and configuration were another major part of my job. I regularly installed security tools, productivity software, and proprietary applications, ensuring each was properly configured and updated for client systems. Sometimes this included manually adjusting settings to ensure compatibility with specific hardware or software requirements. BIOS updates presented another challenge, as they often required working within hardware-specific firmware interfaces. These updates were handled with caution to prevent system instability, and I learned how to follow vendor-specific documentation to minimize risks.

One of the more exciting aspects of the internship involved VPN troubleshooting and remote support. With many users working remotely, VPN access was essential for connecting to internal networks. I guided users through setup processes, diagnosed connection failures, and worked to

resolve authentication and routing problems. I became familiar with various VPN clients, common causes of disruption, and how to adjust configurations depending on the user's operating system. When these issues couldn't be solved remotely, I escalated the tickets with detailed notes for the Tier 2 team.

Remote desktop support was an everyday necessity. I used remote tools to access users' computers, observe issues firsthand, and walk them through solutions. This taught me the importance of clear verbal communication, as I often had to describe steps while screen sharing or guiding users without technical backgrounds. It also gave me an insight into common hardware and software problems that couldn't always be replicated in a controlled lab environment.

In addition to resolving tickets, I worked closely with team leaders and mentors to review my documentation practices and continuously improve the quality of my service. I learned the importance of clear, concise, and professional notes especially when a ticket had to be escalated to another technician or team. This practice ensured continuity of service and saved time for all parties involved.

Each of these assignments supported the mission of Intellidyne LLC by ensuring smooth, secure, and timely access to IT resources for government users. Our department's work had a direct impact on end user productivity and agency operations. By addressing issues quickly and thoroughly, I played a part in minimizing downtime and maintaining the high standard of technical support that Intellidyne promises to its federal clients.

Overall, my duties taught me the real-world application of IT service principles and gave me a solid foundation in how enterprise-level support is delivered. Whether working on routine issues or assisting with urgent problems, every assignment contributed to my growth and gave me a deeper appreciation for the role of technical support in complex, high-security environments.

4. Use of Cybersecurity Skills or Knowledge

Going into this internship, I had a decent understanding of cybersecurity from my classes, but this experience gave me a much clearer picture of how it works in real life. Instead of just reading about how systems should be secured, I actually got to help keep systems up and running while protecting sensitive information. I worked with real users, real systems, and real problems, things you can't fully understand just from a textbook.

A lot of the skills I used regularly were focused on supporting end users and making sure their systems were working properly. This included fixing problems with Microsoft 365, helping users reset passwords, updating BIOS firmware, setting up VPNs so people could work remotely, and creating new user accounts. I used tools like Active Directory to manage user access and ServiceNow to track support tickets. These tools are used widely in IT jobs, so getting hands-on experience with them was incredibly valuable.

Some of the things I already had a basic understanding of like scripting, the CIA triad (Confidentiality, Integrity, and Availability), and basic networking helped me follow conversations and understand what I was doing. But there was still a big learning curve. For example, I had never used a ticketing system like ServiceNow before. At first, I was unsure how to write proper

documentation or how to update tickets when handing them off to someone else. Over time, I learned how to write clear, professional notes that helped my team quickly understand what was going on.

Another big thing I learned was how to communicate better. In cybersecurity and IT, it's not just about fixing the problem, you also have to explain it to people who may not understand technology. I got better at using plain language when talking to users, breaking down complex problems into simple explanations, and being patient even when someone was frustrated. Communication turned out to be one of the most important skills of all.

I also got better at troubleshooting. Instead of panicking when something didn't work, I learned to take a step back, ask questions, and test different solutions. Sometimes it meant checking settings, asking a teammate for input, or doing some quick research. I began to recognize patterns in common issues, which helped me solve problems faster as time went on. I learned that being resourceful and calm under pressure is just as important as technical knowledge.

One of the biggest lessons I learned was that cybersecurity isn't just about preventing hackers; it's about keeping systems running smoothly and safely for everyone who uses them. It means being careful with data, following rules for secure access, and helping people do their jobs without running into tech problems. Every support ticket I worked on was part of a bigger mission to keep the organization running efficiently and securely.

Overall, the internship helped me build confidence in my technical abilities and gave me real-world context for everything I had learned in school. It made cybersecurity feel more approachable and showed me how important teamwork, communication, and problem-solving are in this field. I now have a much better idea of what it takes to succeed in an IT or cybersecurity role, and I'm excited to keep building on these skills in the future.

5. Connection to ODU Curriculum

The coursework I completed at Old Dominion University provided a solid foundation that prepared me for many aspects of my internship. Classes such as Cybersecurity Fundamentals, Windows System Management and Security, and Cybersecurity Techniques and Operations gave me a strong technical baseline and helped me understand core principles I would later use in the field. These courses introduced me to key concepts such as user authentication, encryption, system hardening, and account management, which I found myself applying in real-world scenarios at Intellidyne.

One example of this connection was during a ticket that required me to troubleshoot a user's inability to connect to a network drive. My background from Networking and Network Server Configuration and Administration classes helped me understand how network shares are managed and why proper permissions and connectivity matter. Another clear example came from my experience using Active Directory during the internship. Because I had prior exposure through lab environments in school, I was able to quickly grasp user group management, password resets, and account provisioning without feeling overwhelmed.

My programming and scripting courses, such as Object-Oriented Programming and Computer Systems and Programming, also helped me recognize the value of automation. While I wasn't expected to write full scripts from scratch, having a basic understanding allowed me to modify and run scripts to automate tasks such as BIOS updates or batch user changes. This saved time and improved my efficiency.

What stood out most was how much of what I had studied in theory finally made sense when applied in a real environment. Seeing the "why" behind best practices reinforced my classroom learning in a way that deepened my understanding. It also revealed gaps that I now know to address like learning proper ticket documentation language and adapting my tone for professional communication with federal personnel. These practical lessons were not covered in school but are critical to real-world success.

This connection between coursework and experience has helped solidify the value of my education. It reminded me that what we learn in class is only part of the picture, and that it's the application of those lessons that turns knowledge into skill.

6. Outcomes/Objectives Review

All three of my original goals for this internship were met, and in many ways, they were exceeded. My first objective was to gain real-world help desk experience. Throughout the internship, I handled a wide range of Tier 1 support tasks from account creation and password resets to BIOS updates and VPN troubleshooting. I responded to ServiceNow tickets, communicated directly with users, documented each case, and learned to prioritize issues based on severity. I didn't just observe others doing the work; I was given the chance to take the lead and resolve problems on my own. This hands-on exposure taught me how to think critically and work efficiently in a real support environment.

This goal was especially rewarding because it connected to my coursework at ODU. Through daily exposure to different types of tickets and troubleshooting methods, I became more confident in using tools like Active Directory and Microsoft 365, which I had only studied in theory prior to the internship. It felt empowering to use classroom concepts in a professional setting and see real-world results.

The second objective was to understand the structure and culture of working in a government setting. Intellidyne's client base includes federal agencies, so I was exposed to the expectations, formalities, and protocols that come with that. From learning how to properly address high-ranking officials to following strict identity verification procedures, I gained a clear picture of what's required in a secure, government-contracted IT environment. I also came to appreciate the role that structure and compliance play in day-to-day operations, particularly when handling sensitive information or supporting users working on classified projects.

This objective was fulfilled not only through my technical tasks but also through observation. I attended meetings where government standards and requirements were discussed, saw how different departments coordinated with each other, and developed a sense of what accountability

looks like in high-stakes environments. It made me more detail-oriented and aware of the larger mission behind the technical work I was doing.

My third goal was to learn from and engage with IT professionals. This was one of the most rewarding parts of the internship. I regularly worked alongside experienced technicians and analysts who were not only skilled but also willing to share their knowledge. I learned troubleshooting techniques, basic scripting, communication strategies, and even career development tips. Through shadowing Tier 2 techs and engaging in conversations with team members, I gained insight into what a long-term career in IT could look like. It helped me understand that there is no single path to success in tech everyone I worked with had taken a different route to get where they are.

In summary, the internship not only met my learning objectives, but it also provided unexpected opportunities for personal and professional growth. I walked away with a deeper understanding of my capabilities, greater technical knowledge, and a clearer picture of where I might want to go in the IT field. The experience was everything I hoped it would be and more.

7. Most Motivating or Exciting Aspects

One of the most exciting parts of the internship was being able to troubleshoot and solve real user issues independently. Early on, I had some hesitation, but over time, I built the confidence to take ownership of tickets from start to finish. The first time I resolved an issue without needing assistance, I felt proud and capable. That moment reinforced that I was on the right career path.

Another motivating aspect was learning new tools and technologies. For example, understanding how scripts could automate repetitive tasks and using ServiceNow more efficiently made a big difference in my workflow. I also began to understand how to track patterns in recurring issues and recommend long-term fixes, which was something I hadn't done before. Seeing my technical and analytical skills improve over time made the work especially rewarding.

Additionally, being trusted with greater responsibility was a major motivator. When my supervisors saw that I could handle certain tasks independently, they began assigning me more complex tickets or letting me take the lead on projects. That trust helped me feel like a true part of the team and validated the effort I was putting in.

Seeing how the entire IT department operated was also inspiring. I had the chance to observe Tier 2 techs and cybersecurity analysts, which gave me a better understanding of the diverse roles in IT. It was motivating to realize how many directions my career could take and to know that I was gaining foundational experience that could lead to any of them.

All of these experiences contributed to my motivation and excitement. They confirmed that I had chosen a field I not only enjoyed but also had the potential to grow in long-term.

8. Most Discouraging Aspects

Although my overall experience at Intellidyne LLC was incredibly positive and growth-focused, there were moments during the internship that were personally discouraging. The most challenging period was during the first week, when I was still trying to understand how everything worked, who to ask for help, and what was expected of me. I walked in with the hope of making an immediate impact, but quickly realized I had a lot to learn. The technical systems, the pace of work, the terminology, and the formality of the government environment were initially overwhelming. As someone who genuinely cares about doing well, I found it difficult to accept how many questions I had and how many mistakes I made early on.

One specific moment that stood out to me was when I misconfigured an account during a user setup. It was a simple mistake but, I had assigned the wrong group policy, which prevented the user from accessing shared folders and email. I didn't notice until they called in for support after already having a frustrating morning trying to log in. While the mistake was fixed quickly after escalation and support from a team member, I couldn't help but feel like I had let someone down. The error shook my confidence. I started to second-guess myself and hesitated before taking on similar tasks in the days that followed.

What made it harder was the internal pressure I put on myself. I was afraid of being perceived as someone who didn't know what they were doing, especially since I was surrounded by incredibly competent professionals who moved through their work with speed and precision. I kept asking myself, "Shouldn't I know this already?" and "Am I asking too many questions?" I started holding back when I needed help, and that only made things worse temporarily.

What helped me move past that period was the incredible support of my team. No one criticized me or made me feel embarrassed about my mistake. Instead, they reminded me that the only way to truly learn is through experience especially when you're new. My supervisor, Daniel Powers, told me directly that failure was part of the process, and that I wasn't expected to be perfect. Linda, the assistant manager, even went out of her way to explain where the error happened and how to avoid it in the future, making it a teaching moment rather than a disciplinary one.

I also began to take better notes, create my own personal reference sheet for procedures, and started organizing my ticket workflow more effectively. I asked questions more confidently and even started to answer some questions from my coworkers. That experience not only helped me recover from the initial discouragement but also built resilience that I'll carry into future roles. I now understand that mistakes are not a reflection of failure but a step toward mastery. The discomfort I felt during those early days became a catalyst for growth.

Looking back, I'm grateful for that discouraging experience. It pushed me outside of my comfort zone, taught me humility, and reminded me that progress doesn't always feel

good in the moment but it's absolutely necessary. I emerged from that low point with a deeper understanding of both technical concepts and my own potential.

9. Most Challenging Aspects

The most challenging part of the internship was learning how to balance multiple responsibilities at once in a real-time help desk environment. Tickets didn't come in on a schedule, and the priorities could shift rapidly depending on what systems were affected or who the user was. Juggling VPN issues, BIOS updates, Microsoft 365 errors, and password resets while also learning how to properly document each step in ServiceNow was overwhelming at times. I found myself needing to be fast, accurate, and calm often all at once.

One particular situation that tested me was a day when several tickets came in simultaneously, all requiring immediate attention. One user couldn't log into their account after a security update, another was trying to access a remote session from overseas, and a third was having issues with installing critical software. Managing all these cases while also receiving phone calls from users asking for status updates tested not only my technical skills, but my ability to stay composed and communicate effectively.

What made these moments difficult was not just the volume of tasks, but the fact that I didn't always know the answers right away. I had to get comfortable with saying, "Let me look into that and get back to you." In the beginning, I viewed this as a weakness, but over time, I realized it was a strength being honest, taking ownership, and following through showed professionalism and built trust.

Despite how demanding these challenges were, the positive outcomes far outweighed the tough moments. For every situation where I felt overwhelmed, there was another where I saw just how much I had grown. I started noticing that I could solve common problems much faster, anticipate what users needed, and even teach others how to avoid repeat issues. My supervisors began trusting me with more complex tasks, and I was no longer just reacting I was thinking ahead.

These challenges also taught me the value of teamwork. When I couldn't find a solution on my own, there was always someone on the team who was willing to lend their expertise. I saw firsthand how collaboration led to better outcomes and helped everyone learn and improve. It was incredibly motivating to know I wasn't alone in navigating these hurdles.

More than anything, the challenges pushed me to become more confident. I started to view each obstacle not as a setback, but as an opportunity to build new skills and prove to myself what I was capable of. These lessons in adaptability, composure, and persistence are ones I will carry with me throughout my career. By the end of the internship, the moments that once felt intimidating became some of the most rewarding. I'm proud of how I handled those situations, and I feel better equipped to take on whatever comes next in my IT journey.

10. Recommendations for Future Interns

For anyone considering an internship at Intellidyne, my biggest recommendation is to come in with an open mind and a willingness to embrace the learning process. Do not worry about being perfect from the start. Mistakes are inevitable, but they are also some of the best learning opportunities you will encounter. Take every opportunity to ask questions, even if you think they might sound basic. The team at Intellidyne is incredibly supportive and values curiosity and initiative.

I strongly encourage future interns to take detailed notes from day one. Whether it's a common troubleshooting process, a new tool you encounter, or a tip from a senior technician, write it down. I kept a dedicated notebook and referred back to it often, especially when handling repetitive tickets or when I wasn't sure of the next steps. This habit helped me build a personal knowledge base and reduced the need to repeatedly ask the same questions.

It's also important to develop strong communication and customer service skills. While technical knowledge is essential, the ability to explain solutions clearly to users; many of whom are not tech-savvy is just as crucial. Practice active listening and stay calm, especially during stressful interactions. Remember that your attitude and tone can influence how a user perceives your support, regardless of how complex the issue might be.

Before starting, it would also be helpful to familiarize yourself with tools and systems like Microsoft 365, Active Directory, ServiceNow, and remote desktop software. Having a basic understanding of how these tools function will make your onboarding smoother and allow you to hit the ground running. If you can earn a CompTIA Security+ certification in advance, that would also be beneficial, as it demonstrates your understanding of fundamental cybersecurity principles.

Finally, stay humble and take feedback seriously. The IT field is constantly evolving, and there's always more to learn. Show appreciation for the time and guidance offered by your supervisors and coworkers. Building strong relationships within the team can open doors, both professionally and personally.

11. Conclusion

Reflecting on my time at Intellidyne LLC, I can confidently say that this internship was one of the most transformative and rewarding experiences of my academic and professional journey. It not only allowed me to apply the knowledge I've gained through my coursework at Old Dominion University, but it also gave me practical, hands-on experience that helped solidify my understanding of the IT field. More importantly, it helped shape my sense of direction and confirmed that I am pursuing the right career path.

One of my biggest takeaways from the internship is the realization that I genuinely enjoy IT work. I love solving problems, working with systems, and helping users find solutions to their technical issues. Whether I was troubleshooting a VPN issue or installing software for a new user, every task came with its own sense of accomplishment. There was something incredibly satisfying about resolving issues, especially when I could see the immediate impact it had on the user's productivity. That sense of purpose is something I hope to carry with me into every future role.

Another major realization was how varied and expansive the IT field truly is. Over the course of the internship, I had the opportunity to observe and interact with professionals working in different roles Tier 2 technicians, cybersecurity analysts, project managers, and system administrators. Everyone had a unique background, and many of them took nontraditional paths into IT. This was both encouraging and enlightening. It showed me that there's no one right way to break into tech, and that perseverance and curiosity can be just as valuable as certifications and degrees.

This experience also changed how I see my time remaining at ODU. I now understand how critical it is to take advantage of every learning opportunity, whether it's a class, project, or conversation with a professor. The internship helped connect the dots between classroom theory and real-world application, and I feel more motivated than ever to finish strong. I want to seek out more practical experiences, participate in labs, and possibly even pursue another internship if time permits.

Professionally, this internship gave me a clearer picture of the kind of environment I want to work in. I thrive in supportive, collaborative teams where questions are encouraged, and knowledge sharing is part of the culture. I appreciated how the team at Intellidyne pushed me to think critically but also created a space where I felt safe to grow. That kind of culture is something I will prioritize when seeking full-time employment.

In terms of career planning, I'm still exploring the exact role I want to pursue. The internship exposed me to so many exciting possibilities from cybersecurity to system administration that it's difficult to pick just one path. However, that exposure was incredibly helpful in showing me what the day-to-day responsibilities of each role look like. I now feel better equipped to ask the right questions, do further research, and eventually choose a direction that aligns with both my skills and interests.

Ultimately, my time at Intellidyne confirmed that IT is where I belong. It challenged me, motivated me, and helped me grow in ways I didn't expect. I'm incredibly grateful for the experience and excited about what lies ahead. With the confidence and skills I've gained, I feel ready to take the next step in my journey and I look forward to seeing how far I can go.