Ellen: My path into cybersecurity

My name is Ellen and I am a security engineering manager at Google focused in on how Google uses the cloud.
Cybersecurity wasn't a field when I got started in technology, something I came to later.
I got started in technology when I was working retail at a poster store.
And we needed to build a website and my feet hurt and I really needed to sit down.
And so I asked friends to teach me how to do HTML so I could sit down while working and I could let my blisters have a rest.
While I was at the poster store, one of our customers worked at a start up and used to get employee photos framed and they asked them for feedback on my website, and they ended up giving me an internship.
One of the specialties that I ended up having was API design or designing the interface by which a developer communicates with the machine.
As part of that, I got into a job where I was designing a miniature version of an operating system for security technology and started learning security from there.
Most of the people I know from cyber security, especially in the early days, do not have a degree at all.
Or if they do, they have a degree like I do in something like philosophy or poetry.
Almost everyone learned on their own by experimenting, by talking to people, by reading.
And so I would say no technical background is required.
And in fact, having a background where you're used to being out in the real world can sometimes make cybersecurity make more sense and help you make more balanced choices.
In almost all areas, there is a security community that you can find.
Figure out where they are, look for local conferences, start talking to people.
It's a lot more fun to learn that way than it is in a vacuum.
I've found that most people if you come to them and say, hey, you're really good at this thing, would you mind if I bought you a coffee and you showed me how to do it?
That they'll always pretty much say yes.
The advice I give to people who don't have technical backgrounds, the first one is, I wouldn't be afraid of the technology.
It can seem like only somebody with a computer science degree could ever understand things, but these concepts, these technologies are understandable by anyone.
And so never let the fact that you might not have a technical background get in the way, just pick an area that interests you and start diving in.
And as long as you're curious, and as long as you find it interesting, you'll, you'll learn the technology.

Revision #1
Created 2023-07-04 10:53:14 UTC by naruzkurai
Updated 2023-07-04 11:18:30 UTC by naruzkurai