



Eugene Dipanda

Cyber Defense
and Response

Introduce yourself. Where do you work? What is your job role?

I'm Eugene, I'm from Cameroon and I work for KPMG in Belfast as Cyber Response Manager.

What does your job entail?

My day-to-day job involves responding to cyber security incidents and attacks. It's similar to being a cyber policeman or firefighter. I assist organisations in their response to incidents by offering guidance, advice, and recommendations, as well as conducting investigations and digital forensic analysis of evidence to determine how the hacker infiltrated their network and what actions they took while there. Based on our findings, we provide recommendations to prevent future attacks.

How did you get into this line of work?

I started as a part-time network engineer in a telecommunications company, but when a permanent job opened in the cybersecurity department, my manager encouraged me to apply. After a few weeks, I fell in love with security and worked in the field for four years before being appointed as the Group Incident Manager at the head office in South Africa. From then on, my interest has been solely focused on cyber response.

Outline your career to date

During my final year of graduation, I was offered an internship with the network team of Africa's leading telecommunications company. After graduating, I was hired as a temporary resource to support the network team for two years. Later, I had the opportunity to join the cybersecurity team, which was responsible for ensuring overall security across the company. After approximately four years, I was appointed as an Incident Response Manager at the company's head office in South Africa. It was during my fourth year in that position when KPMG offered me the opportunity to become a Cyber Response Manager in their Belfast office.

Tell us about your qualifications and training

I earned a master's degree in Industrial Engineering with a specialization in Telecommunications and Information Technology from the University of Douala, Cameroon. Throughout my career, I have completed various trainings and obtained certifications such as the Systems Security Certified Practitioner accredited by ISC2, Information Technology Infrastructure Library, Root Cause Analysis, Crucial Conversation, Project Management Fundamentals, and more.

What qualities are required for your job – personal and professional?

To be successful in this job, curiosity is essential. A willingness to delve deeper and understand the details of a situation is crucial for investigations. Additionally, being well-organized is critical for structuring and correlating information received during an incident. For me, people management is also key. I enjoy interacting with people, and it helps me to effectively manage both my team and clients.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

Difficult to say, most advice is important, but if I must choose one, it's "Never let your thoughts or people limit you; there is no limit in what you can do or who you can be".

What do you like to do in your spare time?

In my spare time, I like to do programming, I like the idea of conceiving and inventing things, challenging my creativity. So, I fulfil that by designing and building websites, graphic designs, or scripts to automate repetitive tasks and ease my life. When I'm not in front of my computer, I like to relax by watching comedy shows such as 'The Bing Bang Theory', it makes me laugh and helps me keep my mood up. I also like my PlayStation or reading inspirational autobiography books. Alternatively, I spend time in my car, driving or cleaning it.

Tell us an interesting fact about yourself?

When I was a kid, I was always destroying my toys to understand what's inside, how it works and then I was trying to put everything back. Not always successful but I guess that's where I developed my curiosity.

Who has inspired you most in your life?

My father, he taught me the importance of humility, dignity, and family values. Despite his modest salary, he always provided for us and made sure we never lacked anything.

What advice would you give your 16-year-old self?

Do not doubt yourself, you are more than enough, continue doing the right thing and believe in yourself. Target the stars and always try to make a positive impact around you. And books are a real treasure, try to read more, you will like it.