Studying for CompTIA Security+
Exam SYO-101

Mark D. Watson

Dr. Houston H. Carr
MNGT 6040
Advanced Data Communications
During the summer of 2004, I signed up for Dr. Houston H. Carr’s certification class. This is known as MNGT 6040 Advanced Data Communications. I had taken this class the previous semester, and I had gotten certified in Novell Netware 6.0 exam 650-677. This semester I decided to get certified in CompTIA’s Security+ exam SYO-101. To accomplish passing this Security+ exam, I devoted several days time preparing and studying.

I began studying for my Security+ certification about two weeks into the summer semester of 2004. I first went to Booksamillion here in Auburn and searched for about an hour through all of their books for getting certified in Security+. I finally decided to buy Security+ Fast Pass by James Michael Stewart which was around thirty dollars.

I began reading Security+ Fast Pass probably about a week after getting it. I tried at first to read about thirty pages a week. But towards the end of the semester that number grew to sixty or seventy. For the first sixty pages or so, when I came to a word I did not understand I would just skip it and move on just trying to finish the book. Then I realized the shear number of these words kept growing rapidly, with most of these words being technology related that I should definitely know for this exam. So, I printed out the glossary for this book that was in a PDF document located on the CD that came with this book. Now, when I came to a word I did not understand I would simply look in the glossary right away. By doing this my reading time increased greatly and my understanding in turn was much better.

Also as a supplement to this book the CD in the back of the book contained two practice exams with around 50 questions on each exam. These practice exams were set up like the real exam with a time limit on each question so it will put more pressure on you to prepare you for the real exam. In conjunction to the practice exam in the CD there was also a flash card program that would ask questions to see if you understood the material. I went through the practice exams and flashcards about three times after reading the Security+ Fast Pass.

With the advice of other class mates I used a P2P file swapping program to look for more practice exams with different questions. I believe I downloaded about six of these exams, but about four of them ended up being the same thing just different names. I went through these exams about two and a half times. Something about these particular exams that I didn’t realize how helpful it was till after the exam was these practice exams had an explanation why the answer given was the correct answer.

In conclusion there were still several questions on the Security+ exam that stumped me. I should have read the book a second time as I did everything else to help me gain a more concrete knowledge of Security+. But as the end of the semester was near, I did not have the time or the will power to begin reading the book from scratch again. I strongly feel I would have only missed at most six or seven questions if I would have read the book one more time.