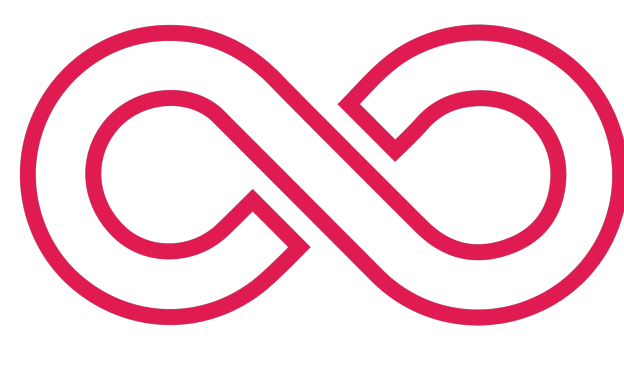


10 STEPS TO BECOME A KICKASS DEVOPS ENGINEER



STEP 1

Understand What DevOps Isn't!

One of the early stumbling blocks in most peoples' DevOps journey is their wrong perception of the term. Just as DevOps is about a lot of things, it's also not about a lot of things. For instance, if you stop at just merging the development and operations teams, it's not DevOps. You have to adopt certain practices and processes and follow them across your entire delivery pipeline. DevOps does not equal Agile.

Obviously, coding skills are essential—at least when it comes to the usual suspects like Python, Ruby, JavaScript, and Perl. You have to be good at programming to understand the hurdles that dedicated programmers face when they develop the software. If you're a competent programmer, you'll also enable a DevOps engineer to comprehend how feasible that code will be in their production environment.



STEP 2

Get Fluent in Programming Languages

STEP 3

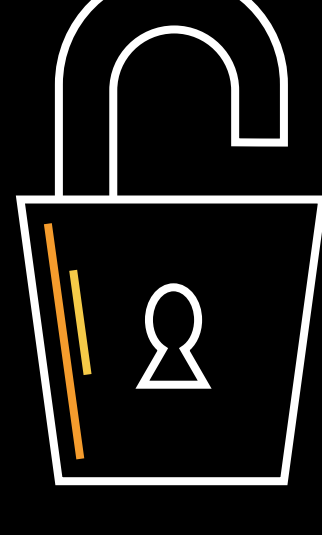
Gain Knowledge About Different DevOps Tools



As you'd expect, there are a plethora of DevOps tools available in the market. The immediate question—namely, "What's the best DevOps tool to use?"—has no single correct answer. It depends on multiple factors, such as the team's size, the SDLC stage at which you'll use the tool, and unique needs of the given environment. It would be inaccurate to say that a successful DevOps implementation is all about the tools. But being familiar with the industry standard tools and knowing which tools work the best in what environments is vital for the success of a DevOps engineer.

STEP 4

The ability to write secure code is one of the must-have skills for a DevOps engineer. A successful DevOps environment fosters quicker development cycles and code deployment. But this also opens the gates to more vulnerabilities than before in the process. The concept of DevSecOps, which boils down to embedding security into the DevOps pipeline, is gaining popularity. And the extent of security skills expected from DevOps engineers is also on the rise.



Embrace Security

STEP 5

Familiarize Yourself with System Administration

Experience in Windows/Linux administration can come in handy for a DevOps engineer. That's why you'll see a lot of sysadmins switching to (or trying to switch to) DevOps. Although they're two different roles, they do share some common technical skills. For instance, if you're a sysadmin, you're probably already familiar with monitoring, OS admin, and scripting. Fortunately, those are part of the requirements for a career in DevOps as well.

STEP 6

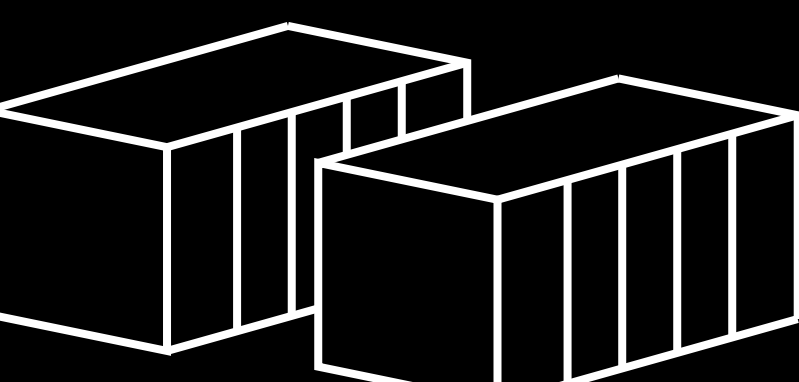
For the most part, DevOps and the cloud go hand-in-hand. Together, DevOps and the cloud can enable easier IT automation and faster deployment rates, and they can promote better collaboration across version control and other such functions. Moreover, inculcating DevOps in cloud management systems makes hybrid cloud management—a popular option for many organizations—possible.

Make Friends with Cloud Platforms



STEP 7

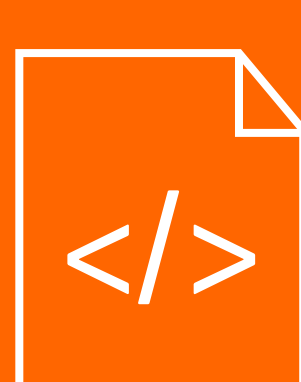
Eat and Sleep Containers



Experience in containerization can be the feather in the cap of a DevOps pro's resume. Containers are an attractive option for many organizations. It eases developers' workloads and offers enhanced portability, versatility, and reliability. It's no wonder that many leading DevOps service providers have containerization services in their army. Consequently, they're on the lookout for people experienced in containerization tools like Docker, Kubernetes, and ClusterHQ.

STEP 8

Gain Experience in Infrastructure Automation Tools



DevOps without infrastructure automation is like owning a horse but only letting it run inside your farm. Although it'd be wrong to say that DevOps is completely about automation, automation is an absolutely essential component of DevOps. That's because scripting languages can automate many monotonous IT tasks that are otherwise performed manually. And as a general thumb rule, the more stuff you automate, the bigger the benefits you reap.

STEP 9

Enhance Your Testing Skills

Testing directly affects the extent to which your DevOps implementation succeeds. If your testing isn't fast and accurate enough, it doesn't matter how quickly DevOps accelerates the rate of delivery. Ineffective testing could well become a bottleneck in your delivery pipeline.

More specifically, continuous testing, which calls for executing automated tests to evaluate risks involved, is vital in any DevOps adoption. Thus, continuous testing makes it onto the list of a DevOps engineer's must-have skills.

STEP 10

Don't Underestimate Non-Technical Skills

There are a few important non-technical skills that play a major role in shaping an individual's DevOps career:

COLLABORATION

DevOps nurtures an environment of shared responsibility. Having a one-man-army attitude might help you make the cut for some jobs out there, but DevOps engineer isn't one of them.

CUSTOMER-FOCUSED MINDSET

Consistently meeting the customers' needs is one of the ultimate business goals of any DevOps professional. That's why a customer-centric mindset is a trademark of any successful DevOps engineer.

COMMUNICATION

DevOps Engineers work with almost all the engineering departments, and often they'll also have to work with people from diverse technical backgrounds. This means they might have to explain complex situations to people who are experts in other fields but not in the specific field involved.

FLEXIBILITY

Great DevOps professionals always focus on what they can do to add value to the business, considering the current scenario of things. Thus, in a career where multiple stakeholders at different levels are often involved, the ability to be flexible can set great engineers apart from the good.



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