# Transcript: It Podcast - Ep 48 - CI - Cloud Table Talk with Demetria Crawford and LaQuetta Glaze

*The following transcript is a verbatim account of the video or audio file accompanying this transcript.*

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

 [MUSIC] WGU's IT audio series, flexible, portable, profound.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

Welcome to the Cloud table talk. Today, we'll be discussing things to know as you enter the Cloud program. It'll be a conversation between two faculty members, LaQuetta Glaze and Demetria Crawford. I'll introduce myself first. I'm a Program Mentor with WGU. My job highlights include 22 years of active duty army and civil service. As a senior IT leader in consultant, my last duty was to implement virtualization and Cloud computing. Now, I'll hand it over to Demetria so that she can introduce herself.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Hello. My name is Demetria Crawford. I am a course instructor for the Cloud Computing Program. I've been in IT for well over 20 years now. I've done everything from starting out at the very bottom, from help desk support and desktop support to working my way up to networking and working in a data center to security, all the way up to actually work in into some Cloud solutions, designing Cloud solutions for organizations. I've been with WGU for about five years now and excited to further support our students here.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

Awesome. We'll start our first question with you. It'll start with, which certification do you think is better? Azure or AWS? Should a Cloud professional have some or extensive knowledge in both?

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Excellent question. There isn't a preference personally, as far as which one is better. You can accomplish most tests that you need to do within a data center for an organization with either choices. It tends to become a personal preference. However, depending on the environment that you're working in, if you're in more of a Linux-based environment, you're going to find more AWS in that type of environment. Whereas, if you're dealing with more Windows-based, you're going to see more Azure. Now, here's the catch. A lot of major companies, your big environments are going to have both. Getting your foot into a little bit of both, but having one that you are a master of is a great idea. I took it upon myself. I believe in having an understanding of a lot of different areas so that when approached about a topic, for example, do you believe your company should go with AWS or do you believe they should go with Azure? How do you answer that question when you only know one? Being a master of one, choosing a path, whether AWS or Azure and then at least knowing the basic foundations of what services the other offers is always a good idea.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

That's some good insight. That is in line with my experience as well. It really depends on the environment and depends on who you're working for at the time and what they have available. Excellent advice.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Okay. I have a question for you LaQuetta?

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

Yes, ma'am. Let's go.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

All right. I am an AWS fan. As an AWS partner, WGU's AWS course instructors are certified in the courses that we support, which includes becoming a certified AWS Academy Instructor. What that means is that we've actually passed a certification and exemplify that we understand the content to AWS as a organization. We actually had to do a teach back. With that in mind, how can our Cloud computing students leverage or benefit from communicating with our course instructors?

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

First of all, let me congratulate you and the team for going through all of that process. I'm sure it wasn't an easy process to go through. Congratulations on that.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Thank you [LAUGHTER] [inaudible]

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

Well, I'll say what I say to most of our students, but I want to also emphasize that this is the important concept here. The concept is that we never do anything alone. There's always one person or somebody that helps us along the way. The WGU model provides two types of people, and both of those people are critical to the student success. Students can receive valuable insight into the certification directly from someone who has had the experience of taking the example for them and has had experience in the field as well. Those course instructors, as well as yourself, can provide a pathway to avoiding certain pitfalls and highlighting resources that are helpful to the student. It is important that the students overcome the stigma that comes with connecting with an instructor. Sometimes there's something in that student that says I could do it on my own. But why do you need to do it on your own is really the question. One of the things I highlight with them is to receive the detailed assistance from somebody who's already walked the path. You need it and you deserve to have that experience inside of your college journey. That's my answer on that question.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Excellent. Thank you.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

Well, my second question to you is, what can a student do to set themselves apart as a new person, a new career into the Cloud computing space?

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Another good question LaQuetta. [LAUGHTER] This holds dear to my heart. The reason is this is how I begin my journey. There's nothing more gratifying to an organization, a manager, a leader who's hiring a person, who's a self motivator, someone who is willing to build their own lab because they want to learn more. Any field in IT and technology, you're constantly learning. You're constantly growing. Your journey doesn't end with your degree as far as learning because technology changes every other day. We know that. We enjoy that. We love that. What sets a person apart is your ability to maintain not just what you learned from your journey through your academic career, but to be able to continue that process. I encourage students, okay, once you finish your courses, how can you build on that? What can you build at home now that you have learned how to build virtual machines in your virtualization courses that will allow you to continue to play and tinker? I'll share one of the things I did when I first started out and I'm about to tell my age here, but I'm okay with it.[LAUGHTER] I'm 45. I'll be 46 in August. I don't mind [LAUGHTER]. [inaudible] Back in the Windows NT days, Windows NT 4.0. That was such a long time ago. We can really share the same story. Go ahead.[LAUGHTER]. One of the things I did, I found some really old desktops. They didn't even have a case on them. I took about four of them. I had a old hub and I plugged them all up at my house. I built Windows NT servers on four of them not three of them and I ran Exchange on it. The Docker build a mail server and I created a whole entire company, and gave it a name called Juicy Business or something like that. The Juice Seller and I created account [OVERLAPPING] [LAUGHTER] I had a CEO, CFO, you name it and I created a domain. Well, at that time we didn't have active directory, but we had domain. I had domain account setup and create emails, and email boxes, mailboxes and sending emails back and forth. That journey, it built up the excitement for me. But when I shared what I was doing in an interview, the interview I went on I wasn't qualified for, I didn't have the credentials. There were people at the table that had more credentials than me. All I had at that time was help desk desktop support. But I was applying for a server position. I wanted more money. What got me in the door and past the door to actually getting a position was my eagerness to learn. If you can get that, it sets you apart. Your attitude towards learning makes a difference and your willingness to enjoy the journey, it will open up doors. Yes, you need the certifications. Yes, you need the degree. These things help. But when you bring that enjoyment for learning and a passion for technology, it can take you through doors you never imagined you could make it through.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

I agree. That's an excellent answer and I have experienced that on both ends as an employee and as an employer. I would rather have the person who is passionate about it and is willing to learn. Because as networks change because they inevitably will, you'll know that person would be able to flow with the changes and not be stuck trying to do trust relationships with Windows 4.0. Windows NT [inaudible] [LAUGHTER] Excellent, thank you ma'am.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

You're welcome. Let's see. I need a good juicy question for you in the name of my juicy business.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

That's all right.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

WGU provides a standard path for the courses required to complete the Cloud computing degree. From a program mentor's perspective, why is it important for students to follow the standard path?

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

I get this question from so many students, "Why can't I just take all the cool classes right now?" One of the things I start out saying, let's understand what a standard path is right now. A standard path is designed to help you build on each competency that you learn through out every term. This is especially important for students who are new to the concepts of implementing information technology. Skipping to the cool classes would actually do a student a disservice if they miss out on common but important concepts such as subnetting. If a person's skips their first few classes such as networking and A Plus certifications and moves into the virtualization classes as an example, they miss out on the foundational concepts of building a physical computer and how that translates into building a virtual. It's all a building block, it's all building on that same concept, but it's important to have a solid foundation. You'll hear me probably preach about that until I'm gone. I preach about all my life in every aspect because it's important to have a foundation in everything that we do. The more solid their foundation is, the better off you are enabled to connect different concepts. Matter of fact, as an example, in my own life since you were talking about Windows NT, when I learned how to build trust relationship, I had built a lab and everything and was working on my network. I don't remember the name of it though so you're better than me, but in that regard. But understanding trust relationships in Windows NT helped me to understand database trust relationships as well. The concept wasn't foreign so when it was time for me to understand database concepts, it just all unfolded for me. But it was because I had that foundation in understanding how to build the computer trust relationship.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

I think we'd sometimes lose focus on the importance, as you said, of foundations. Just thinking about it, both you and I mentioned about Windows NT. No one even knows where Windows NT is anymore.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

You don't even know the psyche you need to learn.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Yes. No one knows what that is. But the foundation of learning from that has never changed and just building on top of it. When you build a solid foundation, it can take you into a 20, 30 year career as we're just realizing and talking about on this things to know, Cloud Table Talk.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

Yes, ma'am. My last question for you today is what are the basics I need to know before beginning the Clouds certifications? What kind of networking or foundational that ecosystem. It's actually tying back into what we just got through talking about. Tell me a little bit about your perspective.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Perfect. I'm going to fall back on to what I was mentioning about my own career growth and how it was a stepping ladder. Everything I did from the beginning, from the foundational basics, build on each other and went from desktops to servers, from servers to networking, from networking to security, from security to Cloud computing. Well, how do you run a network without knowing what your networking? How do you build on what you know if you don't have a foundation? Perfect example you mentioned about subnetting. If a student's learning subnetting in some of our courses like our Network Plus course, for example, that is fundamental because when you start building your virtual data center, they have to be able to communicate. You have to provide ways to provide security in that. How do you do that if you don't understand what firewalls are? These are things that you learned in the earlier courses. How do you learn about Cloud computing and building the infrastructure in the Cloud if you don't understand what the components of the infrastructure are which are things that you learn in A Plus? How do you build on that? So the basics that you need before beginning Cloud certifications, I would definitely recommend when you're starting this series of courses to really get the most out of the foundational courses that you're taking. If it is A Plus, we're covering the desktop. But it's the theory about the things that work and make a desktop function. Because it carries over as the same thing in a server. A desktop has RAM, so there's a server. You get into virtualization. You create a virtual platform. Guess what it's going to have? RAM. It follows, it builds all on each other. I would definitely tell students to treat the courses that you're taking in the beginning as if they're the courses you're taking at the end. All right. Get the most out of the courses so that you build on it the same way you build your career. Everything is a stepping stone and I can't stress that enough.

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

 Right. This actually ties back to a running joke I used to hear about when we first started lab when Cloud started to become a thing. I would be trying to find the words as a senior IT person, an advocate and a person who had to defend a budget. I had to find the words to describe it to non-technical people. One of the things I would say is, you know that a Cloud computing is not computer that's actually in the Cloud, it is just a computer somewhere else. That concept we can tie into what you all said earlier. It's still a computer. It still has the basic components. You still need to understand those foundations. So thank you ma'am.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Well, I have one final question for this series for the day. All right. The Cloud Computing program offers a series of virtualization courses and Cloud computing courses, how important are the skills learned from these courses in today's job market?

Speaker #2 (LaQuetta Glaze):

I would say that the concepts of desktop and data center virtualization are important in a job market because it's important for Cloud students to understand the differences between virtualization and Cloud computing. They need to understand that Cloud and virtualization can be used separately or together in an organization. I don't think there's immediate knowledge without having some kind of training in that area. One of the things I experienced was that the computer engineers who had a foundational understanding of both concepts performed their jobs extremely well and we're highly sought after in the market. That would be my answer to a student if they asked how those classes tie in. I have had to answer that question before knowing it's half the battle.

Speaker #3 (Demetria Crawford):

Exactly. I love your response in knowing the difference between the two although we can implement virtualization and Cloud computing, there's also a sod that separates itself off. Right now in this market where we have people working from home we're finding ways to leverage and create scalability to where organizations are saving money. We're finding ways to decrease the amount of what I call real estate required to run servers. Because now we have virtualization, but we also have a way that we can offset that somewhere else by using Cloud computing. This market, I'll say is on fire. I love it. This has been so fun. I believe that we've covered a lot of information that our students can really gain from. Thank you so much for joining me today. Thank you for having me. This has been a wonderful experience and hope that you guys enjoy it. Have a great day.

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

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