# Transcript: IT Pod - EP 167- CCNA 2 - Jeff Ferdinand and Jessica Galterio - mixdown

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Speaker # 1: Jessica Galterio

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Speaker # 2: Jeff Ferdinand

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Jessica

Welcome back to the IT Audio Series. I am Jessica Galterio and I've been a program mentor with WGU since 2015. Today I have with me Jeff Ferdinand from the Cisco team who has been working in this role with WGU since 2013. Thanks for joining me again, Jeff.

Jeff

Thank you again. Happy to be here.

Jessica

Last episode we talked about how to get started and prepare to start for the course. In this episode, I want to really dive in on what you recommend students do to actually study. How do we get through that content? Do you want to start first with some general tips?

Jeff

Yeah. First general tip is to go through the content. Just because we get some feedback on that. People trying to skip here and there. Definitely recommend, go through all the WGU course content. Then we can go into focus points. But general tips on how to study, because there is some memorization for the Cisco exam of course. Things that you need to know, default, acronyms, just general setup. One of the things that you can do after you've gone through all of the material is to sit down and mentally set up a network, run through the steps of what you would do if you were setting it up and think about how the information moves. Because that's the important part of networking. That's pretty much what you're doing is getting information from one point to another and making information accessible for your work or your group, or wherever you're at. But if you sit down and think of it that way and think okay, what is the information going through? What's happening to the packet, the data? What's going on here from end-user device through the switch to the router, am I hitting VLANs, am I using any process to make sure that the information gets where it's supposed to get and what's required for those processes to work and just actually think through it. Because that'll help you a lot. Conceptualizing overall and make it easier for you. Just a quick general tip there. The other thing, and these are study tips is the default. Cisco likes defaults. Pay attention to those.

Jessica

Okay.

Jeff

As you go through you come across configuration. Take note of those. When you're studying a lot of people do the memorization. Sometimes that work, sometimes it doesn't. If you're using flashcards, excellent. If you're not using flashcards, there are other techniques and we've got just go offers a whiteboard so you want to utilize that as well. You can incorporate that in your studies. Because a lot of these, once you've been through the studies or as you're going through, you pick up items, especially those defaults, default timers, administrative distance, and these will be more recognizable as a student goes through. But you pick those up and you start writing those items on that one-page whiteboard. You can take printer paper, you can take a document and just type it out. But if you do that once or twice a day from say about the midpoint of study till the exam time. Those are items that you're not really going to have to put that mental energy and do.

Jessica

Right.

Jeff

Because you spend five minutes focused on it, putting down the configuration, putting down the defaults, and it becomes almost muscle memory. You can utilize your mental energy on other items that you want to focus more on. Those things that you would usually spend a lot of time going through flashcards or doing, taking time to memorize. You don't need to do as much there. You just focus for that set amount of time once or twice a day and do it every day. It doesn't makes it that much easier for you.

Jessica

Yeah.

Jeff

Minimizes some of what you have to memorize.

Jessica

When you say whiteboard, do you mean a virtual whiteboard or a physical one?

Jeff

If a person goes in for a testing and they get a physical one, you take it online, you get the virtual. We actually in the student folder, we have a link to where you can practice utilizing the one that's given on the online environment. Which is an excellent idea because it's not what you'd expect.

Jessica

Right. I've heard about that from students that that whiteboard, threw them off. That's a great tip. Not only does it help prepare for the content on the exam, but actually what you'll be doing during the exam as well. Can you go back to the focus is for each?

Jeff

Well, the focus is more of after you studied what you want to do, and what you want to focus on. Really that comes down to the first three topics and we'll get more into that when we're talking about the review.

Jessica

Jeff why don't you give us a couple of techniques to help students make this information stick?

Jeff

The first technique is, what I mentioned before, is once you've gone through or as you're going through to think of that information, what's happening to it? What's going on with a network? How are things working through? Second one is the whiteboard use. As you go through, you put defaults, you put items you don't want to spend so much time trying to memorize. You choose those for that whiteboard that you get when you sit for the exam, either the physical or if you're doing the online virtual whiteboard, you take 5-7 minutes, once or twice a day, and you focus, you fully focus on writing those down. Either the default config with Command Prompt so you know what mode you're in and where you show commands, the defaults requirements for neighbor relationships and things like that. You write those down and you focus on it. It becomes almost muscle memory. The other, as you get closer to the end of studies, you sit down. We'll go more into this with the review. You sit down with a topic guide and you run through that almost as a check-off list to make sure you've got things down and refresh. You can use visualization techniques and those can be very helpful. Because what you can do is associate words with the terms or associate a sentence with the terms. Instead of doing that if that item doesn't work for you is to take and do a mental picture, either create one and attach whatever you're trying to learn to the different items in the mental picture. A great way to do this is to take something you see every day and take a few minutes to visualize that, and start adding meaning to those images, attaching what you're trying to learn to those images. Do that daily as well. Pretty soon you'll associate those items so that you can visualize that picture, and those items will pop up and it's about like they used to when getting somewhat of a memory palace idea, but not quite as in depth. Those are different techniques that you can utilize to try to study. Going back to the item of pathing or thinking your way through a network, you can also write one out. You can utilize hands-on to some degree by utilizing Packet Tracer. We have cohorts for that for labs.

Jessica

Good.

Jeff

You can start utilizing Packet Tracer. We've set things up, play with items and see how it actually works.

Jessica

Right. Well, I think these are wonderful tips and I think it's so important too, because a lot of us, we just end up in a passive place with our education. We just read the content and take the exam. When the reality is how we learn things is by doing, sometimes that can be a little difficult in an online arena. How do we make this applicable? How do I practice this? But I love these tips of doing it as you go. It really does become a second nature and it's something as simple as like operating your car. You just know how to do it because you've done it a million times along the way as you were learning.

Jeff

Yes. You're incorporating it.

Jessica

That's great. Thank you very much for going over all of these wonderful study tips. Again, probably one of the best things any student can do is book time with their course instructor to make this plan more personalized and specific to them. But there's a lot of great stuff in here that I know students can utilize as they're going through the content.

Jeff

Definitely. Any questions, any concerns on how to study or if a person is stuck or their studying is just not working for them, things aren't clicking. It's just like staring at a wall and seeing the same thing over and over again. Any of those cases or just in general, touch-based with us, let us know because we can help you get past that.

Jessica

Definitely. Well, thank you for listening to this episode of the IT Audio Series. In the final episode of our CCNA mini-series, we will discuss how to review for the exam, so please be sure to check that out and other episodes of the IT Audio Series.

Schedule time with your instructor to explore more deeply. WGU, a new kind of you.