# Du'An Lightfoot
*Developer Advocate at Cisco*

## Real-life Programmers

This series lets developers share their journey as a way to inspire others. Get to know Du'An:

## Initial goal

Was struggling to make my way in civilian life after serving in the Air Force. Decided to attend a bootcamp to revise my skills. That's where I did my CCNA and decided to be a network engineer.

## His journey

After the Air Force, I was thinking, "I'm a war veteran. I have top-secret clearance. I have the skills. The world is just waiting on me." And that didn't happen because I didn't know how to sell my military skills in the civilian world. Went from the service desk to a network technician after finishing my CCNA. Had a lot of support in that position to be successful, so I took advantage of that and did my CCNP. Moved to a job for the government, then a health tech company and now Cisco.

## How stars aligned for success

**1.** After the government job, was a network engineer for a large organization. This is when my skills really kept growing in networking automation, and that's how I got to where I am today.

**2.** My technical lead there showed me the possibilities and encouraged me to take risks with my code. This helped me tremendously.

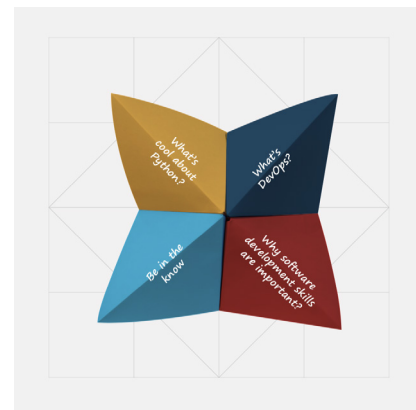**3.** One key thing for my career has been relationships. I see value in everybody.

## Favorite part of the job

- Learning all these cool technologies
- Being around amazing people
- And seeing how far networking has come

## Advice for others

1. Don't doubt yourself (everything you want to learn, you can learn)

2. Put yourself out there (don't be afraid that you're not worthy of building relationships with people who are where you want to be)

3. Share what you're learning (go to meetups)

**Is programming in your future? Click to find out.**