

Sharpen your skill - face the ever-changing world by *Winston Chan*

Like most of you, I had got lost in finding my career direction. Have no idea how to start my career or what can I be after graduating. Through joining different activities provided by CityU and the Department of Management, I had explored different new things and found the direction suits me.

I believe the university is not only a place for you to gain knowledge, but it is also a place for you to discover the world and build your network. In my university life at the City University of Hong Kong, I took part in different enrichment programmes and activities to broaden our horizons and explore the world. During my 4-year university life, I am very lucky to have participated in different internship programmes and engage in an exchange programme.

What to expect from an intern job?

“Can I really benefit from an internship?” This is a question that most university students have struggled with. I would say it depends on the efforts you spent on it. Undeniably, an intern may only be responsible for tedious administrative work. However, I believe those routine tasks are an important time for you to learn about the ways of work, the company, or even the industry. I would like to share my experience since my first internship.

I had my first internship in the private sector during the second summer vacation at university. That internship helped me built a solid foundation in office skills and communication in the workplace. I worked in the Distribution Training and Development department at a



multinational insurance company. My role was to assist in their daily training operations and keep track of the training evaluation and also maintaining the course registration process and participation status. Most of the tasks are regular administrative works. Although these tasks seem easy to a lot of people, for me these tasks are new to me. As this was my first office work, I had no experience in lots of office skills like

using excel to manage data and other administrative skills like photocopying and filing

documents. Luckily, my colleagues were very nice to me and taught me a lot of these tiny but useful skills.

To others, these tasks are tedious and boring. However, I do not think so. I remember a sharing by our alumni. He said, “Photocopying may seem to be a boring and not a value-added task for most of the people.” But to him, it is a chance that he can learn about the company, learn the way of work of other colleagues. To an inexperienced worker in a company, a quick grasp of the company's



background and information is important. By reading their training materials and feedbacks from new joiners, I am able to get the information I need quickly and efficiently.

After working in an insurance company for a month, I entered a British pharmaceutical company and worked as an industrial placement in their HR department. I spent six months in this company, the first two months were full-time intern and the remaining months were part-time. With the skills equipped during the last internship, I was able to handle routine and administrative works assigned by my manager. Trust was built based on my daily performance and after a month my manager started to involve in other functions in HR like recruitment and



talent management. And also participated in an HR project to create better HR services to our employees. This opportunity provides me the chance to understand the more about the daily operations and experience the importance of HR in a company. It was a great opportunity that I could have a taste of different functions and explore the HR world and I was benefited in that internship a lot and it helped me to identify my future direction.

With all these experiences in different industries and workstreams, I applied for an internship position in one of the Big 4 accounting firms. Those big 4 firms do not just provide auditing services, they also provide different kinds of advisory services. I was selected to join their summer internship programme in the People and Change team which is under Management

Consulting. This team mainly provides professional people consulting and change management services to clients and solve their immediate needs. HR consulting is totally a different world in the HR industry. No regular payroll to handle or employee inquiries to answer, our job is to provide a solution to address the client's needs. This experience was so different from my past in-house internship experience. More than knowing how different HR functions work, you also need to learn how to provide deliverables to clients and provide professional services to clients. One of my engagements was to assist in a change management project in which I have work in the client's office. The one working next to is not your colleague but your customer. The expectation of your deliverables is high as it is a product to be presented to your clients. This internship brought an extraordinary experience not many interns have the opportunity to face clients in their first assignment.

It was a remarkable and delightful experience which helped me to find the right way to start my career. I found that the industry is dynamic, and I can keep learning and facing new things through different engagements and projects. It becomes my goal in finding my graduate job.

To answer the question at the beginning of this section, I believe we can benefit from each internship, no matter the size of the company or the industry as an internship is to provide you a chance to explore and know what you want to do in the future. And it is crucial to equip several mindsets, namely attention to detail, problem-solving oriented, credibility, etc. I believe these skills will do facilitate in your future career no matter what industry you work in or what position. I have my sharing can give you some insights into looking for interns or finding your future way. Good Luck to you in all your endeavours.

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Date: July 2020