

My Internship Experience

During the summer of 2010 I traveled to Poland in order to intern for the Warsaw Business Journal. As one of the country's preferred English business publication, WBJ is offered complimentary on all inbound LOT flights that arrive at Lotnisko Chopina w Warszawie, the capital's airport. The start of my internship was personally a very memorable experience due to the fact that I began on my birthday - the 24th of May. Little did I know that I would be faced with my first task as a WBJ intern before even stepping into the office. The task, interestingly enough, was getting to the office. This challenge can be attributed to the fact that I initially lived thirty minutes from the Warsaw Business Journal headquarters, in the kabaty section of Warsaw. The kind staff of Collegium Civitas (The university that assigned me the internship) offered to assist me with transportation on my first day of work, although I found myself determined to learn the route without assistance. On the morning of May 24th, utilizing Warsaw's public transportation system (with a little help from www.jakdojade.pl), I was able to arrive at the WBJ office after only having made two directional mistakes. In retrospect, I can confidently conclude that the time (six weeks) I spent living and working in Warsaw was one of the most memorable experiences of my life.

For the duration of my internship at Warsaw Business Journal, I was exposed to the firm's unique structure, managerial hierarchy, daily function, strengths and weaknesses. The objective of this analysis is to present my personal observations relative to the above-mentioned aspects of WBJ. I will also attempt to integrate examples of personal encounters I had with staff members to illustrate the synergy of the firm's human capital. This will compliment my perception of how the firm itself functions in a variety of categories. I believe that my six-week internship at Warsaw Business Journal provided me with the perfect amount of time to absorb and understand the firm, as well as the niche that that it markets to.

Before addressing my experience at the Warsaw Business Journal, I would like to express my gratitude to three individuals in particular who greatly assisted me and provided guidance whenever necessary. First, I would like to thank Director of the Civitas Internship Program Dr. Serge Pukas, who informed me upon my arrival in

Warsaw that I could contact him anytime for anything - from question relative to my internship to suggestions on good places to eat. Second, my supervisor at WBJ who was one of the most helpful and understanding people I have ever worked for. Lastly, Mr. Prabhat Kapil (a Civitas housing agent), who assisted me in finding a furnished apartment centrally located in the Politechnika district of Warsaw. These three individuals greatly affected my "Poland experience" by making my time as an intern in Warsaw one of the best experiences of my life.

The structure of the Warsaw Business Journal is quite unique: All employee (writers, editors, technical assistants etc.) work together very efficiently by having a constant flow of electronic communication with one another (everyone uses gChat, a service provided by Google that allows people to communicate using the internet). This provides everyone in the office with the possibility to converse with one another instantly and silently in order not disturbing anyone else's train of thought. The managerial hierarchy of WBJ is one that I classify as respectful on all levels. If and when an issue arises, it is quick to be addressed so that it does not hinder productivity. During my time at WBJ I answered (for the most part) to the paper's editor-in-chief. Although there were also many times during which I was assigned to work under other staff members. For example, there were times when I worked on certain projects under the supervision of copy editors at WBJ.

If I had to describe the environment created by the daily operation of the Warsaw Business Journal I would venture to say it is simultaneously productive and relaxed. Employees are briefed on what they must accomplish and do so in a timely, yet generally unsupervised manor. Everyone whom I was introduced to and whom I worked with gave

me the impression that WBJ had successfully instilled a high level of personal responsibility. Various WBJ journalists taught me the basics of writing and editing news stories and ensured that I was always aware of the aspect of time when given an assignment. For instance, I was instructed to generally finish short stories (usually updates of longer stories) in 45-60 minutes and longer stories in 60-90 minutes. By adhering to these reasonable deadlines, I was able to stay focused on my work while also having enough time to create a quality news story.

The Warsaw Business Journal has countless unique strengths, many of which I have already made reference to. The WBJ team is almost like one big family. Everyone is respectful of one another and works together to be as productive as possible. If one journalist is overloaded with work, another might help in order to ensure that everything gets finished in a timely manor. I was surprised how common it was for members of WBJ to gather after work hours are over and do various team-building activities together. For example, on many occasions I went after work to play football with journalists who were also passionate about the sport. It is usually rare to see activities initiated like this by employees of any given firm.

It is truly a challenge for me to consider ways that the Warsaw Business Journal could be improved. For example, I could suggest that WBJ, which is a small compared to others similar businesses, should increase the size of its staff. Although if WBJ were to add members to its team, it might lose the features that make it so unique compared to the larger firms. The one small thing that I might suggest (which is not even a very significant issue) would be for WBJ to invest in technological upgrades such as newer computers. They could go about this by applying for a technology grant, or creating an

account designated to technological upgrades and saving a small percent of their income each month for such things. Overall, the positive aspects of WBJ far outweigh anything negative that comes to mind.

In conclusion, the Warsaw Business Journal has provided me with an internship experience that I will remember forever. Working directly with the WBJ editor-in-chief was pleasure, and taking part in activities with staff members after business hours was a unique experience that I'm sure I will not have the privilege to experience elsewhere. The exposure and knowledge I have gained while working in central Europe was incredibly beneficial to my field of study (international relations and international business) and I am thankful that I had the opportunity to do so in such a wonderful city for such a wonderful firm.