

When deciding a suitable placement for me to undertake, I wanted to make it relevant to what I intend to do in the future. Therefore I started to look for internship roles in Marketing and Assistant managing specifically. Marketing has always been a role that I think I would enjoy, as I've always found it interesting how businesses can promote their brand and increase awareness through various marketing methods and techniques. Assistant managing was also a role I was looking to undertake as I value the insight that that position could give me. Wanting to eventually get to a high position when I'm older, I thought this would be a very appropriate internship as it would give me a deeper look into how owners manage the people in their business as well as enforce change and uphold the work culture.

I applied to a variety of companies; Rent A Car, Challenger Sports, Bamboosh Marketing to name a few. Each were different types of businesses and therefore my roles in each of them would vary. My placement rationale was very consistent with the placement learning and development opportunities wheel. I was looking for a business that had a strong working culture and environment. As I knew that I would get the most out of a business that people wanted to be a part of rather than just sitting at a desk making managers coffees. I was also looking for a business that would develop my skills and awareness in business. This is because up to this point in my life I had only learned about business academically, in a text book. Therefore I valued this opportunity to see and be a part of a real, working business. I wanted to see their problems and see how they overcame them, as this is where real learning takes place.

Upon arriving at the first interview I could see it was a small but busy business. With roughly 40 people in total. The interview was with the CEO, Luke Walker and both the initial and secondary interview went very smoothly. In the initial interview I was asked basic questions about my education and places I'd lived as well as my strengths, weaknesses and why I wanted to be part of this business. This was all very good interview practice and if I had not prepared well, these questions may have caught me off guard. I was also informed that there were 80 people applying for this job and only 40 would make it to the second interview and then only 5 would make it all the way into the business. The odds were against me but I just went along and tried my best. I was told at the end of the interview that I had been successful enough to make it to the second interview. This interview was much more formal. I met my 'leader' who was called Joel and he took me to Bristol to see one of their sales events in action. In the car ride up he questioned me on different business knowledge such as what direct and indirect marketing was, if I knew about outsourced marketing, the traffic light theory and various different businesses terms. It was conducted like a test and anything I did not know I was to write down in my

booklet. He also gave me information about Bamboosh and himself too. Once we arrived we sat in a Starbucks and I was given a few tasks. One of which for example, was to pick two products that correlate in the same market and describe each's advantages and disadvantages and then come up with my own product that would challenge those products in the market. I did mine on Adidas vs Nike with a new shoe I developed called the 'slick.' It was an interesting task. At the end of this 2 hour period I was shown an event. Two of the more experienced members were pitching the charity to people on the street. This was my first time in business that was so public and challenging but I liked the idea of this more than being bored in an office. At the end of the whole second interview process I was told that I had been accepted into Bamboosh by Joel and my Internship started.

On my first day when being shown around I could get a good sense of their business. At Bamboosh they make a point to be very active and engaged as they are predominately a sales business, therefore they try to keep the morale high in order to motivate people to build relationships and sell their products / services. I was shown items such as the 'bell' and the 'gong' which are located in the main gathering area, they both represent certain levels of achievement. For example if you make more than 3 sales in a day then you get to hit the bell at the end of the day and everyone is to give you a high five and make you feel confident about how you've done. The gong represented 6 sales in a day and was for the more experienced members. Ringing the bell for the first time would be my first goal, Luke explained. There were also photos of successful people in their field on the walls as well as targets to beat such as; 'most sales in a day' or 'quickest sale made.' I liked this immediately as it was engaging and gave you clear goals of what is to be expected of you. It was also explained to me that the way you progress in Bamboosh is entirely up to you. If you are able to ring the bell everyday for one week, you automatically get promoted into 'leadership.' In Bamboosh 'leadership' is like a promotion. This is a key part of Bamboosh that attracted employees. You can be promoted very quickly. It all depends on your performance. It is possible to get promoted in as little as 2 weeks after getting the job as well as you hit all the sales targets. Once promoted you get to have more influence and join in the meetings with the CEO and managers. You are given more responsibility and are treated like a more senior member. It is possible to get to that level after just 2 weeks if you are good enough to ring the bell everyday. However for some it takes much longer. Meaning the speed at which you progress is directly related to the level of output you put in and achieve. I liked the structured and clear set up of the Bamboosh team. Their business set out a clear way to improve and challenge yourself. The speed of the internship process and the positive introduction to the business, with clear set goals and expectations is what attracted me to make Bamboosh the internship that I took on.

Pre placement, I identified 3 key areas that I wanted to have experienced by the end of the placement; forming a solid office relationship, observing how the senior members manage and motivate their employees and to develop new skills and knowledge. I definitely met each target in different ways which I will unpack more throughout the essay. The skills I had at the time to offer included motivation, an eagerness to learn and a strong passion for business. These attributes carried me through the course but the main skill I learnt at Bamboosh was managing my attitude. When at Bamboosh there are two types of days, one is an office day where you practice theory and the pitch as well as various activities that were set up to team build and bond and the other was a pitching day, where we were outside observing how the senior members tried to get people onboard with the business. When outside in the cold, rain or shine, for 8 hours, it could be very tiring physically and emotionally. Initially I found it hard to stay motivated for that long, especially in the middle of the winter and a few times my attitude would slip. Joel would point me in the right direction when this happened and often let me take a break. But having lived in a country where it's 30degree plus all day for most of my life, the winter cold and rain was a harsh reality that I had to come to terms with very quickly. When my attitude slip would happen I would have much worse days and wouldn't do as many sales. Luke would explain to me when I got back to the office that the sales side to business is all about attitude and not letting the small things affect how you perform. He would say "each no is closer to a yes," and recite the 'law of attraction.' Whereby every-time a negative outcome comes into play we cannot let it affect our attitude, rather we should look at a 'no' as a step closer to a 'yes' rather than a rejection. Attitude was a huge part of this business as the pitching was very hard to do and took a lot of practice to get right. A second way my attitude was challenged was in terms of the business hours. As I live in Swansea and Bambooshs HQ was in Cardiff, I would have to wake up at 5:00am to get the 6:00am train to be in office by 7:00am. Luke was very very strict about being late too. I was even sent home on my 3rd day for being 10 minutes late. This proved very challenging for me. Especially as we wouldn't leave the office until 8pm, meaning i wouldn't get home until 9:30pm and then would go straight to bed and get up at 5am to do it again. This was the first time in my life that my whole life was revolving around work/this placement. I then found it even more challenging to have to compete for sales and memories pitches on lower sleep levels than my workmates. This was a big obstacle to overcome and I'm glad looking back that I did not quit and saw it through. In Bamboosh you have to remain positive and in good spirits for the whole day otherwise the outcome you are looking for will never be reached. This is the predominant skill I learnt at Bamboosh. Attitude control is a much more difficult and challenging thing than I had initially thought but those who can do it well have extreme advantages over those who cannot.

Another aspect I was particularly interested in gaining from the internship is a solid understanding of how to create a positive business atmosphere. This is an area I

think Bamboosh Marketing excelled at and is one of the main reasons I chose to do my placement with them. They had morning sessions called 'Atmosphere' where senior members would conduct speeches to inform and motivate the employees about the day's tasks ahead. Before the speeches commenced we were to go over our speeches to practice the pitch. The pitch is the heart and soul of Bamboosh as it is the way we spoke to customers and introduced them to our product. Therefore it was very important for them to be well rehearsed and practiced. We also had booklets with important sales and marketing techniques and practices. Such as impulse factors, KISS, and other acronyms that the business used and wanted us to be aware of. Most of these acronyms were similar to or just had slightly different names from things I had learnt at University. Therefore it was interesting to see this theory being used in a real physical business environment.

Placements give students the ability to progress in knowledge about their subject or industry, it gives real life examples and situations that the student will be able to assess and understand how to deal with. This allows them to gain insight into how to make better and more informed decisions about their future career choices. Doing a placement allows you to gain experience beyond the textbook. It allows you to 'try before you buy,' meaning; the student will watch what the job entails, allowing them to assess whether this is the right choice for them. Critical work skills will be gained and understanding developed. This is why Bamboosh made a particular point to go over and review the day, everyday. We had a sheet called the 'Rhino sheet' this was a self reflection sheet that was to be filled out at the end of the day. You were to put 3 positives, 3 negatives and 3 things to improve. I noticed that it was a good way of constantly ensuring your employees are always being reflective and striving for the best that they can achieve.

Another major advantage of taking an internship is making connections. If the internship goes well and the company likes you they may offer you a job in the future. In the modern working climate, having a degree is no longer enough. More university leavers require additional experience to give them the edge when applying for a job role. Having done internships looks extremely favourable on your CV. For students looking to compete in today's working world relevant work related experience is a vital addition to your application. It gives you an edge over the competition in securing future employment.

Placements provide team based work, which is a nice contrast to the normal individual-centric approach taken by academic study. This kind of experience builds on self management and problem solving skills.

Overall the placement was a valuable experience. It matured me a lot and also made me realize that I do not want to go down the sales route when looking for jobs in the future. I found the lack of control and fast paced environment fun, however not

something I would be able to find motivation for everyday. The whole experience was fulfilling and extremely informative in terms of developing my understanding of how real businesses function and being able to witness for the first time a real entrepreneur setting up and maintaining his business was one of the most interesting factors of the experience for me. It also developed me as a person, my attitude and resilience to tasks is much stronger/higher than it was previously. Understanding the value of work to money is another key skill I gained a grasp of through doing this internship. In conclusion the self improvement and reflection that this experience offered me had value second to none.