

Lessons learned inside a cubicle

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I felt intimidated yet confident as I entered the Javits Center in New York. Hundreds of men and women in business attire strolled by as if I didn't exist. But as I listened to snippets of conversation about the latest electronic and medical technologies, I realized I was exactly where I wanted to be. My intimidation transformed into confidence. I became immersed in a professional world that neither text books nor professors could teach. From that moment on, I knew that my eight-week internship at Electronic Component News (ECN) would be filled with a plethora of eye-opening experiences.

Immediately, I felt a part of the ECN team instead of a temporary intern. It felt like I actually provided real value to the magazine. The stereotypical intern tasks of coffee runs, filing paper work, and making copies were never part of my daily schedule. Instead, I had the opportunity to design gallery layouts, post content online, and edit articles for print. In addition to gaining a deeper understanding of how an editorial staff operates, I also learned two valuable lessons that can be applied to future opportunities.

1) **The importance of adaptation.** The publishing industry must adjust to today's generation of mobility in order to survive among competitors. Within the past decade, magazines have become less print-centric and more dependent on the internet. A web presence is crucial to attracting readers. Since technology allows for faster production, magazines need to find a way to keep their content fresh. Editors must spend more time searching for unique content rather than producing it; a transformation in their processes is necessary.

ECN has tailored their methods of production to this change. Their process of simultaneously working on the print and the web combines two large steps. This simple procedure cut legwork in half. It has already proven itself enormously beneficial during production of the magazine. In recognition of ECN's efforts, they were recently named a "Top 10 Media Site" by BtB Media Business.

2) **Teamwork is crucial for productivity.** Magazines require multiple people working together through a variety of steps for a successful and smooth production. Each position is equally important, making the process a team effort.

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ECN exemplified how effective communication among co-workers can lead to a more efficient work environment. Working together allowed for more value-added input instead of fixating on tedious daily tasks. Each editor could contribute in his or her own way.

As a result of ECN's ability to adapt to today's marketplace, they have continued to successfully grow as a publication. Though my internship was brief, ECN has taught me the skills necessary to pursue a career in journalism. From posting news releases to interpersonal relationships, I have acquired valuable experience that can not be taught in the classroom. Such life lessons must be experienced. I no longer feel intimidated. Thanks to my internship at ECN, I am one step closer to fulfilling a career in journalism.

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