

Alexander Parker- Blue Canyon Partners

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During this summer, I accepted an internship and worked at Blue Canyon Partners, a management consulting firm, based out of Evanston, Illinois, located in the Greater Chicago Area. Blue Canyon is not like any other management consulting firm. They focus on business-to-business growth strategies for Fortune 500 companies. These type of strategies assist in making important growth decisions about brands, services, pricing, products, supply chains, and global markets. Blue Canyon has developed a very unique and specific methodology that they use to create value for their clientele. The teams here at Blue Canyon work in a wide array of industries and come from a number of diverse work backgrounds.

As a Summer Associate at Blue Canyon I took on a number of responsibilities and projects. I took part in improving my Excel proficiency from day one as I went through Wall Street Prep, an online program and tutorial used to improve Excel proficiency. After that was completed, as well as my on-boarding training, I was tasked with providing market research over a number of different industries. Within this market research, I performed qualitative market research, quantitative market research, conducted marketplace phone interviews, and put together client deliverables. I worked as a full-time associate, due to the absence of a team member, on a project with Senior Management with regards to the Engagement Manager and one of the Senior Consultants.

Going into detail, I worked on a major client project throughout the duration of my internship. The project involved a Fortune 500 company in the energy space. I conducted almost all of my market research analysis during this portion of my internship. In terms of

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qualitative research, I spent time on the internet sifting through very large amounts of information searching for relevant pieces for the client, as well as contacting managers and executives in the applicable market to learn more about the subject matter. In terms of quantitative research, I also sifted the internet searching for relevant metrics that would be useful to determine an appropriate index for Blue Canyon to use in assisting the client. Also, this material is used to evidence the advice on which directions we think the client should head into. Throughout the numerous interviews that were scheduled and conducted, I assisted in write-ups and note taking, as well as post-interview discussion and synthesizing information. These interviews were a huge aspect of how Blue Canyon advised and directed the client, and it was very rewarding to see my contributions to the team realized during this aspect.

I developed many invaluable skills during my time working at Blue Canyon Partners. I greatly improved my market research skills, in terms of gathering relevant information using the internet. I also feel that my overall communication skills improved from having to conduct cold-call market interviews with senior executives and managers about their particular industry. Also, as elementary as it may seem, I really improved my listening and note-taking skills as well, through client-interviews, associate training, and listening to presentations. Another skill that I had almost no background in prior to this internship was my Excel work. I personally feel proud to have obtained a handle on how to use Excel. I practiced financial modeling and creating a relevant index for our Fortune 500 client in the energy space. The plethora of new skills I have developed while at Blue Canyon will without question assist me in any field that I enter within the business world.

I was very fascinated by the consulting world. I learned so much overall about consulting, but I also learned so much about the business world in general. In consulting, not a single one of the projects is the same, but even if you continue to work with the same company on projects, you are always looking for new aspects to improve. There is never complacency. Your job is always motivating. One aspect I noticed while engaging with the team in project work is that there are always very high points during a project, as well as some low points. However, the team always seems to persevere through the obstacles that they may face, and at the end when the presentation is finished and presented it leaves a rewarding feeling.

Overall during my time here at Blue Canyon, I was very lucky and fortunate to be able to interact in such a small and familial environment. Blue Canyon is very small firm totaling around twenty employees, and because of this I was able to work with managers, senior consultants, as well as interact with the CEO, Atlee Valentine Pope. This was very much a pleasurable part of the internship at Blue Canyon.

In summation, this opportunity was another great experience as a professional in the business world. This internship provided me with a lot of positive insight into the consulting industry, and it makes me think about how I will start to analyze my career goals as I embark on my senior year here in the next month. I feel that seeing how many different directions your career could venture into that consulting has a place for many people, which is very assuring. I thoroughly enjoyed the many opportunities to meet new people, see new places, live in a new city, and work in an industry with such diversity. I thoroughly enjoyed my time here at Blue

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Canyon Partners, it was far from a dull experience. I very much so want to thank everyone here at Blue Canyon Partners for making this such a great experience, especially, CEO and fellow Sewanee Tiger, Mrs. Atlee Valentine Pope, for offering me such an incredible opportunity to intern at such a great firm this summer.

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