

Blue Canyon Partners' Internship Report

I interned with Blue Canyon Partners, a small management consulting firm located in Evanston, IL, that focuses on a business-to-business growth strategy for Fortune 500 companies. This type of strategy helps make important growth decisions about brands, services, pricing, products, supply chains and global markets. Blue Canyon has a proprietary research methodology which helps generate actionable results for their clients. The consultants at Blue Canyon work in a wide variety of industries and come from diverse work backgrounds.

My primary responsibilities at Blue Canyon Partners included working for a Fortune 500 company doing market research analysis, scheduling and conducting phone interviews with senior executives to learn more about a specific industry and creating financial models. I would also produce write-ups after the phone interviews which included a summary of the interviewees' main ideas and takeaways that were referenced when creating the presentation for the client.

I developed numerous new skills while working at Blue Canyon Partners for the summer. My market research skills have greatly improved by spending time on the internet sifting through large amounts of information in order to find relevant research for the client. Also, I honed my phone interview skills by conducting conversations with managers about their specific industry. I practiced financial modeling, which I learned at Sewanee, to create cost savings analyses for multiple markets.

To give a few more details about the projects I undertook, I worked on two mini research projects for the first two weeks of the internship and later one major project for the remainder of my time. For my main project, I worked for the first month doing basic market research for

a specified industry. I created a large PowerPoint presentation that included general industry facts and also more specific research requested by the client. I also conducted similar research in the restaurant industry and in various other businesses. Some of the information that the consultants needed was not available online, so I created a financial model for one part of the project that included reducing certain costs. Most of the research which I collected was used for a client presentation that gave preliminary information about the potential markets for the client. After that presentation, I created contact lists of relevant people to call and scheduled phone interviews with senior executives and managers to learn more about the industries that we were researching for the company. During the phone interviews, I took notes and asked questions, which were very beneficial in learning about this specific step in the consulting process. I would then help associates compose a write-up for the purpose of retaining pertinent information that the interviewee had discussed over the phone. Throughout the summer, I was able to listen to the client conference calls as the consultants gave presentations of pertinent information which the business had requested from our consultants.

I was fortunate to work with senior consultants and a founding partner of the firm, who were all great mentors. I learned a tremendous amount while working at Blue Canyon Partners. The consulting industry is fascinating and no two projects are alike. I learned how to work and act in a professional environment and further developed my ability to research information quickly and to process that new knowledge. I observed and participated in the detailed process that a consultant works through in order to achieve a result that will benefit the client. I was trained on the Blue Canyon Partners' exclusive research methodology which helped me thrive

during my internship with Blue Canyon Partners. This experience had many more high points than low points. One of the more challenging tasks included making cold calls to gain interviews with top management personnel at a company. This required making many phone calls in a given day and getting lots of rejections before landing a phone interview. However, the satisfaction of landing a phone interview far outweighed the numerous rejections. A high point included seeing the final presentations where all of the hard work came together into one cohesive and organized report. In addition, the opportunity to work with such an incredible team of people was both a highlight and a pleasure of my summer. All of the employees at Blue Canyon were very friendly and were always willing to answer any of my questions.

Interning in the consulting industry was fascinating and will begin to help me analyze my career goals. The opportunity to meet new people, see new places and gain exposure to a wide variety of industries makes consulting a good career choice. There was never a dull moment in the very fast-paced work environment at Blue Canyon Partners. I especially wish to thank Ms. Atlee Valentine Pope, the CEO and a Sewanee Alumna, for giving me the special opportunity to intern at such a great firm for the summer.