MBA Internships: Kalsey Belle (MBA '24)

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Name: Kalsey Belle (MBA '24)

Concentrations: Energy and Analytics

Internship: Summer Intern, Entergy (KeyString Labs), New Orleans

How did you approach the internship search process, and what strategies did you find effective?

I identified companies I was interested in working for (mostly Multinational companies), searched online postings which didn't end up being particularly useful, and used links of job postings provided/forwarded by my career consultant, Erin Revere.

Can you share a memorable moment or experience from your internship that had a significant impact on your professional growth?

Given an analytics project. I had to analyze raw data from a third party vendor and create a Performance Reporting dashboard on PowerBI. I had never used PowerBI nor analyzed raw data to create Performance Reports for Public Charging Infrastructure. I learned a lot in a field that I intend to grow and develop through the MBA.

How did your internship align with your career goals and aspirations? Did it confirm or reshape your career path in any way?

My internship very much aligned with my field of interest, and it confirmed the concentrations I intend to pursue.

Were there any challenges or obstacles you faced during your internship, and how did you overcome them?

There were a few challenges over the course of the internship. There were a few projects that KSL had identified for me to work on, some of which lay outside of my comfort zone. I was faced with the dilemma of either selecting projects within my comfort zone to increase my chances of excelling and hopefully allowing me to secure a return offer, or to select projects outside of my comfort zone which would allow me to learn the most and develop professionally but could also lead to me not fulfilling expectations which could compromise my chances of securing a return offer. I decided to opt for the latter – stepping out of my comfort zone. It was challenging to learn to use a new software with limited time (the last 2 weeks of my internship) and build a useful product/platform for the team. To ensure the continuity of the project, I created a Handover report which could be used by whomever would inherit the project following my departure.

Another challenge was changing supervisors towards the end of the internship. My supervisor was offered a new role in a different department within the company mid-way through my internship and transferred over during my last 2 internship weeks. It made handing over a little tricky.

Another challenge was being in "demand" and unwilling to decline work assignments. I had done some work for one team, and they had appreciated it so asked me to do some additional work. The additional work was time intensive and conflicted with the time I had to deliver on the other two projects assigned by my supervisor. Although I worked outside working hours to be able to meet the deadlines, it was a challenge to balance all three deadlines.

Did you have a mentor or supervisor who played a crucial role in your internship experience? How did they support your development?

Yes, my supervisor was great. He presented me with a list of six projects they needed done and allowed me to choose the ones that were of most interest to my professional development and interests. He also gave me the flexibility to apply my own ideas to shaping the project and provided feedback in our weekly one-on-one.

Did your internship experience involve any international or cross-cultural elements? How did you navigate and leverage these aspects to enhance your learning?

Being an international student, working in an American environment was an international/cross-cultural experience.

Looking back, what advice would you give to current or future MBA students about maximizing the value of their internships?

Seize the moment. Interact and involve yourself in different projects – even if it means stepping out of your comfort zone. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you don't understand, and contribute your ideas even if it seems contrary/different to the current modus operandi. Your team will notice and appreciate your work when they see you immersing yourself.

How did your internship contribute to building your professional network? Did it lead to any valuable connections or mentorship opportunities?

I had the opportunity to work across different teams which helped build my professional network. I also got involved with company-wide CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility] initiatives which helped to increase the network of people I interacted with and provided opportunities for Tulane and Entergy collaborations.

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