

## Internship Journal – Example 3

Week of

9/8 – It's good to be back working and in school, although it is hectic trying to catch up on everything that is already underway; it's like trying to jump on a moving train. I couldn't ask for a better supervisor, Caitlin is on top of her projects, and is very well organized. She knows how to delegate tasks, inform everyone of the situation and projects at hand, and get things accomplished effectively. Working with Will is good too, he's a smart guy, with a lot of skills on the computer that I don't have, which inspires me to acquire these skills in future classes and jobs. For this semester, I would like to focus much of my projects on education and outreach. When thinking about waste management, and how to actually achieve a zero waste goal, people have to physically and mentally avoid the trash can, with the subconscious knowledge that their waste is either recyclable or compostable. This can only be achieved through education and getting the message across that their waste really does matter, and having the life-cycle understanding of how our society is based. Therefore, if a measurable difference (in recycling rates theoretically) could be seen due to education that is done here, I could feel very accomplished and satisfied.

9/15 – The new project of 'greening' offices has been presented to me, and it's very intriguing. It's a project that I think has a lot of power behind it to make a large difference on the campus. It is also a project that is hard to object to, this is a no-brainer for any business, engineering, marketing, or art student. It is the chance to save energy, reduce waste, and reduce the impact that offices are making. These things translate into hard numbers of dollars saved very easily, which makes it an easy sell. I think this project would be most effective if there was a pre-project audit, so I'm pushing for this idea, and there are possible other interns who could put in time working on this.

After having read some reports on office-greening studies and projects, an initial audit would provide a solid baseline of where we are now, to be able to compare to everything else in the future, and also motivate people to save energy, as real-time savings and data could be gathered and used as a promotional/educational tool. Here we encounter the valuable resource of time, and the question is posed as to whether or not it is worth it to do an audit of this magnitude.

This can be related to any project, as time and money are extremely valuable commodities on a state-funded campus in a budget crisis. It makes one think about the bigger picture, and the impacts and effects that projects will have in the future, and their worth as it relates to time and effort of everyone involved.

It is an interesting prospect to be a 'supervising-intern' over other interns, but it would be nice to have the extra help. I realize that sometimes it feels like I can just do everything myself, because all the ideas are in my head, but there is not enough time in the world for any of these things to be accomplished by one person. I am learning to better delegate and organize tasks, and work collectively to accomplish projects, keeping people on task, both through this internship and

everything else on campus with student organizations and activities. I feel this is an important skill to have, and will have very practical application in life after my undergrad years.

9/22 - This week I worked mostly by myself or with Will, because Caitlin was gone, and I feel that everything was so well set up and organized, everything went very well. I feel much more comfortable and knowledgeable here, and know everyone and can chat with people more openly in the office now. This is good, it helps ease communication about projects, and facilitates moving things forward, as most people here have been here for almost 20 years, and have a wealth of info about the workings of this place. Just walking or driving around with some of the guys here can be some of the most informative and valuable times of the job, as they have first hand knowledge of how everything works, who does what, and the nuances of this place.

I have been working with the grounds side of Facilities more and it is interesting to learn how this large institution runs from an unseen location. It is the underbelly of the campus, that makes everything run smoothly up the hill, and most people don't seem to have any clue this is here. I like that aspect of things, because I feel I'm getting good knowledge and experience about the inner workings of a large institution like this, seeing how to accomplish things within the system. This is very different than my first few semesters in college as a student on the outside trying to influence change.

9/29 - This week has included preparing for a composting/waste minimization presentation for the Vista room, which I am really looking forward to. As I described earlier in this journal, education is important to me, and I think this will be an effective presentation. I realize why marketing pays so much attention to the psychology of people, and exactly what audience to target. It is all about sending a short, simple, memorable message home to the proper target. In this case, I feel the target is good, with the student managers in the Hospitality and Management curriculum being an influential part of what goes on in the Vista room, and could bring skills and knowledge out of college with them. Hopefully the presentation will drive home a memorable message, so that reduce-reuse-recycle isn't just a catchy little ditty.

While observing the practices in the greater San Francisco area, I feel like the campus is dragging behind a few years, and wish that we could catch up. Bringing in the message of single-stream recycling is one of the most important ones, as it is a relatively recent and different thing for people. Composting is also an important message, but I think the overlying one that is more important is the reduce portion of the ditty. Given my major, my internship, and my personal views, I think about the environment 24 hours a day, as well as everything other issue connected to it, so it's an obvious thing to me not to get a plastic bag for everything, or to turn off lights, and conserve resources. It is strikingly obvious that the population at large does not think the same way I and many of my friends and colleagues do. The big question is how to get that message, and those thoughts across. The last thing I want is for everyone to think like me (it would be

- a miserably boring world), but rather think of the planet, and realize that there are some serious problems and crises facing us today. I don't know that I am making a much of a difference sitting here typing this, or working at my internship, but it is what I can do for now, and a stepping stone to bigger and better things, hopefully accruing more experience to help myself and others make the changes that we need.
- 10/6 - This week I worked mostly on training and educational/ outreach methods for waste reduction and diversion. I realize I like talking to people and am constantly thinking about how to better convey a message to an audience about a particular subject. This is true outside of the work setting, and whatever subject it may be. I have never considered myself a graphic designer, nor had any desire to be anything related to the marketing field. I am now learning how important it is, however, in the modern world of information technology we live in today. How are we going to get across simply, effectively, and succinctly the message of our global environmental crises? Is it through the television; is it through billboards, subtle ads all over the internet, posters? The message that needs to get across in the end is largely one of a change in values and behaviors. Here I am putting all this time and effort into some posters, all the while thinking it may have just been easier to sit down and talk with some people face to face.
- 10/13 – Working in waste management, I cannot help but to constantly think about waste reduction and diversion, it is almost a curse. The more I learn, the better I understand the famous adage, “Ignorance is Bliss”. I work on a campus, an institution of higher learning consisting of roughly 30,000 students, and however many additional thousands of staff, faculty, and administration. The building space on campus is about 3.6 million square feet. If there are roughly 35-40,000 people served on this campus, that makes it several fold times larger than Arcata, the last college town I lived in. I sometimes forget that this campus operates similar to a small city, but within a city, and as a State institution. Thinking about this is the only way I can effectively cope with the vast quantities of waste that are passed through this area at the bottom of campus, where it seems to be out of sight/out of mind to most people.  
Maybe that's a better solution, why keep waste management way down here where people don't have to think about the incredible amounts of waste they generate. Maybe we should move operations right into the middle of campus, maybe then people could begin to visualize the tens of thousands of coffee cups tossed away each day. Al Gore argues *for* the NIMBY attitude, but extends the backyard to the entire planet. If only people really understood where all their chip bags, snapples, and dasani water bottles came from and went, if the idea was presented the whole earth is both the back and front yards, maybe then we could have a serious shift in behavior toward waste.
- 10/20 – Educational programs are a tricky thing. People need to first be willing to learn if there's a message you want to get through to them. We have, for the last two semesters, been experiencing resistance to our composting program from the lead chef at the vista room, the on campus fine dining program set up to teach the hospitality and management students. I finally was able to bypass the chef, speaking directly to students, but when I arrived for the training, I was thwarted

once again. Strangely, they were more than willing to set up the program, and seemed excited about it, but did not want any training. This would have been fine if they didn't keep throwing trash into the compost. Having a couple students buy into the program was helpful, but in a setting where there is a chef controlling kitchen operations, students coming in and out at odd hours during the week, a custodial staff that isn't informed of the program, one realizes that the situation can get complicated fast. This may be one of the more humbling lessons I learn from this job, is that everything is usually more complicated than it seems on the surface.

10/27 – This week consisted of working on a poster promoting a Recyclemania challenge to create a poster, a poster for a poster essentially. This took far too long, which is an understatement. The poster, and the info, came together in the matter of a few hours. Then, after discussing other people's opinions, and having to approve the poster through various hierarchical levels, this simple advertisement turned into a several day process. Having worked for the state and federal governments, I am usually somewhat prepared for the paperwork, bureaucracy, a Catch-22 like scenarios. This really tested my patience and sanity however. All this time, money, effort, deliberation, all spent on an ad to get students to submit a poster to promote Recyclemania.. ludicrous. The real icing on the cake though, is afterward, my boss' supervisor questioned whether or not this was even an effective way to promote recycling and waste reduction, which lie at the heart of what this whole thing was originally attempting to do. Well, we shall see if it really is worth it, if this was at all an effective means to reduce waste here on campus.

11/3 - In addressing waste reduction here on campus, it is hard to move forward with productive and effective programs to reduce and divert waste. Many problems lie in lack of funding, many simply in the infrastructural difficulties and constraints, while there is an overlying behavioral change that needs to occur. In attempting to better understand where and how we need to move forward, it can be instructive to look to the past. So, in searching for previous waste audits, energy audits, or some sort of baseline level of where we are at as a campus, I came up with virtually nothing. There are many offices on campus that supposedly archive information like this, but with the age of technology and the internet rising so rapidly, not much around here seems to be updated or made publicly available. I learned this earlier in the year working on the Greenhouse Gas Inventory in collecting information here and there about the campus. This coming year, it seems I will tackle it from another angle working on LEED-EB certification for two of our buildings.

This is an exciting prospect, as LEED would be a huge experience going into the environmental field in the future, as green building is becoming more and more popular in the U.S. This is also a challenging prospect, because I am still just a student, and it isn't always easy getting people to do things, or go out of their way in their daily routine to gather info/data for a student. I have learned that making connections and networking is even more helpful than I initially had assumed, it really is all about the people you know, dropping names, and in turn making a

name for yourself. It seems silly to think about, but the more people I meet on campus, the more I am able to get done, and with greater ease as well.

11/17 – Working on LEED may now be more boring than I thought originally. I also question the effectiveness spending all this money, time, and effort to certify a building as a Leader in Energy and Environmental Design, especially for our existing buildings. Much of the work includes providing information on things we simply do already, like recycle! This is becoming an increasingly difficult task to prove, however. While I truly support the idea of LEED and the goals of the USGBC, I don't know if this is the most forward thinking way to get companies, institutions, etc. to strive toward sustainability.

11/24 – Coming in to work on campus on a day when students aren't around reminds me that I actually do work here, and there is a whole framework and system that makes the gears of this campus turn. I finally posted the C&D and Trash signs that we have been attempting to put up for over a month now! Yet another reminder that I work on a campus, things take a long time. I got to crunch some numbers on the waste that our Student Services Building generates as well, which I find extremely satisfying, and I'm not sure why. I think I was more excited to get outside and dig through trash, and tie up signs. Most of my workday involves sitting in front of a computer screen (hm, much like I am now), and it really does get old. I know that whatever I do out of college, I need to be able to get outdoors. While I like working with computers, and have tremendous faith in the informational power that the internet has developed in my lifetime, I can't handle this all day.

I do sincerely hope this experience pushes me further toward my goals in the future, and helps me to figure out what I want (or don't want) to do after college. I think I have learned much better how large institutions like this works, and the tricky inner workings of a campus. I feel I have learned the difficulties and challenges that face campuses and even entire municipalities a little better, and believe that this experience has been a good one and a productive one.