

**Thanks for talking to me today, XXX; just for the tape, are you happy for me to record this?**

**Participant 20**

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Yes, I am.

**Great. Thank you. Can I take you back about 18 months, to your second year at uni, and could you tell me a little bit about your placement search, the sort of job roles you applied for, any interviews you had and how you ended up at your placement company?**

So I started off just by looking at companies that I was interested in. The company that, XXX, the company that I'm at at the moment, did come into uni and did a presentation and that sparked my interest for the company. I applied for that straight away but continued to look for other companies and didn’t have much success elsewhere. I kind of put all of my eggs into one basket and hoped that I got the placement role that I did. It was quite a long process, as in, I applied and I didn’t get the job until I'd say, three to four months later. So there was lots of steps to it and there was lots of… I'd say three months actually, but there was lots of steps to it and it did take a while so it was a long process, so I was always looking at other places, but I never got to the assessment centre stage in other places, so I never really got that far.

**But you did with XXX, and…**

Yeah.

**How did you feel about the company after the assessment centre?**

Well, I'd had quite … before the assessment centre, I knew a few people that had worked at XXX, so they had given me a good insight into the company and what sort of roles to go for and that is why, you asked about what roles I was going for, I was generally looking at business management roles or a sales role and I ended up in a marketing role. But I did speak to people who had worked at this company before and they said in terms of, most exciting role within your placement year would be marketing or something along those lines, so you don’t just sort of sit and do Excel spreadsheets all day. So I'm really happy that I've gone down this route because it has been really fun and I've got to do some fun things compared to other people. Sorry, I've gone off what you said…

**All helpful information, thank you. Did you hear from the company in between getting the role and sending back your contract and everything, and when you started?**

Yeah. When I got given the role, I was put in contact with the person that I was taking over, I was also invited to a big group of all of the other interns, so we could all talk, and then we were sent an email a few weeks before we did join, just sort of giving us details, and they were updating the details of what we were going to be doing when we came in, our induction etc, so there was contact with the company before.

**Excellent. Tell me a little bit about your induction?**

Our induction was two days and it was quite long days. They had to go through the health and safety and all of the bits that the company would have to do but they did actually make it quite fun because there was probably about 27 to 30 people within our group, and we were all in a big conference room the whole time. So they made us do some groupwork and different activities and made us practice different design thinking and agile activities that XXX use as a company. They implemented those ways to work in a fun way and in a group activity way so we could see what it was like to be working there. It was … some of it, we did think, is there any point in this, but it was just kind of easing yourself into it. And it was a bad few days. It was obviously, you know, you had to go over certain things like the health and safety and business conduct, they did it in a good way I though. And the second half of the second day, they gave us our computers and we all had to set up our computers which took a while.

**Did you have a handover with the current placement, or what was the current placement student?**

Yeah, so he was there for two weeks after I joined, so he had a big handover spreadsheet, file that he gave me and then we’d go over everything together, so I was really quite fortunate because some people didn’t have a long hangover. I had two weeks so by the end of it, he had nothing really to do because I could do everything. It worked out really nicely. As I said, other people didn’t have that luxury.

**And is he coming back to XXX?**

He was a Futures student, which is where you get a job straight after going to college, and then – so it’s like a gap year. So he is doing university now and hopefully will be coming back to XXX but that scheme doesn’t … it’s not the same as the placement scheme that we have.

**Okay. Tell me a little bit about your job role? What do you do for the company?**

It’s an interesting one because I think if you asked any intern at my company, they wouldn’t be able to give you a specific job role because we get given all sorts of different … like the job role that you're given when you first get your job, you do nothing … you do loads of different things. So I'm in Field Marketing which is the part of XXX which markets each individual product. So all of the products that my company supplies, we have a Marketing Manager in my team for each one of them. And then I'm the person that helps out each one of these Marketing Managers, so there's probably 20 people in my team and then my Manager. So she's in charge of them all and then they're all Marketing Managers for a different product, say, cloud, GTS/GVS which are all like XXX products. So then I help every single person in my team with bits and bobs and then my Manager is in charge of them all. I'm just a little sidekick!

**That sounds quite busy!**

It does get busy, but sometimes it’s not as busy, so it’s kind of a good mix.

**Good. Do you have very much control over what you do on a day to day basis or are things fired at you, unstructured?**

I would say you get asked if you want to do anything. Obviously if my Manager gives me a task I’ll do it, and she doesn’t give me a lot, so a lot of things, they give you the opportunity to say no if you feel like you're doing too much work, or you won't be able to do it. So you do get asked and you can say no, but it’s how much you say yes to and make sure you don’t completely bog yourself down. So at the moment I'm preparing for an event called Think Summat Dublin, which is one of our XXX – sorry I'm saying the company name too much! We have a main event in each country that our company is in, so we have one in London, and then Ireland have their signature event and I'm helping to run it, and so I'm going to Ireland next month and I've been helping to plan this event for the last three months. I'm in the core team for it and that was just because I said, yeah, I’ll help, and so I'm the only intern doing this. So it was actually quite a good experience.

**Yeah, sounds like a great opportunity.**

Yeah. But in terms of, sorry what was the question you just asked?

**It was about how much control you have over your day to day job role?**

Yeah, you have pretty much, I would say, but it is completely dependent on who your Manager is, because you could ask any other person in the company, and they would have a completely different response, but I would say I am very much in control.

**That's good, excellent. And has the job changed very much since you started?**

Yeah, it’s changed a lot. I think when I started, it was quite quiet, but I did also start in the summer when everyone was on holiday, but it was very quiet, and you meet everyone in your team, they start to trust you; they’ll maybe give you one piece of work and if you do alright, they’ll come back to you, so it’s all about forming relationships and you do get busier, so it’s what you make of it, I find.

**Yeah, absolutely. Have you had the opportunity to put your own stamp on some of the work that you're doing? Have you changed processes and things like that?**

Yeah. One thing I'm doing, I run an events calendar for the whole of my company, so all of the events that we are doing, which is a lot of events, there's nowhere on the internet where we show what we are doing, so I run an internal events calendar, which when I joined had about 30 views per month, page views, so I completely redesigned it and I update it daily, it’s the one thing I do all the time and made it really good, and now it gets about 2000 views every month, and obviously it’s an internal one, so it’s a lot of employees looking at it. So it’s used by all the sellers to invite their clients to different events that we are doing, so it’s something that I can say, I've done that, and that's good for the company and could potentially have a great outcome for the company.

**Yeah, absolutely. That's a big increase in the number of people looking at it. How do you feel about XXX now? What are your thoughts on the company having worked there for a few months?**

I feel like you are definitely a very small cog in like a massive, massive machine. So it is hard, especially within marketing, in my role, you don’t really have an output, so, it’s hard to get that satisfaction of having an output in such a huge organisation. But I feel like it’s a great place to work and a great place to have loads of different opportunities, so I can't fault it in that way, because I've been … they encourage you to go out and do other bits and bobs because they want you to come back to the company, not necessarily in the same … I won't come back in marketing, they don’t hire in marketing, so I'm looking at a sales role at the moment and yesterday I was at the top of the Gherkin with Security Sales having a three course lunch, so, like you're encouraged to do other bits and bobs and explore so, I'd say it’s all very positive and I have a positive view on it definitely.

**So have you work-shadowed many people?**

No, I've only recently … you do the first six months getting to know your role and then once you're really good at your role, you're really secure within that, they encourage you to start looking for shadowing opportunities for the second half of your placement. So obviously I'm about seven and a bit months in, so I set this up a month ago, so I have been shadowing somebody in Security Sales, and I've got another shadowing thing lined up in sales for storage. That's two different bits I've got lined up, so… But its meeting people within that industry, finding out if that’s something you want to do and if it’s something you would enjoy really.

**Yes, absolutely, and if you get a free lunch at the top of the Gherkin, that's not so bad!**

Yeah, I didn’t expect that, that was … I definitely love it out there!

**Yeah, definitely. So what skills do you think you’ve improved and developed during your time there?**

In terms of, I've got through quite a lot of creating things, obviously marketing, so in terms of PowerPoint, Excel, Photoshop, all of that has definitely increased and got just a general being on the computer and doing things, it sounds like it’s not a skill but I feel like…

**Oh, it is!**

…yeah, so I've got a lot better at all of that. Talking to people in general. So we do all of our meetings online, like a call like this, and so it’s just having maybe 20/30 people listening to you and just being able to talk and say what you mean, what you're supposed to be saying. I think that was the biggest thing because if I think about when I first came, at the start I'd be really nervous to speak on a call, and then it’s just sort of growing that confidence. So I think that’s probably the main thing, just speaking to people and being able to voice your opinion and being confident with it, is probably one of the main things that I've learnt, I would say, in a corporate way.

**I know what you mean. Do you think your confidence has improved over the last six months?**

Yeah, definitely.

**Good. So within your department, have you had the opportunity to meet your boss’s boss?**

Yeah. The Marketing CMO – the Chief Marketing Officer – he is my … my Manager is pretty much second in command, so she's pretty high up anyway. His office is next to where I sit so, I see him a lot, the CMO and I've got quite close to him and he's invited me to a few events with him, to be his personal helper. So I go to different events with him and just help him out in different places, so I've got quite good exposure to that.

**Yeah, that sounds really good. Do you feel valued as a placement student?**

Yes and no. I think within your team you are valued because they obviously know your work, and everyone that you’ve spoken to, but I think if you're meeting someone and you were to say, yes, I'm XXX and I'm a Placement Student, then they're not really going to think twice, they're just going to think you're not worth talking to. Not really worth the time. but that is dependent on the person. So I think with people that you’ve met and you’ve actually done stuff with them, they're very appreciative, but you always get people who overlook you in any organisation I think.

**Yeah, I think that’s true. Do you think as an organisation, XXX values placement students?**

Definitely, yeah. Because the amount of investment they put into placement students, the amount of placement students they have and also the amount of placement students that come back as grads is quite a high percentage. They obviously put a lot of effort and a lot of trust in placement students. So yeah, I definitely think they value us.

**Good. You mentioned the calendar you put together, which sounded fantastic, is there anything else that you sort of feel when you leave that you'll be remembered for doing?**

Not necessarily! [Laughter] I've been lucky with some of the stuff that I've managed to do because the intern before me, I asked him what was his most exciting thing, and he went to Twickenham or something, and I went to Twickenham in my first two weeks or… I've just been really lucky with the amount of things that I've been randomly invited to. I don’t know, that's not being remembered for anything good, but I would say I've had some really good experiences and I've got much luckier than other interns.

**I'm not sure it’s luck though. It’s probably networking or you know, helping people so they want to help you back…**

Yeah, yeah. I guess so.

**I think things like visits to Twickenham don’t just fall in your lap very often.**

[Laughter] It’s helping someone out and then its like, oh, do you want to come to this, and obviously, yes please!

**Yeah, I'm quite jealous of that one, I must admit! So if you could change one thing about your placement, what would it be?**

I think the problem about a lot of our offices, they're quite quiet at times because we have a huge culture of people working at home, and although it’s not a bad thing because I get to work from home on Fridays, which is lovely, but it’s almost like sometimes the management, there's never any management in the office all the time, and it’s that sort of vibe of everyone in the office, it’s just a nicer feeling; where if it’s just a couple of interns sat in the corner doing some work, that’s like all your office is, so I guess I wish there was a bigger culture of people coming into the office.

**Yeah, that's a good point actually, I hadn’t thought of that.**

Because it is just nice to have a busy office and it is a good place to work, it’s a good working environment.

**Yeah, you do sometimes need that face to face conversation with friends, you know, a bit of chatter about the weekend and those sorts of things. Yeah.**

Its not necessarily that, its more, because there are days when management comes in, normally on Wednesdays and Thursdays, they're normally busier days in the office, and on those days a lot more gets done because everyone, you can easy just kick up a conversation if you need some work done, because instead of emailing them a question, you can just go and speak to them, and it’s a lot quicker. Everything is a lot quicker. Everyone is more efficient when they're in the office and it’s just nicer.

**Yeah, that's makes sense. As you know my study is about psychological ownership, so what does ownership in the workplace mean to you?**

Being able to be proud of what you do, I guess. I'm not really sure, I'm not going to lie.

**Well, it’s just your opinion and I've deliberately kept it quite vague, so as not to lead you in any way.**

Ownership? Just, okay, just being able to be like, I've done this and be proud of it, instead of hiding from something you’ve done, maybe if you’ve made a mistake, you just be open, yeah, I forgot to do this. And so own it in that way. Whereas if you haven’t got ownership – I don’t know if I'm getting the definition of this really badly…

**No I think it’s sounding interesting.**

I haven’t got much **[inaudible 00:22:47]**, I'm sorry.

**Don’t worry, it’s okay. do you think you feel ownership towards your job role?**

Yeah, because I feel if I was not there, then they would need someone to eb doing it, so obviously my job… They couldn’t just, if I was gone, they would have to re-hire someone, they just couldn’t … So at least I've got some sort of value.

**Yes.**

Yeah, I feel like I've not, if I make a mistake I would own up to it and take ownership of things that I do, and I'm proud of things that I do within the workplace. I feel like I could do more that would have a bigger output that would make me feel better about the work I do, I guess.

**So if your responsibilities were greater do you mean, or you…**

Yeah, I think responsibility is definitely… I think I work better under pressure, if I know there's going to be a bigger output. Not necessarily under pressure but if I know that my work will mean something then I will work, it sort of motivates me, and that’s probably a reason that I wanted to go into a sales role, because I know that is a direct output.

**Yeah, so you almost want to see the fruits of your work, I guess?**

Exactly, yeah.

**Do you see other people at XXX show ownership**?

I’m just really bad with the definition of this, but yes, I guess everyone… You are not allowed to give me any sort of definition are you?

**No, sorry.**

So its just my take on it?

**Yeah.**

I'm going with, they're proud of their work is what I'm kind of going for. They will take ownership for it. Yes, I feel like people are proud of what they do, because most of the people I work with are higher up, they’re in management so I think they have a bigger output, they are proud of what they do and they do take ownership of it. Sorry, it’s not…

**No, that's okay. What about feeling ownership for the company? Do you have that feeling for the company?**

Yeah, I definitely have a soft spot for the company and I enjoy… I feel like I do identify with them so I wouldn’t speak badly of them in public! [Laughter] Yeah, I definitely identify with the company and feel like it’s a place that, not call home, but a good work environment that I'm happy to be part of.

**Yeah. Okay, that makes sense. Some other students have said that another way of feeling ownership is for their career, so they feel they own their future career – is that something you feel?**

Yes, because what you do now is literally going to impact your future career, so it is all on what you do now so I guess if you … I'm finding it really hard to get my head around this…

**That’s okay, don’t worry.**

So it’s like, yeah, I do agree with that.

**So would you say where you're shadowing people, is that you taking ownership for your career?**

Yeah, because if I'm shadowing someone, I'm getting an insight into what it is like to be in that job role and know exactly what they're doing, so if that’s something … if I'm shadowing someone that's something I'm potentially interested in for my future career, and exactly what I'm thinking is, would I like to do this when I'm older, when I graduate, is this something that I'm interested in and is this a potential… So yeah, its 100% taking ownership of that.

**Yeah. Can you think of any positive and negative outcomes of feeling ownership?**

Positives is, it’s up to you if you're choosing what you're doing and it’s all up to you, it gives you drive and motivation to be good and strive for things. Negatives… You can sort of shy away from things or feel like you don’t … say you're looking for a job and you're shadowing and you're, I don’t like this, and then you don’t like anything, you kind of feel like you don’t know what you want to do in the future, you feel like there's nothing for you in the company that you're at…

**Yeah, that makes sense.**

And also, it goes back to what I was saying, if you're taking ownership and saying you’ve done it wrong, and it backfires, and maybe you get told off, that obviously would be a negative, but then again you do learn from your mistakes, so that kind of outweighs it.

**Yeah, probably. Do you think you’ve felt ownership for anything before you came to XXX? So at university or a part time job, or any of your hobbies?**

I mean, every kid wants to be a professional footballer!

**Yeah, that’s true.**

No, I definitely have, I've always wanted to … I've always been quite entrepreneurial and wanted to start my own business, and that is completely taking ownership of that, but that’s all on yourself, so that’s something I've always wanted to do and still want to do, so its not necessarily within XXX that has changed my mindset on that.

**What sort of business do you want to run?**

Any sort of start-up company; I've had loads of stupid ideas, and I always have stupid ideas, that I'm hoping that one day I will actually follow up on.

**So what are the plans now when you finish your placement and come back to your final year, what do you want to do when you graduate?**

So as I said, I wanted to … I've obviously got my foot in the door at XXX, so it would be stupid not to reapply, and I'm looking currently for a security sales role potentially, so hopefully I'll make lots of contacts in my last few months at XXX, go back to XXX and have a good year there, and make the most of my last year and do lots of good work, and then hopefully … so you should find out if you get the job back at XXX before I start uni again, I think…

**Okay, so that’s good.**

Yeah, so hopefully I’ll get a job again, and if not I would be applying at other places in my final year. I'm happy regardless because I've got this experience behind me that I could potentially get a decent job elsewhere…

**Oh absolutely…**

…so I hope its just a positive future! [Laughter] I would like to come back to this company, it’s such a great place to be and such a great name to have behind you, it would be stupid not to, and hopefully work in London for a while and just see how that goes.

**Yeah, sounds like a good plan!**

Yeah.

**That was my final question so let me…**

*[End of Transcription 00:32:34]*