



Project work and working life

Marko Siitonen
Department of Language and Communication Studies
University of Jyväskylä
Autumn 2017

marko.siitonen@jyu.fi



Why are internships and projects so important?

- reinforcing learning, giving a chance to apply what is learned, experiential learning at its best...
- launching a career
- socializing interns into work or a career/broadening career knowledge
- making transitions between studies and jobs/careers



About internships

- The meaning of having a good supervisor cannot be overstated
- Flexibility is needed – from simplistic to complex tasks during the internship
- Gaining insight into the social dynamics of working life in general – at any job!
- What is an intern? A first year student? Bachelors? Almost ready MAs with previous work experience? -> expectation management



Internship in practice

- 2-3 months
- 10 credit units
- paid/unpaid
- "intercultural" working environment (or intercultural communication required), communication-related tasks
- or for those in working life, an intercultural focus- usually a very different focus on their work than they used to have, different assignment...
- students' own preferences, need to be accepted by the staff in intercultural communication
- Timing: summer 2018, autumn 2019, spring 2019



Steps for a successful internship

- Find an internship placement
 - Note: You can discuss these matters with any teacher
- Negotiate your tasks and responsibilities
 - Make sure that you have at least one dedicated person who is responsible for your internship at the workplace
 - While going through initial discussions, talk with Marko and make sure that the internship placement is okay
- Register the information online
- Write a learning contract
- Be an intern!
- Reflect on your internship experience by writing a report
- Profit!



Finding an internship placement

- Career services of the university
<http://www.jyu.fi/hallinto/rekrytointi/en/>
 - Muru Linjala, Niina Pitkänen, Jari Penttilä, Annamari Rovamo
 - They can help in tuning your CV. Please contact them!
 - Aarresaari (national <http://aarresaari.net>), Aarresaari is filtered by our university, IDS-list has some placements
 - www.osumia.fi – jobs in Central Finland -> www.pointpotential.fi for people coming from outside of Finland (go and make a profile here!)
 - www.facebook.com/tyoelamapalvelut
 - www.toissa.fi
- Check at least these:
- www.jyu.fi/tytti & www.jyu.fi/tep/jobs

More useful links for finding an internship/job

- Employment office: <http://mol.fi/jyvaskyla> (in Finnish), <http://www.mol.fi/english/index.html>
- CIMO - Centre for International Mobility <http://home.cimo.fi>
- http://www.suomi.fi/suomi/tyo_ja_yrittaminen/tyonhaku_ja_tyopaikat/ (in Finnish)
- <http://www.monster.com/>
- www.oikotie.fi (in Finnish)
- AIESEC Jyväskylä – a student network of international people <http://www.co.jyu.fi/aiesec/index.htm>
- Financial support for internships abroad: Next round of application for the university's travel grants for internships abroad will be in spring 2017



Previous internship places

- Governmental organisations: ministries, embassies
 - International organisations
 - Private small and medium sized enterprises
 - NGO's, volunteer work
 - Municipalities
 - Education and research institutes
 - Projects
- in Finland or abroad



Electronic internship agreement

- Some internships require a "contract" that is done via an electronic system of the university
 - An actual legal contract can only be made between you and your employer
- This agreement is between the intern, the employer, and the university of Jyväskylä
 - The agreement can be made even when the university is not monetarily involved in the internship
- <https://webapps.jyu.fi/thsl/contracts/list>
- Instructions for using the system can be found from <https://webapps.jyu.fi/wiki/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=13898507> (in Finnish only)
- If you have questions about the system, please direct them to the maintenance at korppi@jyu.fi



The Learning Contract

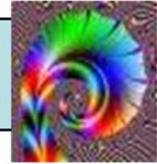


Learning contract

- An individual development plan designed for the internship/work period
- Covers 4 areas:
 1. Learning about the target culture
 2. Learning about the organisation
 3. Learning about one's task/assignment
 4. Learning about one's area of specialisation

Of each area the participant determines their learning objectives, methods and assessment criteria

Framework of Learning Contract



	1. Wider Objective	2. Immediate Objective	3. Learning Methods	4. Assessment Criteria
A. Culture				
B. Organisation				
C. Task / Assignment				
D. Area of Specialisation				



Learning contract – Why?

Learning Contract –studies are designed to:

- Enhance experiential, intentional learning
- Support (intercultural) adjustment
- Promote professional development
- Transfer doing into learning



Learning contract – How?

- LC is designed and negotiated with an appointed staff member before starting the internship
- A final version can be produced during the first period of the internship
- After the plan has been accepted, the participant can start implementing his/her plan
- At the end of the process the development and achievement of the stated objectives are verified in the form of report and/or portfolio



The structure of the learning contract

A. Learning about the culture and intercultural interaction

- Learning about the local culture, its way of acting and behaving and developing one's own intercultural interaction. The learning objective rises from your own development needs and objectives. So, this learning area consists of two learning objectives: 1) cultural learning and 2) developing your own intercultural interaction



B. Learning about the organisation

- Learning related to the organisation you work for. You should determine a more specific learning objective (e.g. related to the organisational communication, certain projects taking place, etc.). This more specific objective should rise from your personal and/or professional interests.
- You can include general information about the organisation, e.g. an illustration of the organisational structure (to get the idea of the organisation as whole), brief descriptions of the mission/objectives, history, current situation and future prospects of the organisation.
- The actual personal learning objective which you choose for yourself can be conducted with the methods you determine yourself.



C. Learning about the task/duties

- This objective rises from your job description. The aim is to develop the kind of know-how that is needed in conducting your job (e.g. project planning, reporting techniques, negotiation practices, networking, etc.) You may wish to develop skills that you don't yet have, but need in your job, and that are useful in the future, or you can further develop already existing skills.



D. Learning about one's area of specialization

- This learning objective rises from either the major field of your studies, e.g. related to your thesis (building the theoretical background, collecting data), or from your future professional objectives (=> building professional specialization/expertise).
- Thus, the objective is to specialize into a specific theme that is relevant either in the light of your studies or your professional future.



Personal adjustment and growth

- In addition to the actual LC-objectives we wish you to pay attention to your cultural and organizational adjustment process and personal growth. Thus, it would be important to actively participate in the activities of the local culture and to participate in active social networking.
- Keeping a diary or a blog and taking pictures are excellent documentation techniques.



In all the four areas of learning described before, you should determine:

- 1. The wider learning objective
 - What do you intend to learn? (the theme/area of learning)
- 2. A more specific/focused learning objective?
 - Which specific aspects within the theme you will focus on?
- 3. Learning methods
 - How are you going to reach your objectives? (the methods you will use)
- 4. Assessment criteria/methods
 - Against which criteria will you reflect your learning? How will you prove in the end of the process that you have reached your objectives?



Internship & Career Development - assignment

"Planning my internship/project/academic expertise"

- Describe your plan at the moment.
- Where? What? When?
- What are the next steps to be taken?
- What kind of practical issues are there? (e.g. How to finance the internship?)
- Area of specialization: links to your thesis and/or future career?
- Lay out your plan in a 1 page document.
- Send the document to Marko until 8.12.
- Plans are returned via e-mail to marko.siitonen@jyu.fi.