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Professional Technical Communications Internship

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Surviving the Disney College Program

This Professional/ Technical Communications internship class helped me through the Disney College Program in itself. It kept me grounded to the real world. It’s really easy to get swept away by the magic in Disney. Everyone works at least 5 days a week and most of the time you’re running on caffeine to get through the long days. Most of the time I would get off work, go home, fall asleep, and then go to work in the morning. The days of the week just kind of merge together after a while and if it wasn’t for this class I wouldn’t know the days of the week. This class always had the same report due on Fridays so I would always look out for Thursday night or Friday morning and do the report either before or after work. This class also helped me keep track of how many hours I worked in a week. The days that I would do the weekly report and see that I worked more than eight hours in a day or more than forty hours in a week I think I would jump up and down because of the over time I knew I would be getting. Also, the reports helped me know what I was working the next week. If it wasn’t for the reports I would go day by day not knowing what I was working. It’s irresponsible to do that because what if I was working really early the next morning. This class made me more responsible, made me notice how many hours I worked in a week, and the days of the week.

This class did not prepare me for all of the hard work I would put into this internship. It didn’t prepare me for the long hours, the guests that would complain about everything; basically the life events. I knew going into the internship that I would have to put a lot of hard work in to it, but I still wasn’t prepared. There was no way this class could have prepared me for it. There were guests that would come up to you and only complain about their entire stay at Disney and it was heart breaking because they would yell at you for things that were out of your control. They would tell you that they deserved their ten percent off discount for being an annual pass holder, but they didn’t have their pass on them. If they don’t have their pass on them there is nothing I can do for them. They would demand to speak to a supervisor and I would bring them over and they would tell them the same thing. Or if we didn’t have the correct size shirt for a guest they would flip and cause a scene. I would them get a coordinator over and they would look up the correct size and the location they could find it. This class could never have prepared me for these types of situations.

The Disney College program is a very intense and exciting internship. It is very stressful, but there are those few days that make you love your job and never want to leave. Most of the time I would be thinking this place is horrible why would anyone want to work here as a career, but then there will be one day that you make a guests day and it’s worth all the stress and hard work. Disney has a lot of rules and regulations, but they are a great company to work for and I’m so glad I got this opportunity.

Disney has four basic guidelines that they want all of their cast members to achieve. They call them the basic four keys: Safety, Courteously, Show, and Efficiency. Safety is the number one priority for Disney. Nothing comes before safety. Disney wants everyone to be safe at all times especially their cast members. I have only been with the company for a short time, but I have seen a lot of regulations change mainly for the safety key. At Mouse Gear Merchandise we had a table with clips for hats and other such items that went away for safety reasons. It was unsafe because it was right next to the stairs and someone could trip down them if they bent. If something is unsafe Disney takes care of it as quick as they possibly can. Courtesy is the second biggest key. It makes a guests day when you are courteous for them. Disney wants all of their guests to feel like royalty when they step onto property. If we can do something to make a guest happy we will go above and beyond to do it. In Mouse Gear Merchandise if a guest wants something that we don’t have we can call over a coordinator and they can find the exact location the guest can find it. The next key is show. Everything has to be show ready, even the cast members. The cast members have to be in Disney look and if we aren’t in Disney look they will send us to costuming or even send us home. Any area that is visible to a guest must be show ready. It must look like the guest has stepped into another world away from Florida. Everything has to match the area that it is in, for example if you’re in Mouse Gear Merchandise you will notice that everywhere you look has to do with Mickey Mouse and his friends and Gears. Even the top of the racks for the items has gear knobs on it. There is even a room with a wand that spins around and where the wand points it lights up and you can see more gears. The last key is Efficiency. If you can do the other 3 keys and leave efficiency out Disney would still be happy, but Disney is still running a business and to make people come back Disney has to be efficient. If there is a huge line guests expect the line to go fast or they will get upset about the long line they have to wait in. In Mouse Gear Merchandise when you are on the register if there is a long line we try to be a little faster than normal, but not too fast because we might mess up a transaction or break something and that breaks the other basic keys that are more important.

When a cast member shows one or more of these guidelines they award you with a four keys card that thanks you. I have received a few of these four keys cards and it makes you feel good when you get one. It makes going through all of the rough situations alright and makes you happy about working for such a demanded of company. The Disney College Program has shown me what it’s like to work harder than I’ve ever worked before and now I feel like I can do anything.

They also have a thing called magic moments and I try my hardest to make them because it makes you feel good. There will be children that cry and it makes your heart swell for them because they are in the most magical place on earth. Whenever I see a child crying I go up to them and ask what’s wrong. Most of the time they won’t respond and they will just keep crying. Then I will ask them if they like Mickey Mouse, this time I normally get a nod yes. After, I’ll ask if they like stickers and they proceed to nod their head or give me a small yes while their crying slows. Then I magically pull out a mickey sticker from my pocket and ask if they would like one. It normally stops them from crying and they say thank you and proudly put their new sticker on. That moment that they stop crying makes me feel so accomplished with my job. It makes me feel so good that just by giving a kid a mickey sticker they have a better day.

This Professional Internship class has helped me stay grounded and in reality. It kept me from going into my own little Disney work world and helped me know the days of the week. It didn’t prepare me for how hard I was going to have to work or the rude guests. There were days that I hated my job and days that I loved my job. There were definitely few days that I loved my job, but those days were so good that it has been worth all the stress and hard work. Disney has four basic keys: Safety, Courteously, Show, and Efficiency. As a cast member you are expected to show these four keys at all times, but when you do them and are noticed for them it makes working for Disney magical.