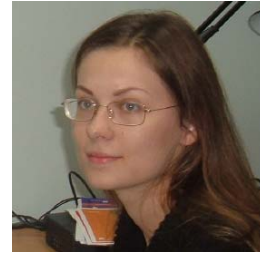


2008 – Diary of a Business Experience Winner



Ilona, Lithuania,

The First Day

Our first day at Macmillan office was somehow like a dream. We did not know what to do, where to look and how to behave. Luckily, the people at the office are exceptionally nice, warm and welcoming.

We spent the first part of the day getting to know the office and people who work here. Here at Macmillan I experienced what marketing job looks like for the first time. It consists of multitude of tasks. Some are very exciting, but some are tedious and require willpower to keep up! Before Business Experience, I used to be an end user: a textbook would be simply dropped into my lap. The amount of careful planning, hard work and passion of the people, who create these books, surprised me. I never thought that my course materials carry so much in them. I will surely appreciate them more.

Our Business Experience has started and I am looking forward to learn more about the people at Macmillan and how the work is organized here.

Week 1

Today is Friday, the last day of our first week here. Amazing, how time flies! I am finally starting to find my way around, know people's names and feel more comfortable. We have been given a lot of different projects to work on and we start to feel how varied publishing tasks are.

During this week we have met with a publisher and a commissioning editor. It was a blast to talk to them and, frankly, they made their job sound very exciting. So far, turning out a book looks like a mixture of idea and mechanics, with both parts equally important. Also, I have never imagined it takes at least a year to develop and print a book! With series of books, or ELT level sets it takes even longer- four to five years. From this point of view, publishing is very much gazing into the future. Since the future is never certain and not really willing to reveal itself, work of the publisher and editor involves significant risk.

We have also learned more about marketing this week. Upon hearing "marketing", one would usually think "advertisement and fun stuff". Well, now we have seen a much more prosaic core function of marketing: making information and products available to the ones who may need it.

The write-up of this week ends with lots of compliments for the staff. They try to make us feel welcome and at ease in this company and city. Thanks, guys!

Week 2

This week had been far busier and more creative. We continue to have meetings with people in key areas of the publishing process. This week we have met with editors, design and production managers. It is very interesting to see how a book takes shape and how all the little details come together.

One of the highlights of the week was going to a prop photo shoot. We had an opportunity to observe how illustrations are created. We also got to help out a little- I even was a hand model for one of the pictures.

Another fun project assigned to us is a video dictionary. We take a word or a phrase from the Macmillan Dictionary and create a video definition for it. So, we have been scriptwriters, directors and performers at the same time. The project is lots of fun and stimulates the creative part of our brain a little. Make sure to check out our movies at onestopenglish.com and have a good laugh at our efforts.

Today is Friday and there is a weekend full of exploring ahead of us. Luckily, weather is rather sunny and we can enjoy Oxford, which is very charming and beautiful. I hope the next week will be as engaging as this one!

Week 3

This week the busiest of all three: we did couple of very interesting new projects, finished up with the ones from the last week, and, of course, tried to cram in as much sightseeing as possible.

We have been working with the sales team this week. We did couple of research and analysis projects for them. I enjoyed this part a lot, because it is what I am trained to do as a business student. As part of research we also got to roam around bookstores in Oxford, which was most enjoyable.

Then, in the middle of the week we met up with the digital publishing director and talked about the future of publishing. I was really impressed and so far, digital publishing is a sphere that interests me the most.

For the more touristy part, we have been enjoying good weather and got to see a lot of Oxford. It is a beautiful city with beautiful people and wonderful Macmillan office with its wonderful employees. We had a sad final debriefing with our boss: it is sad to let go and leave. Thank you guys, it was wonderful to work with and learn from you!

Ilona