



INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Testimony



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IIP mission: Paris, FRANCE

Strategic Marketing

Air Liquide Healthcare

How were you recruited by Air Liquide?

Air Liquide recruited on the Massachusetts Institute of Technology campus, where I study for an MBA at the Sloan School of Management. I requested to work at AL Santé for several reasons. First, I found out that this was the business line with the highest growth rate, and I thought I could work on an intense and dynamic business, where very important things are happening and where I could meet some of the best professionals in Air Liquide. Secondly, I had a special interest in working in a 'non-industrial sector' in order to develop my focus towards services. And lastly, I think that working in the field of healthcare allows you to directly help people and I find it very personally satisfying.

Which functions have you performed during this internship?

I worked on acquisition issues, market analysis and financial reporting. The variety of functions allowed me to know and understand the type of management work that I hope I'll perform some day. I also had the chance to learn about the healthcare industry and about the general working culture in Air Liquide.

Which are, in your opinion, the main differences between the working methods of Spain and France?

What surprised me the most in the beginning was the formality in professional relationships. It is very different from Spanish manners, where the use of 'vous' is almost extinct, and even more different from the typical American informality. But after a short time I realized that it is only a matter of manners, and that people are as friendly and willing to help as in Spain, USA, and even Beijing.

But definitely, the greatest difference between USA and Europe (Spain and France) is the way that employees distribute their time and interest between work and personal life. Life is infinitely more human in Europe, where people work more efficiently to leave work and enjoy life, and where people take 3 consecutive weeks of vacation, take a long midday break to have lunch with colleagues, etc. I truly believe that a good balance between the professional and personal sides helps people work better and more efficiently.

What advice do you have for future interns, from the professional or practical point of view?

I would recommend trying to make most out of the experience: work hard, play hard. On one hand, the intern should try to learn as much as possible not only about the job but also about the company and the industry. And on the other hand, he/she should take this wonderful opportunity to make new friends from all over the world, get to know the city of Paris and the French culture.

I would definitely recommend Air Liquide as a company to intern for. The company has a very strong culture and history of taking the best students and giving them the opportunity to have a real work experience while they add value to the company.

The IIP program in particular is a great experience, because you become part of a highly talented and motivated group of people that come from all over the world. This enhances the learning experience (and the fun) because you can learn not only in the company, but also from the other interns.