



Insider Spotlight: Top 8 Lessons I Learned as an Intern

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Editor's note: we recently had some of our Alliance Data corporate office interns share [their thoughts on their summer with our company](#). Today, we are featuring an Alliance Data card services intern who we asked to provide some thoughts on her experience and the lessons she learned.

Since it'd be impossible to share everything I learned during my 12-week [marketing internship](#) at Alliance Data, I've narrowed it down to my top 8 lessons. These are lessons I know I'll appreciate for years to come, and they'll stick with me in future endeavors.

1. My work matters.

Even as an intern, I was given actual assignments and real-time projects that contributed to my team. Everything I learned over the summer came from hands-on work and active collaboration with partners. (No coffee runs here!)

2. Culture matters.

[Culture is a top priority for associates](#), and it shows. In contrast to my expectation of a Hollywood-esque battle among interns for the chance to be noticed, I found an environment where we all received individual guidance and daily encouragement.

3. It's okay to ask questions.

At Alliance Data, asking questions is a sign of engagement and curiosity. The more questions I asked, the more I understood the work, the company, and the industry. I may have started out as a nervous intern, but I grew confident because of how open and honest my team was, anytime I needed answers.

4. Get to know people.

It changes everything. Outside of my team, I had the opportunity to build relationships with my fellow marketing interns. For our final project, we worked together to research the Millennial generation and present our findings to senior leadership. We had more successful collaboration (and more fun), because we cared about one another and the quality of our work.

5. Assume positive intent.

I heard this often. Sometimes, things just go wrong. When they do, we can express negativity, or we can keep an open mind and try to understand the situation before reacting to it.

6. It helps to learn the lingo.

Every company has its jargon, and I had to embrace that. Eventually, I came to understand the unique terms and phrases, which helped me follow along in meetings and conversations. (And yes, I might have even used the vernacular a time or two.)

7. There's probably more than one bathroom on each floor.

I'm throwing this out there, because it took me an embarrassingly long time to realize. (#InternProbs)

8. "Don't be nervous, be prepared."

This is a direct quote from Melisa Miller, [President of Alliance Data's card services business](#). She shared it with my internship group during one of our regular meet-and-greets, and it became our summer mantra. For me, it's a simple but eloquent reminder that there's no need to be anxious, as long as I'm ready for whatever may come my way.

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