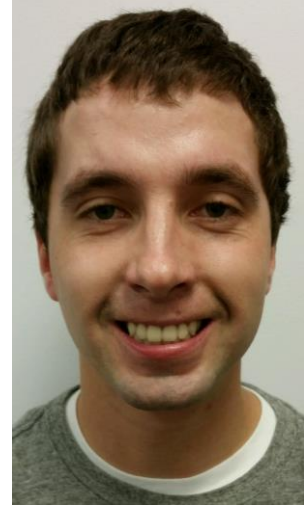


Zach Remillard
Summer Internship
May 21-August 18

Enterprise Rent A Car

“Thank-you for choosing Enterprise Rent a Car, this is Zach, and how may I help you”? Before I applied for this internship I wasn’t completely familiar with the company. I just assumed Enterprise was a company that rented cars. For the most part this is correct; however, renting cars isn’t something that is self-explanatory. I went into the internship with an open mind not knowing what to expect. Through the experience, I have learned every single aspect of running a successful business! Not only skills of running a business but also various communication skills by associating with different customers. Every day was different and I continued to learn something new every day. I had several tasks and duties I had to accomplish on a day-to-day basis. Not only did these tasks help me learn more, I was also able to utilize my communication skills I have learned these past two years. What I really felt benefited me the most was the experience I was able to take from the internship and how I can use it for my future job selection. First, let me describe a day, and duties I had to perform on a regular basis.



Internship Tasks

What I find the hardest is describing to someone is a typical day as an Enterprise employee. Every day is different, so I always like to choose the busiest day we have during the week; which happens to be Friday. To my benefit, I was able to experience one of the busiest offices in the state of Minnesota. My office was located Downtown Minneapolis. I was able to experience every aspect of the business in a variety of ways. Setting up a reservation, marketing to corporate businesses, managing a car fleet, selling a product, building revenue, having one on

one interactions with customers, and excellent customer service. The main focus of my internship was entitled as a sales internship. The products I sold were protection plans for the rental vehicle, Pre-paid fuel, and vehicle upgrades. I would associate with three different kinds of renters. These include, corporate, insurance, and retail customers. I learned how different insurances cover rental vehicles such as Minnesota, out of state, and international renters. I knew how to approach each customer to a different degree, which led me to a great success in my sale numbers. Throughout the day we needed to abide by our reservations list by making sure we had a car for each person planned to come in. However, we also had backend work in the office that needed to be accomplished.

During our down time, each person was assigned a task throughout the day to accomplish. The four tasks I was assigned each day were Pends, Last Days, and confirming appoints. Pends was my favorite assignment. Each day I would have a list of customers that have not completely closed out their charges on the rental vehicle. My job was to call each customer and go over the daily and/or weekly charges on the rental vehicle. Once in contact, I made sure it was ok to put the remaining balance on the same credit card we had on file. The most important part of doing pends was asking the three critical questions. How was customer service, anything we could have done better, and how can we make it up to you. One of Enterprises main focus is customer service, so it was extremely important to ask the three critical questions. Another task I was responsible for was called Last Days.

Every insurance customer was responsible with being in contact with their insurance company to set up a time length they will be covering the charges for the rental vehicle. Once they established a start date, Enterprise would be in contact with the customer to set up a reservation. Once the insurance customer was in the rental vehicle for a period of time, insurance

companies would set up a last day they would stop covering the charges for that specific customer. My job was to get in contact with the insurance customer and inform them the last day their insurance would be covering the charges for the rental vehicle. I would also inform the customer he/she would still receive the same discount on the rental vehicle if he/she needed to keep the rental past the last day. This task kept up our charges, books updated, and we were able to plan when the rental vehicle would be returned to us. My final task I was responsible for everyday was confirming rental appointments.

Confirming appointments was the main task I was responsible for every day. I would scan through the reservation list, for the next day, and call each customer to confirm he/she planned on coming into the office for the rental vehicle. If any changes needed to be made I would take care of, also I would confirm if it was a walk in, delivery, or a pickup. I would also make sure he/she had all the materials needed in order to secure a rental vehicle. I confirmed they had a valid drivers' licenses, and if they planned on securing the rental with a major credit card or a check debit card. Each day everyone was busy in the office. This really made the days fly by fast. Customer interaction and great attitudes provides for a fun work environment. The first day I started at the office, my boss informed me I would be working with hundreds of customers. He stated my communication skills are going to improve substantially. Three of the main factors I became a better a communicator was witnessing, and experiencing nonverbal communication, and interpersonal communication with different customers. Nonverbal communication is what I really used to determine my approach with customers.

Communication Studies Experience

Nonverbal communication was probably the biggest aspect I was able to use during my internship. I really focused on nonverbal communication during my sales pitch, and also during a

friendly conversation with my customer. My junior year of college we talked a lot about body language, and how facial expressions can really express if a customer is engaged or if he/she feels offended. For example, if I was having a conversation with a customer and he/she was not initiating eye contact with me I determined that customer was not paying attention to what I was saying. Another drawback I would be aware of was arms crossed. Customers would become defensive when he/she would not hear a price, or reservation time that was not familiar to them. My instinct was to show empathy. I want to do what I can to make sure I can make this customer happy. Another communication skill I became very effective with was learning how not to use filler words when I spoke. I focused a lot to not use words such as “umm, and like”. Especially when I would talk on the phone. As weeks progressed I could hear myself sounding more professional and clear with my word paths. Another theory I really applied during my internship was interacting with intercultural customers.

My location, I had the opportunity to help several international customers. I helped customers from all across the world ranging from Iceland, Asia, Europe, and even Canada. What I had the most struggles with was being able to explain the rental process concepts not only in person, but also on the phone. For the most part, international customers have a tough time speaking English. I needed to explain the rental processes as clear as possible. I related a lot of my interactions with my intercultural communication class. For example, I helped a couple that didn't speak any English. The customer had their 15-year daughter with to translate all the information I needed to explain. This was extremely hard because I didn't want to mislead this couple by any means. I really focused on my nonverbal skills such as hand gestures, and pointing out words on the contact to explain the best possible way I could. I did the best I could to relate all of my intercultural customers to by Intercultural communication class

I took intercultural communication last year with Deepa, she really talked about how students are not educated on how intercultural communication works. What I found really fascinating was hearing different guest speakers throughout the semester explain their stories. What I found through this internship to be extremely helpful was being educated about intercultural communication. I helped several different customers from different countries and I tried to explain everything I could just how someone would from their own country. The easier he/she can understand the concept, the better rapport you can build with a customer. I loved the enterprise internship and I believe the skills and experience I received gives me a great start to pursue in a career I will enjoy.

Future Success

I can hardly believe my summer internship has ended. It seems like only yesterday I walked into the administration office for my first day of training. On my first day of training, our trainer informed us we all were fighting for four scholarships. Each scholarship ranged between these dollar amounts, 250,500,750 and 1000. All 22 interns were competing for these 4 scholarships through sales numbers, additional revenue, and customer service. As of Tuesday, I can say I was able to receive the top \$1000 scholarship from the Enterprise internship! I ranked 2nd out of 22 interns in both the months of June and July for my performance numbers. My main focus for this internship was to gain more experience as a salesman. However, I received experience of how to run a successful business. I loved my internship and I can see myself working for the Enterprise Company in my future.

Enterprise has every aspect of a business I enjoyed. My manager told me he tries to keep a great work environment through the office. This benefits all of us and helps us enjoy the workday. My favorite part about this job was the competitiveness, and the culture the office

provides. I helped hundreds of customers this summer and my communication skills have grown substantially. I feel I can bring the skills, knowledge and experience I have gained to any interview and/or job application. What I really appreciated was I knew everyone in the company wanted me to be successful. If I was having troubles my manager and coworkers were always there to help. Not only at my own office but others also. Managers and assistant managers from around the area also told me to reach out to anyone. I loved the support and dedication. This made me more confident in myself. Where I stand now is great. I plan on working part-time for Enterprise in Mankato. My next step will be finishing school this spring, and I will be hoping for that phone call in October offering me a full time position. I worked extremely hard this summer, and I feel I have put myself in a fantastic position for my future success!