



GOOGLE EXPERIENCE REFLECTION

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI
HONORS PROGRAM
SELF-DESIGNED EXPERIENCE
EMILY FINLEY
2017

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INTENTION

Hello! My intention for this self-designed proposal is to understand the culture of Google and get to know how their environment impacted and will continue to impact my everyday life. With such a unique perspective and outlook on solving simple, everyday problems, observing Google's sentiment and way of leadership is inspirational. I carried out this experience by collaborating with my intended experience advisor, art director Amy Yip, engaging in the community outside of my initial graphic design team, and using research to further my understanding of the company.

Not only did I take advantage of Google's many resources, I also explored many surrounding areas of California. Through this, I feel that I was able to honor Google's strides towards a healthy work and life balance. Throughout my time, I was able to create video blogs, an online blog, and listen to Audiobooks (from Audible, my last internship! <3). With such a rich organizational mission statement – to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful – and such a wonderful company to explore, I'm so thankful for my 2017 internship with Google and I'm excited to show you what I have learned!

THOUGHTS

WHAT DID YOU LEARN THIS SEMESTER,
PROFESSIONALLY ALONG WITH PERSONALLY?

I have learned the importance of valuing diversity, originality, open minded ideas, exploration, love, spontaneity, freedom, and passion. I have learned about the need and desire to learn, and how a constant thirst for more information can only take you further in life. I have learned about the qualities that make me, me. I have also learned about the qualities that light others up. I have learned how to balance my personal life with my work life, and how to integrate my passion for design across both spaces while studying the culture of Google.

THOUGHTS

WHAT IS ONE STRENGTH YOU FEEL YOU CAPITALIZED ON DURING YOUR SELF-DESIGNED EXPERIENCE?

I think that understanding and applying information has really become of a strength of mine. Not only have I been able to learn new material effectively at Google from the culture around me, I also feel that I've been able to apply this knowledge to the workplace and my other personal endeavors through creative pursuits in design projects and elsewhere. One example can be understanding brand standards through of the company. I have been also apply all of the information I've learned through school, as well, to my projects at Google. It's been so amazing thus far! :)

THOUGHTS

WHO IS ONE INSPIRING INDIVIDUAL YOU MET?

Amy, my art director throughout the summer, is such a successful, talented, and creative individual. She provided me with projects that have helped me in ways I could not even put into words. This environment has been so amazing, refreshing, and inspiring! Amy designed the logo for Google Glass, Curtis my other art director designed promotional pieces, and I worked alongside industrial designers who assisted with the project as well. It's so unique! I've loved every moment, and being surrounded by such an optimistic culture strengthened my own feelings of confidence in my life.

THOUGHTS

WHAT IS CONFIDENCE, IN YOUR OWN WORDS?

I think that Google's culture encourages individuals to be themselves. To not change yourself to be what others want you to be. To break from the mold and try something quirky and different. I think that this environment is a wonderful tool for self development, helping me and others celebrate differences rather than discourage them. I feel like last year and at my previous co-ops, my confidence derived from skills that were slightly surface level at times, if I did this well, if I didn't do this well, and then to become more confident I'd need to master such skills. And it wasn't the company putting that pressure on me, it was me, putting that pressure on myself. I feel that after experiencing a workplace such as Google, I've been learning more about your inner confidence and building that foundation of Who Is Emily? Who Am I? What can I contribute to society?

ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OBSERVATIONS

While working at Google, my understanding of community, environmental, and global impact has increased immensely. Referring to the documents I've read, I found it interesting to read more into how the company incorporates social responsibility in its work environment and culture. I've never thought much as to how Google creates a safe place for us to work. I've understood the parameters surrounding the food they provide, the amenities, and the office spaces, but I've never pinpointed my focus on their attempts to make the office "safe" culturally.

To me, and in my own words, organizational/corporate social responsibility entails the company being cognizant of other important factors, whether that be socially, economically, politically, etc., outside of their sphere of influence. And a socially responsible company will learn about those factors and do their best to incorporate their learnings into the company, integrate, and use that info to not just better the products/employees etc. but to also benefit the world as a whole. Tying back to safety in the work environment, I feel that Google's influence over the small details of social responsibility, not only making their work environments safe nationally and internationally, but also exciting and innovative spaces that breed creativity, shows their dedication to having further impacts on being a socially responsible organization.

When I think about safety, I think about my childhood home.

I think about a place that provides me with everything I'd need to survive, with love, care, and commitment at its core. Creating a safe working environment, to not only fulfill employee's needs, but to also foster creativity and a warm social environment, is most certainly a factor that Google's department of People Development and others have placed as a high, high, priority.

As stated above, safety is an omnipresent factor in Google's culture today. I not only feel safe in Google's office spaces, I also feel safe among the practices I participate in as an employee. Practices, involving fair pay, gender neutral roles, and so much more. The minute I started filling out the application when I received an interview was the moment I started experiencing Google's commitment to social responsibility.

After that being said, I feel like all of this has an impact on greater society, not just within the walls of Google. I feel that social responsibility, whether it be making the workplace safe or bettering existing practices, ends up leaving permanent effects on those involved. Employees can leave Google with the tools they need and a broader perspective on how heightened social responsibility changes their daily internal ecosystem for the better.

PHOTOS AMY YIP



Here is me and Amy Yip. She was a wonderful starting point and introduction into Google. It was an interesting and meaningful connection to have been interviewed by Amy, and then, have her be my host and mentor throughout the entire experience. It was also so helpful to have her guide me through design decisions.

PHOTOS DOMINIC FAROLINO



This is Dom! What a wonderful experience, to have met him before I interned at Google and then following that bond up into the depths of Silicon Valley. We explored so many places together in California, ones that Google stressed would increase our knowledge of the surrounding area. It was truly a great experience to have had another Bearcat, from the University of Cincinnati, by my side during the duration of the summer!

PHOTOS SANDRA FINLEY (MOTHER)



Aww, Sandra! I love Sandra so much. Missed her during the summer. This is my mother. What a wonderful parent. I loved having her visit me during the last few days of my internship. Such a caring, kind, loving, individual. An especially bittersweet goodbye, as I was leaving for Singapore in the days to come, but we are very close so we knew that would be no problem to tackle at all! <3

PHOTOS GOOGLE



Artistic shot of the Google building, so nice. A picture of me standing by the Android figure and the building of Google. A picture on the classic Google Bike, yay! And, a photo of me and my friends at orientation.



PHOTOS GOOGLE INTERNS



Google students featured my photo on their Google Students Instagram page. They had a challenge for interns to post a picture with all of the Google colors, and I was picked!

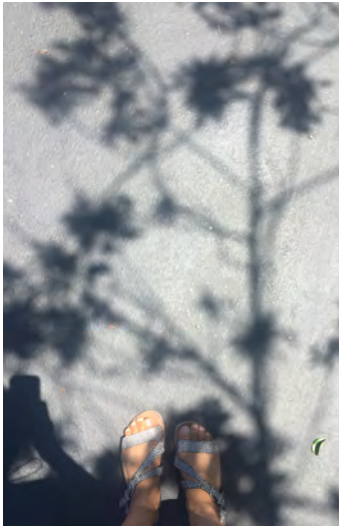
PHOTOS MEANINGFUL MOMENTS



Here's a selfie with me and Google Glass! What a neat thing to try on and also take a closer inspection of. I remember when advertisements for Google Glass came out online, the bright imagery and innovative videos. What an amazing experience to be on the team that had envisioned that idea! On the right are meaningful moments in California, experiencing the culture of Google.



PHOTOS SCENIC



PHOTOS FOOD (OMG!)

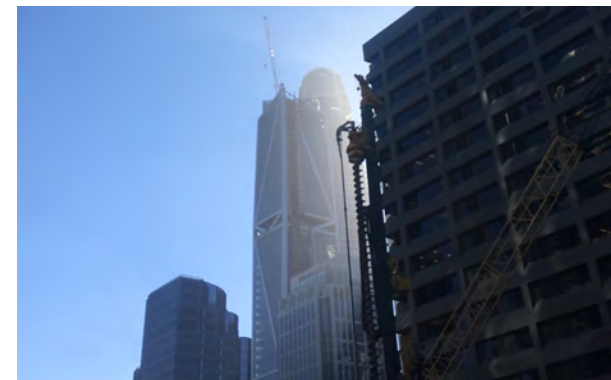
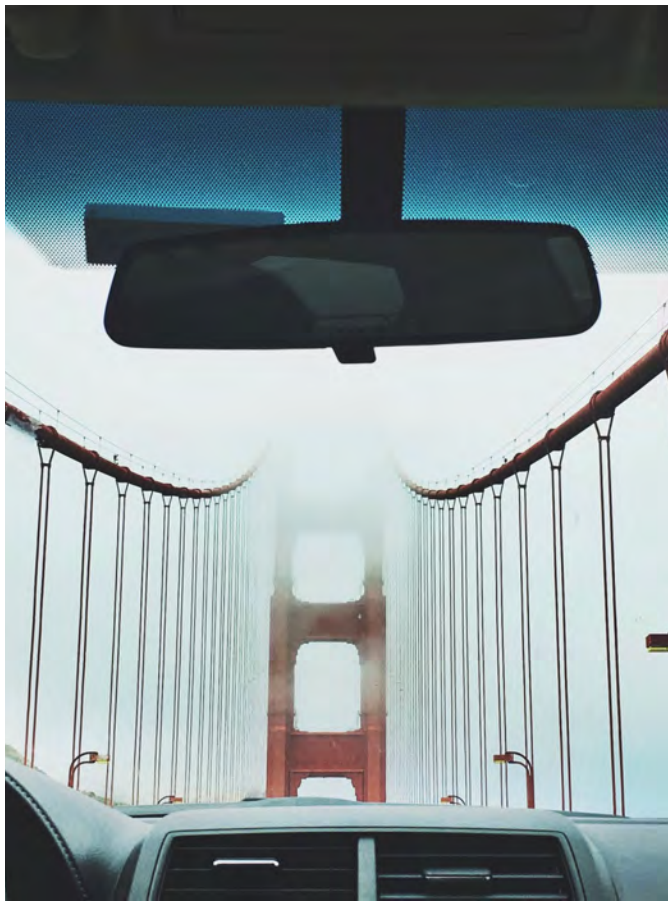


Food! Ahh, the food at Google was amazing and so diverse! I loved how they incorporated foods from different cultures into the variety of restaurants and menus in Mountain View and in San Francisco.

PHOTOS BLACK MOUNTAIN HIKING



PHOTOS ARTISTIC





THANK YOU

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