

Mass Communication Internship Job placement Manual



A Handbook on Vocational Job Placement Best Practices

Written By:

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**Lamii Kpargo
Lawrence Randall**

Contributing Universities:

University of Liberia;
African Methodist Episcopal University;
and
United Methodist University



**MASS COMMUNICATION INTERNSHIP
TRAINING MANUAL**

**Developed for Students in Mass Communication
Internship Placement**

Written by:

S. Kpanbayeazee Duworko, II

Lamii Kpargo

Lawrence Randall

In Cooperation with

The Departments of Mass Communication

University of Liberia;

African Methodist Episcopal University

and

United Methodist University

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Printed by
Diligent Publishing House
49 Gurley Street
Monrovia, Liberia
(231) 6 510 220

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Training Center INFORMOTRAC project and coordinates media development programs for and on behalf of International Media Support in Liberia.

Mr. Randall previously served as Coordinator for the National Public Awareness Committee of the Forestry Reform Monitoring Committee. His task was to promote awareness on the New Forestry Law of 2006 and provide forum for the vetting of a set of core regulations drawn from the law. Under his direction and with funding from the US Government through the Washington based Environmental Law Institute, the law and regulations were made accessible to ordinary Liberians living in the rural communities adjacent to forested areas through community outreach and mass media publicity.

Prior to this, he served as Radio Talk Show Host with the Ducor Broadcasting Corporation and the Infinity Broadcasting Service.

PREFACE

The idea of publishing an Internship Manual for Mass Communication graduating seniors is the outcome of a Vocational Training and Job Placement Project funded by UNESCO in 2006.

This Handbook is a unique start in further building and consolidating professionalism in the media sector in post-conflict Liberia. The publication is a pioneering effort and breaks ground for further donor and local support into media literatures in Liberia. It presents a limited outline of practical steps to take while enlisting in internship job placement especially in a media environment. It does not pretend to provide any exhaustive study into conducting internship placement, neither is it a one-stop-shop for Universities in Liberia interested in placing communication students in vocational training. Rather, it is a humble effort at bridging the knowledge gap with respect to fulfilling professional job placement requirements for course credits. This Handbook can be used for academic purposes without any reference to the authors or the Liberia Media Center.

The Handbook is based on the experiences and information obtained from the participating students and the institutions with which they were working. Part of the content, however, was conceptualized and self-generated by the authors and adapted to suit the local context. Information was drawn from the three Universities lists of criteria for Internship Job Placement. Specific emphasis was placed on the testing systems, evaluation criteria, monitoring regimes and placement strategies.

In this regard, the LMC is immensely indebted to the three Chairpersons of the partner Universities, Associate Professor Joe Worlorbah Mulbah, Chairman of the Department of Mass Communication, University of Liberia; Mr, Reginald Goodrige, Chairman of the Department of Mass Communication United Methodists University; Mr. Malcolm Joseph, Chairman of the Department of Mass Communication, African Methodist Episcopal for their institutional and personal

support for the project and ultimately the Handbook.

LMC is heavily obliged to International Media Support for its generous contribution in making the printing of this publication a success. Special appreciation goes to UNESCO, especially the Media and Communication unit for its continued support to media development initiatives implemented by the Center. The Center notes the laudable efforts of UNESCO Monrovia Office and staff for facilitating and arranging logistics for the Vocational Training and Job Placement Project.

LMC recognizes with enormous gratitude the contribution of Mr. S. Kpanbayeazee Duworko, II for his lead road in collating data and generating some of the Chapters for this publication. Appreciation is extended to Mr. Lamii Kpargoi for ably coordinating the project and providing insights into the Handbook as well as writing some of the texts.

Lastly, it will be an unfortunate oversight to skip the valuable contribution and edits by Mr. Lanre Arogundade of the International Press Center in Lagos, who provided useful suggestions and comments on the content.

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year he has served in the capacity of Project/administrative Officer of the LMC.

Mr. Kpargoi holds a Bsc (Cum laude) from the University of Liberia (UL) and is currently a candidate for an LLB at the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law at the UL. He is a recipient of the coveted Joseph Jenkins Roberts Educational Foundation (JJREF) Scholarship and Medal Awards for Academic Excellence in 1995. Mr. Kpargoi has been an honored student throughout his academic sojourn. As a student leader, he served as President of the Joseph Jenkins Roberts Scholarship Students Association (JJRSSA) from 2002 – 2004.

He worked as a staffer of the Legislative Press Bureau of the Liberian Legislature between 1997 and 2003 and rose through the ranks to become the Bureau's Editor-in-Chief .A former secondary school teacher,Mr.Kpargoi writes political commentaries for several local newspapers and web-based Liberian news groups, and speeches for private individuals in his spare time.

Lawrence Randall

Lawrence Randall is a journalist and a media development specialist. Previously, the Senior Communications Officer with the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDRR), he was appointed as the Director of the LMC in March 2005 by the Press Union of Liberia (PUL), which holds the Chair of the LMC Board.

Under his leadership, the LMC has successfully developed into a key institution in the Liberian media landscape, significantly contributing to areas such as professional training, media law reform and access to technical resources. In his capacity as Director, the LMC is growing steadily as a center of professional excellence and a reference point for post-conflict media development initiatives.

He currently serves as a Consultant with the Radio Netherlands

Notes on Contributors

About the Contributors

S. Kpanbayezee Duworko, II is a Liberian educator, journalist, social activist and writer. He has served as media training consultant for the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Liberia Media Project and the Center for Media Studies and Peacebuilding. Duworko wrote the *THRP PEACEBUILDING TRAINING HANDBOOK* for the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Program of the Lutheran Church in Liberia and the report of *The Traditional Forms of Reconciliation in Liberia* project sponsored by the UNDP-Liberia.

Duworko is also a published writer of both fiction and nonfiction. Among his published works are **Reflections on Reconciliation and Our Political Fiamomo** (anthology of essays); **Corruption in Liberia: A Critical Analysis** (monograph); **Doomsday is dawning** (poetry); **Reflections** (poetry); **The unfortunate: two short stories**; **English Made Simple: A Grammar Textbook**; **Composition with Ease: A Writing Textbook**; and **Studies in Liberianology - Volume I: Re-assessing Peacebuilding Strategies in Liberia**. He has also published a number of articles in local dailies.

In 2006, Duworko presented a paper at the *Conflict and Integration in the Upper Guinea Coast* conference organized by the Max Planck Institute of Social Anthropology in Halle, Germany. He is currently an instructor in the Department of English and Literature at the University of Liberia.

Lamii Kpargoii

Lamii Kpargoii is currently the Program Coordinator of the Liberia Media Center (LMC) run Initiative for Mobile Training of Community Radio (INFORMOTRAC). INFORMOTRAC is a Radio Netherlands Training Center (RNTC) funded project which is slated to operate in Liberia between September 2007 and December 2010. Over the last

About our International Partners

International Media Support

Freedom of expression is a fundamental human right, which is necessary for the protection and promotion of other human rights and democratic values. It is accordingly one of the foundations for peace and stability. International Media Support undertakes interventions in areas affected by conflict and severe human insecurity to promote and strengthen press freedom and improve the working conditions of local media practitioners and institutions. In this way, IMS seeks to contribute to the creation of peace and stability in conflict affected and threatened areas.

IMS typically engages in rapid collaborative interventions undertaken with the aim of supporting media practitioners and institutions hindered or threatened by conflict and/or assisting media practitioners and institutions that have a positive impact on the underlying causes and negative consequences of conflict.

IMS is an international NGO, supported by the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian governments, and is based in Copenhagen, Denmark.

UNESCO

UNESCO - the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is the UN system agency responsible for education, social and natural science, culture and communication and information in the service of an ambitious goal: to build peace in the minds of men. Today, UNESCO promotes international co-operation among its Member States and Associate Members.

In the area of communication and information, UNESCO is particularly active in promoting freedom of expression and pluralism of the media. UNESCO is the only United Nations agency with a mandate to defend freedom of expression and press. Article 1 of its Constitution

requires the Organization to “further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.” To realize this purpose the Organization is required to “collaborate in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples, through all means of mass communication and to that end recommend such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas by word and image...”

Communication, offers courses for a 4-year degree program in mass communication. The department offers courses in both broadcast and print journalism and students are at liberty to specialize in either.

The current enrollment strength of the department stands at three hundred with female students accounting for 20 percent. There are three associate professors, two instructors, three teaching assistants and five support staff. Occasionally, the department hires part-time lecturers to beef-up its faculty. Through a grant from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), the department has acquired a 250 watt FM transmitter that covers the whole of Monrovia and its environs and has a 12-page Varsity Pilot Newspaper operating.

United Methodist University (UMU)

The most recent of the mass communications bachelor degree granting programs is that offered by the United Methodist University (UMU). The program which is still in its early stage currently has 36 students enrolled in three degree granting majors: Print Journalism, Broadcast-Journalism and Telecommunication management- a significant increase from the 6 students who were enrolled three semesters ago. The program offers 16 courses and the Faculty is hoping to introduce 2-3 additional courses in the 2007 – 2008 academic year.

African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU)

The Department of Mass Communication of the African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU) was established in 2001. There are about 120 students, doing major or minor courses in Mass Communication at the University. The first batch of students is expected to be graduated from the school in 2007. The department has staff strength of 5 people and offers a variety of courses.

The department urgently needs studio and laboratory facilities for effective acquisition of practical knowledge. It also needs text books and fellowship opportunities for its students.

Appendix 4:

About Our Partner Universities

University of Liberia

The University of Liberia's Mass Communications Department, as is the case with other sectors of the country is gradually putting together the broken pieces left behind due to the long years of civil crisis in the country. The war shattered the foundation of the institution and destroyed its infrastructure and facilities.

The department was set up in 1983 through a bilateral agreement between the Liberian government and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). UNESCO under the agreement provided technical assistance for the department, while the Government of Liberia through the University of Liberia was responsible to make available the space and the institutions faculty. This assistance from UNESCO however, ended in 1990.

Today, the department has managed to resuscitate itself to a measure of its pre-war capacity. It has succeeded in attracting more students to the department and acquiring some state-of-the-art equipment for the enhancement of students' academic works. Significantly, for the first time in several years, the enrollment of female students has increased to 25.

The department, prior to the holding of the 2005 Presidential and Legislative elections secured a small but appreciable grant from the United States Aid for International Development (USAID) through the Office of Transition Initiative/Liberia Transition Initiative (OTI/LTI) to train local working journalists for the conduct of the 2005 elections. The training session, which spanned over three months recorded huge dividend indicative of the professional manner the media reported the elections.

The department, which grants Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Mass

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Notes on Contributors

Activities	Date	Location	Source of Funding
LMC – Phase I (incl. recruitment of personnel and acquisition of equipment and furniture)	March 2004 - August 2005	Monrovia	IMS/OSI/ IREX
Working groups on Reform of Media Laws and Policies	May 2005 – Nov. 2005	Monrovia	UNESCO/ IMS
Computer Assisted Reporting/Internet Training (for media and members of the Federation of Liberia Youth	November -January 2005	Monrovia	UNESCO
Media Review Roundtable on the 2005 elections	February,2005	Monrovia	LMC/UNMIL
Free three months Internet Access for Students and Youths	February 2006- April 2006	Monrovia	LMC
Coordination of International Media Partnership Delegation return to Liberia	June 4-11, 2006	Monrovia	LMC/IMS
Media and CSOs roundtable on reporting the budget and corruption	15-Jul-06	Monrovia	LMC
Information delivery, vetting and data collection on proposed forestry laws and regulations	July-February 2007	Liberia	Environmental Law Institute/FRMC/LMC/ FDA/PUL/CEMESP
Photojournalism Training	January- February 2007	Monrovia	FREEVOICE
Internship Placement and Vocational Training Cycle I	November 2006- January 2007	Monrovia	UNESCO
TRC Media Training and Team Reporting/Monitoring	January-April 2007	Liberia	IMS/ICTJ/TRC
Future Search Conference and Needs Assessment for Community Radio Support	January- March 2007	Liberia	Radio Netherlands Training Center
Logistical Coordination-BBC World Service Trust Communicating Justice Project	August 1-17, 2007	Monrovia	BBC World Service Trust
Internship Placement and Vocational Training Cycle II	August 2007 – Present	Monrovia	UNESCO
INFORMOTRAC-Radio Netherlands Training Program-RNTC for Community Radio	July 2007- December 2010	Liberia	RNTC/Department of International Cooperation/Netherlands

INFORMOTRAC program aims to build the capacity of community radio stations through the provision of broadcast, studio equipment and training.

The center is currently administered by an Executive Director and a Program Officer assisted by a host of voluntaries.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives:

After reading this chapter, students will be able to:

- Develop and list individual purposes and relate these individual purposes to the specific purposes of the program;
- List and explain benefits to be accrued from the internship program; and appreciate the necessity for internship.

1.2 Background of the Project:

The media industry was one of the major sectors of the country that suffered the negative consequences of nearly fifteen years of civil war in Liberia. The attending negative impact witnessed huge intellectual flight resulting to an acute shortage of experienced and well trained journalists. Those fleeing the country for greener pasture failed to return in pursuit of better conditions of services abroad while others left at home found employment in non-media related professions with high income potentials. The summary of this scenario was that the media sector suffered devastating brain drain.

It is a reflection of the lingering effect of the crisis of the past that, currently, the majority of practicing Liberian journalists has not been exposed to proper formal training in mass communication institutes or schools. Most practicing journalists today enlisted with media houses as apprentices and overtime rose through the ranks in their respective institutions. The drawback of this lack of formal rigorous training has been the delivery of poor quality media products, repeated and unabated transgression of ethics and professional standards by some media outlets and journalists.

What is also interesting is that despite the increasing number of mass communication graduates yearly by three universities and the few six (6) months to one (1) year mass communication schools in the country, less than half of these graduates are absorbed by the media industry. This problem has been mainly attributed to the lack of requisite job experience on the part of these mass communication graduates.

The Graduates themselves have acknowledged the lack of strong internship/vocational course credit programs that could improve their competitiveness in the media market. Due to this situation many mass communication graduates from Liberian tertiary and high institutions have largely remained unemployed because they lack the requisite experience demanded by employers in the media industry.

Appendix 3

Profile of LMC

The Liberian Media Center (LMC) a not-for-profit and non-governmental independent media resource center, officially registered under the Laws of the Republic of Liberia.

It was officially commissioned on August 26, 2005 to provide journalists and media organizations in Liberia with improved access to basic IT (Computer and Internet) and secretariat resources and training workshops. LMC also exists to provide forum for the periodic assessment of media coverage of significant national and international events, facilitate capacity building programs for journalists and renders professional services to media and civil society groups.

LMC supports advocacy for the reform of Liberian Media Laws and Policies in the pre and post election transitional period within the broader context of the right to freedom of expression, freedom of opinion, freedom of the press, access to information, media independence and pluralism in Liberia and the West African sub-region.

LMC is currently involved with a series of programs/projects. There are also some activities that the LMC expects to undertake in the near future. These activities are pending on donor's response to proposals that have been submitted or in the process of being submitted by the organization.

The center recently concluded a public awareness and vetting of a set of Core Regulations and Contracts under the new 2006 Forestry Law enacted to improved the management of forest resources in Liberia.

In September of 2007, the LMC in partnership with the Radio Netherlands Training Center (RNTC) will launch the Initiative for Mobile Training of Community Radios (INFORMOTRAC). The

Appendix 2

Appendix 2: List of Participants in the first UNESCO sponsored Internship Placement Project

Names	Assigned Institutions
A. University of Liberia	
1. Joseph F. Charlie	<i>Daily Observer Newspaper</i>
2. Habakkuk T. Polahn	<i>Sky Radio</i>
3. J. Kerkula Yarkpawolo	<i>The Heritage Newspaper</i>
4. Olive E. Thomas	<i>Sky Radio</i>
5. Samuel N. Kemayah	<i>LBS</i>
6. Emmanuel N. Johnson	<i>Truth Radio</i>
7. Tickly D. Monkoney Jr.	<i>Radio Veritas</i>
8. Jimmy B. Zinnah Sr.	<i>LBS</i>
9. Austin D. Russ	<i>Power Radio</i>
10. Z. Abraham Gardour	<i>Crystal Radio</i>
11. J. Alfred Chea	<i>The Forum Newspaper</i>
12. David K. B. Akoi	<i>LBS</i>
13. Cosme R. Pulano Jr.	<i>Talking Drum Studio (TDS)</i>
14. Wesley D. George	<i>West Africa Democracy Radio</i>
15. Christopher K. Sallee	<i>Radio Veritas</i>
B. AME University	
16. Josephine Nyankoon	<i>Star Radio</i>
17. Terl Johnson	<i>Truth FM</i>
18. Louise Andrews	<i>Radio Veritas</i>
19. Robert Johnson	<i>The Analyst</i>
C. United Methodist University	
20. Elchico Fawumdu	<i>The Inquirer</i>

While all sectors of the media industry have struggled to uphold and maintain some appreciable level of acceptable performance, the vast majority of industry owners spoken to in 2006 agreed that the current shape of the media is less than desirable. Hence, in 2006 the Liberia Media Center (LMC) held series of discussions with media proprietors and faculties of tertiary institutions on a number of interim stop-gap measures to tackle the problems in the medium term while determining long-term steps for mitigating them.

The resultant conclusion of those meetings informed the idea of the LMC intervening and proposing a complementary program to assist Universities involved with Internship Job Placement.

Pursuant to the implementation of the program, LMC deployed some twenty graduating mass communication seniors from the University of Liberia (UL), United Methodist University (UMU) and African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU) to a cross section of media outlets in Monrovia and monitored them. They were sent for a period of 2 (two) months in late 2006. The objective was to expose them to job training that would adequately prepare them to cope with the demanding task of full-time journalism work when they actually start professional practice.

1.3 Purposes

The overall purpose of this manual is to assist Universities interested in enlisting students in Internship program in preparing their students for the challenges of the job market by facilitating their insertion into various mainstream media institutions in Liberia.

Specifically, the manual aims to:

- Guide the Placement of a specified number of graduating university seniors of mass communication in print and broadcasting (television and radio) media institutions in the country;
- Provide the forum for on-the-job learning and exchange

between interns and media practitioners of diverse backgrounds;

- Enhance interns' theoretical media knowledge through practical on-the-field issues, techniques and applications;
- Monitor performance level and progress of all interns enlisted in the program with the aim of identifying those areas of the profession that the interns may need further professional growth; and
- Serve as feeder for media outlets to identify potential mass communication graduates capable of meeting the challenges of employment in the media industry.

1.4 Benefits

In the context of this manual, participants enlisting in a job placement program of similar consideration are to benefit from the below listed:

- Students would have the opportunity to acquire practical knowledge and be able to better appreciate the dynamics of the media job market;
- Students would be empowered and their competencies enhanced with the acquisition of practical skills needed for employment in the competitive media industry;
- Students would gain appropriate professional knowledge to handle ethical issues and therefore avoid ethical transgressions in reporting when finally engaged in the media industry; and

Students would find avenues for possible employment upon graduation.

SECTION 4

GRADE:

The grade for my work should be at least *average*. I selected this grade because I did not know any thing about this profession but rather have the love for it. If I had known this work, I would not have gone as an Intern to any institution. I would have been working and assigned to a beat and would not have had the difficulties I encountered as an Intern at Truth FM. Therefore I will like the *average* to stand for me.

SECTION 5:

I thank the Lord for the life and time given me to do this internship program through the help of the LMC. I also like to thank the Chairman of the Mass Communication Department of the AMEU, Mr. Malcolm Joseph, who thought about our dear school being an integral part of the *LMC Mass Communication Internship Training for Graduating Seniors* program

During my stay as an Intern at the station, I was happily welcomed by the station's reporters and staff. Initially, I was not trusted to go on beats alone. But later I covered beats alone. I learned many things during my stay with the station, and wanted to stay there a longer time but had to leave when the internship ended.

I urge the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) to organize continuous media workshops for mass communication students. These workshops will introduce the students to many new and relevant aspects of the media industry.

talkative but rather a careful observer. I got frightened because it was my first time going out to ask people about unfolding happenings and events. This made me monitor news daily.

WAYS TO HELP IMPROVE:

In order to improve, I kindly appeal to the LMC along with authorities at the various mass communication schools to do the following:

- Continuously have this program (internship). This program is indeed a better way of making sure that students studying journalism understand the profession better and not just the theories from the classroom. Classroom theories are totally different from what you will do on the field.
- Give more assignments. Media outlets or mass communication institutions should give their interns or students assignments on the field more often. This enables students to get rid of fright and ask more questions during interviews. This leads to better performance when the students graduate and get employment.
- Monitor Interns rigorously. Interns should be monitored for mistakes and proper presentation of stories and other news gathering events. This includes closely looking at their stories and editing them because an Intern does not know the profession and is learning during the internship.
- Explain in details concepts during class lectures. The concepts should be explained well and properly understood by the students.

STRENGTHS:

News gathering, editing and writing are my key strengths. At first, it was difficult to compose my story after gathering the facts but now I am able to compose my story better and constructively.

CHAPTER TWO

INTERNSHIP AND ITS IMPORTANCE

2.1 Objectives

After reading Chapter Two, students will be able to:

- Define *internship* and *mass communication internship* and other key words associated with the concept of internship; and
- Explain reasons why internship is important

2.2 Definition and Key Terms

In order for students to understand and appreciate the *concept of internship*, it is very vital to start with a definition of the word *internship* and to learn words closely associated with the concept.

Internship is defined as *experience gained from training on the job before graduation or completion of a course of study*. An *internship* lasts for a specific period. In some instances, students on *internship* are required to do a number of hours. These hours are part of the requirements for graduation. For the purpose of this manual, a *mass communication internship* is defined as *a period between 30 to 60 days in which a mass communication student is required to stay at a media outlet to gain practical experience and acquire skills and further knowledge in actual journalism practise*.

An individual performing the internship is called *intern*. Thus, a *mass communication intern* is a person assigned to a *media outlet to gain practical experience and further knowledge related to the field of mass communication*. The person under whom the intern works is usually referred to as the *supervisor*. In media institutions, interns are usually supervised by the *news editor/director/ chief reporter* if the intern is involved in news gathering. If the intern is involved in advertising, he/she is usually supervised by the *sales/advertising manager*. If the intern is a broadcast technician/engineer, then he/she is supervised by the *technical manager/chief engineer*. Or if the intern is involved in photo journalism/television video camera, then he/she is supervised by the *photo editor/chief camera operator/cameraman*.

It is also advisable for *mass communication interns* to be familiar with key terms or expressions associated with production in the media industry.

2.3 Importance

These days, the media industry in Liberia prefers persons who have

would then do my excerpt on the computer for it to be played during news time. I also compiled the foreign news for each newscast.

Section 2

The three (3) most significant challenges faced were:

Denied to attend school:

As an Intern, at first I was told not to go to school. The reason was because my Director said in Nigeria where he studied; he started his internship after he completed his class attendance. He said I should decide if I wanted to practice journalism or go to school. Nevertheless, due to the many pleas from the rest of the reporters and a memo written to him, he accepted and I was given my schedule.

Lack of I.D card:

This was quite difficult, especially when you introduced yourself as an Intern. Most news makers believed that granting interviews to an Intern was just for play and were not willing to provide their precious time for interviews to an Intern who is practically seen as an apprentice. In some cases I was not allowed to attend some interviews.

Not granted permission to voice my reports:

At the station I was not given the time to voice my reports or present news and as a broadcast-journalist I will not only be reporting but also doing other things at different times such as live coverage of events, presenting of news as well as bulleting, packaging and presenting reports.

Section 3

WEAKNESS:

My key weakness lies in not asking questions during an interview. For this reason when I attended press conferences and it was time to ask questions, I remained mute and listened to others because I am not a

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

PRESENTED
TO
LIBERIA MEDIA CENTER

BY
TERL K. JOHNSON
DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL UNIVERSITY

Section 1

I saw my assignment at Truth FM, as a big challenge where I have longed to practice. Going to TRUTH FM was now part of my academic requirements.

At Truth FM 96.1 Radio Station, I was treated very nicely and respected by the reporters. They took me as though we had interacted for a long time and taught me things that I did not know. I was taught how to put down my excerpts on the computer, edit them and prepare my intro.

In the newsroom, we worked, joked and went on beats together. If reporters were too busy on other beats while I was less busy or not assigned, they told me to help cover their beats. When I came back, they allowed me to write and they edited the work. This really helped improve the gathering of my stories and transforming them into news items for broadcast. While on beats, I also met many reporters from various media outlets and we all got to know one another better.

On the relationship with my News Director who was my supervising editor, at first I was nervous because he is someone who likes to make sure that things go on right in the newsroom, but gradually our relationship grew stronger and better each day. Whenever I returned from a beat, I would always write my story and send it to him for editing. I

some practical experience and knowledge about the media or mass communication. Employers in the media industry prefer people with practical experience and knowledge because they do not want to spend money training people on the job. Huge cost is attached to training personnel on the job. Therefore *mass communication internship* is very important in the life of students nearing the completion of their study. The purpose of internship varies from institution to institution. Here are some reasons why a *mass communication internship* is important.

- *It will help the students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and provide avenue for the students to combine theory and practice to improve and overcome those weaknesses.*
- *It will help the students to keep focus in achieving their career goals.*

It will assist the students to critically determine whether their acquired academic knowledge is relevant to the current needs of the media industry and whether their respective institutions are up to the task of providing the requisite knowledge demanded by the media industry.

- *It will assist the students gain the desired experience needed by the media industry employers.*

In summary, it could be rightly said that a *mass communication internship* is important because it prepares the intern for the type of responsibilities he/she will have in the future while exposing the individual to the nature of the media industry and what it takes to deal with challenges that arise in the course of duty.

● CHAPTER THREE

REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNSHIP

3.1 Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to:

- Determine whether they meet the requirements set by their respective departments *for Graduating Seniors*; and
- Appropriately structure their final reports as required by the *Internship Training* program.

- c. My first interview conducted

Challenging assignments

- a. My first interview conducted
- b. My first assignment to voice as co-producer

At TDS, I co-produced and presented the **WOMAN** Program along with its producer many times. I also produced the final and first editions for the year 2006 and 2007 respectively. Furthermore, I worked with the drama unit and travelled to Ganta, Nimba County with Lucy Jagbeh. There we coordinated the closing program of the International Children Day of Broadcasting (ICDB) 2006

I am thankful to the management of TDS for affording me the opportunity. To the LMC, I say thanks for giving us the forum where as young media practitioners we acquired practical experience. Lastly, I am grateful to the Mass Communication Department of the UL, especially Professor Joe Worlorbah Mulbah for providing the opportunity where I could exhibit some knowledge of what I was taught.

Point, a township outside Monrovia. The second occurred at the Gender Ministry in Monrovia where the Liberian Chapter of the Network of African Women Ministers and Parliamentarians was launched.

- B. Scriptwriting- Fortunately, all scripts for the **WOMAN** program were written by me.
- C. Developing Actualities- For the programs we produced together, we developed the actualities together. Later I developed the actualities for the programs I produced alone.
- D. Program Packaging- I had the opportunity to package many of the programs along side the producer. I also packaged the ones I produced myself.
- E. Studio Production Arts/Cool Edit Pro- I had Cool Edit knowledge prior to my arrival at TDS. Fortunately, the technicians consented to working with me but regrettably nothing was done. Only once did the junior technician and I work together. There and then did he know that I had some knowledge about Cool-Edit. The extra time I spent in the studio improved my Cool Edit skills.

Generally good things were said but actually they were not done. A schedule was set for me to go on the field on Tuesday, Thursday and Wednesday but did not come to fruition. My most significant challenges and challenging assignments outlined in my first report remained the outstanding challenges experienced during my internship.

Significant challenges

- a. Opportunity to work
- b. My first script written

3.2 Departmental Requirements

Generally the internship in the mass communication departments at the UL, UMU and AMEU is open to all graduating seniors. However, each department has specific requirements that a student must meet.

3.3 Requirements for LMC Supported Intervention

3.3.1 Required Grade Point Average (GPA)

Any student intending to partake in the *LMC supported Internship Placement Program* must be a graduating senior with a GPA of at least 2.50. The student must also have completed thesis writing (if it is a course requirement in his/her institution) before becoming an *intern*. The rationale is to give each student ample time to concentrate fully on the internship. Past experience has shown that a student simultaneously writing a thesis and undertaking an internship will not have adequate time daily for the internship. The *mass communication internship* is intended to acquire *practical knowledge*; therefore, the more time a student spends daily at a media outlet, the more practical knowledge is acquired.

3.3.2 Letter of Application from the Student and List of Qualified Candidates from the Institution (Department of Mass Communication)

Each student desirous of being a part of the *LMC supported Internship Placement Program* must apply in his/her own hand writing to LMC. Only applicants previously shortlisted as “qualified”, by their respective institutions will be encouraged to apply. The application letter will be validated from a list of qualified candidates as submitted by the respective departments.

3.3.3 Interview

Every selected applicant will have to go through an interview. The interview is critical to the process because it is meant to determine

whether the student is knowledgeable in the field of mass communication, has good writing skills and is up to the tasks for the internship. The program is also intended to show excellence in journalism, hence, the best hands must be sent to participating institutions.

3.3.4 Monitoring, Supervision and Handling of Equipment Provided

A monitoring mechanism should be established and implemented during the period. This mechanism should include a memorandum of understanding to be signed with media outlets to enhance editorial oversight of the trainees and ensure staff cooperation as they perform their work.

The usefulness of this is reflected in the comment on the supervision of an intern assigned at **The Inquirer** newspaper during the first *LMC Placement Program*. The News Editor of the newspaper, Mr. Timothy T. Seaklor said: "I assigned the intern to an experienced reporter for a week, ensured that he was issued a temporary ID card and evaluated his stories. After the first week, the intern was on his own gathering news. But I made sure that all his stories were evaluated and he was told what needed improvement."

The mechanism also includes the publication and or broadcast of reports, findings and products of the interns in the media outlets with which they are assigned.

The monitoring further entails ensuring that the Intern signs a daily attendance register and produces a weekly self-assessment and activity report. Monitors should pay regular visits to these outlets and assess first hand, the performance of the trainees and the problems confronting them. The objective of this routine monitoring is the need to find solutions to the problems that are identified.

Under the internship program, needed equipment like cassette recorders, notepads and digital cameras should be provided the interns for the duration of the internship. Each student should be required to return the cassette recorders and digital cameras. To ensure that this

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Samples of Two (2) Interns' Reports

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

PRESENTED

TO

LIBERIA MEDIA CENTER

BY

COSME R. PULANO, JR

MASS COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA

An Intern is someone who goes to receive or gain supervised practical experience prior to full-time engagement. My two-month stay at Talking Drum Studio (TDS) has added greatly to my practical knowledge. At TDS in line with the work plan that was drawn by my supervisor, I found myself achieving about 70% of what I had to do due to many prevailing circumstances that I could not overcome. Due to the huge tasks that my supervisor had day after day, accomplishing this schedule with me was a problem. Hence, I took the responsibility to inform those concerned about this schedule.

Basically during these two months, I gained practical experience in

- A. Interview skills,
- B. Scriptwriting,
- C. Developing actualities,
- D. Program packaging, and
- E. Studio production Arts/cool Edit pro with the help of the Technical staffs.

A. Interviews- I was able to conduct two interviews during my (2) months at TDS. These were done with Lucy Jagbeh, producer of **WOMAN**. The first interview on the water crisis was done in West

opportunity to share experiences of covering and managing difficult assignments.

Section 4:

[Make a self assessment. Maximum of 200 words]

This section deals with how students see or perceive their key weaknesses in specific areas such as *news gathering, story construction, editing, interviewing, pre-script research, and soliciting advertisement*. Students will then suggest ways like *more assignments, close monitoring and mentoring* to help tackle these weaknesses.

The students will also have the opportunity to identify their key strengths in key areas also.

Section 5:

[Grade your work.]

Students will also grade themselves. They should be sincere in grading themselves according to the following categories:

1. Above Average
2. Average
3. Below Average

Section 6:

[Summarize your experience on the job. Maximum of 100 words]

Lastly, this section presents the opportunity for students to review their internship activities. (See Appendix 1 for sample reports by two (2) students in the first internship program.)

happens, the institution from which the student come should draw up a binding agreement that will compel each intern to retribute any equipment lost or wilfully damaged.

3.3.5 Students' Final Report

Each intern must produce a final type-written report containing six sections of not more than 1100 words. The final report will enable a proper evaluation of the performance of the Intern during the internship and analysis of the challenges they encountered. This will also assist in the designing of measures to overcome similar challenges in the future. See Chapter Five for report format.

 CHAPTER FOUR

THE DOS, DON'TS AND CHALLENGES OF INTERNSHIP

4.1 Objectives

After reading the chapter, students will be able to:

- Know the *dos* and *don'ts* of internship;
- Adhere to the *dos* and *don'ts* of internship; and
- Develop mechanisms to deal with challenges faced during internship.

Structure of the Report

The final report is divided into six sections. Below are the sections including a brief analysis of what each should contain.

Section 1:

*[Provide insight on general state of affairs at assigned media outlet. **Maximum of 300 words**]*

Interns are enabled by this section to provide informative details about the media institution to which she was assigned. The section focuses on the following:

- a) Broad/general information on work environment at the media outlet (location, ownership, personnel, structure, policy, philosophy, business plan, target audience, priority issues, nature of debates and general conditions);
- b) Peer-to-peer and or elder-to-youngster relationship on the job; and
- c) Cooperation and relations with supervising editors.

Section 2:

*[Provide explanations on three (3) most significant challenges faced on the field while discharging duties. **Maximum of 300 words**]*

Entering the profession after graduating from formal training always presents certain challenges, most of which are often unforeseen. This section allows the students to discuss the challenges of Internship and their perception of how they could be faced.

Section 3:

*[Shortlist the three (3) most difficult assignments and provide insights on your most prominent story line. Copies of all published and unpublished works/articles must be attached. **Maximum of 200 words.**]*

In post-conflict societies, journalists normally encounter difficulties on the beats, especially in an environment like Liberia where public officials still sometimes prefer to avoid the media. Here, students have the

● CHAPTER FIVE

WRITING THE INTERNSHIP REPORT

5.1 Objectives

After reading this chapter, students will be able to:

- Familiarize themselves with the internship report format; and
- Write the final internship report.

4.2 Dos

Interns should:

- Abide with the ethics of the profession and make it a daily guide;
- Have a daily log and keep to it;
- Undertake assignments and submit them within deadlines;
- Be punctual;
- Be honest;
- Be truthful;
- Liaise with supervisors and discuss with them measures to improve job performance;
- Follow up on any unfinished assignment;
- Read stories over carefully before submission;
- Maintain healthy working relationship with other personnel at assigned place of work; remember people have highs and lows even at work places;
- Be courageous to overcome hazards of journalism;
- Engage in daily self-assessment and make relevant improvements;
- Handle equipment with care and test it before using;
- Show courtesy to all persons encountered in the course of duty;

- Sign in upon resumption of work and sign out at the end of the day's work and
- Regularly engage in self-development and take advantage of any training opportunities

The above list is not exhaustive and Interns are encouraged to add as deemed fit and relevant.

4.3 Don'ts

Interns should not:

- Boast about being 'experts,' since learning is continuous
- Delay or dodge assignments.
- Lie about what they don't know.
- Be idle on the job; idleness may lead to gossiping.
- Solicit favor for their work; either from the management of the media outlet to which they are assigned or from the person(s) the work is about.
- Be complacent; complacency may lead to sluggishness.
- Be discourteous even when they believe their supervisors have mis-judged their work.
- Be absent without an excuse from the supervisor and regularly offer excuse to be away from duty. Internship entails being there always to acquire the needed practical experience desired by the competitive media industry.
Again this list is not exhaustive and Interns are encouraged to develop more to serve as a guide for them.

4.4 Challenges

Internship is not a smooth process. It comes with bottlenecks. Here are some of the challenges faced by some students in the first *LMC Mass*

Communication Internship Training for Graduating Seniors program:

- Some supervisors may not give you the leeway; fearing that you are there to take their jobs after graduation.
- In some broadcast outlets (especially the broadcast outlets), you may not be allowed to go on air. One Intern lamented: "At the station I was not given the time to voice my reports nor present news and as a broadcast-journalist you will not only be reporting but rather be doing other things at different times such as live coverage of events, presenting of news as well as bulleting, packaging and presenting reports."
- You may be subjected to questioning from some media managers about why you selected their media outlets for your internship.
- Tasks developed with the supervisors may not be accomplished because the supervisors may be very busy day after day. One student wrote, "Generally good things were said but actually they were not done. A schedule was set for me to go on the field on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday but did not come to fruition."
- Nervousness could set in if you first meet a supervisor who is hard working.

Without an identification card, an intern may be prevented from attending and properly carrying out his tasks. Another student wrote, "*Lack of I.D card*: This was quite difficult, especially when you introduced yourself as an Intern. Most news makers believed that granting interviews to Interns was just for the fun of it and were not willing to provide their precious time for interviews by an Intern who is seen as an apprentice. In some cases I was prevented from attending some interviews."