

## **MBA Internships: Justen Downing (MBA '24)**

September 1, 2023



### **Justen Downing (MBA '24)**

**Concentrations:** [Business Analytics](#) & [Finance](#)

**Internship:** Operations - Intern, Syneos Health (Pharmaceuticals/Consulting), Somerset, N.J.

**How did you approach the internship search process, and what strategies did you find effective?**

After discussions with my career consultant, I created a tiered list of desired companies.

**Can you share a memorable moment or experience from your internship that had a significant impact on your professional growth?**

Going out to lunch with the COO, who expressed an interest in my career progression.

**How did your internship align with your career goals and aspirations? Did it confirm or reshape your career path in any way?**

It helped me to gauge where within this organization (or organizations like it) I may like to work.

**Were there any challenges or obstacles you faced during your internship, and how did you overcome them?**

One challenge I faced was getting buried in all of the operations the company is involved in, and knowing how my role/responsibilities can best be applied to these processes.

**Did you have a mentor or supervisor who played a crucial role in your internship experience? How did they support your development?**

I did. They supported me by matching my skillset with projects that I might find interesting.

**In what ways did your internship allow you to apply the theoretical concepts you learned in your MBA program to real-world situations?**

I was able to apply my knowledge from [business analytics](#) to aid in developing a control Excel sheet that accumulates the entries of multiple other sheet submissions to acquire more easily comprehensible data. I was able to create a survey which prompted responses from sales team leadership to reflect on the effectiveness of the training materials that upper management supplied to them.

**Did your internship provide exposure to a particular industry or functional area that you had not previously considered? How did this influence your career decisions?**

Yes. Pharmaceutical consulting, incentive compensation, sales targeting and alignment, and business analytics.

**Did your internship experience involve any international or cross-cultural elements? How did you navigate and leverage these aspects to enhance**

## **your learning?**

Yes. I worked with an individual from overseas. I edited the material within a corporate training video that they were creating to display best communications practices.

## **Looking back, what advice would you give to current or future MBA students about maximizing the value of their internships?**

Make sure to find an internship that will give you broad exposure to many different functional areas, if possible.

## **How did your internship contribute to building your professional network? Did it lead to any valuable connections or mentorship opportunities?**

I made multiple valuable connections. This is especially important in the pharmaceutical industry, because it is a relatively small world.

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