

Class: 5E

Name: Lee Suet Man

Topic: Summer Internship

Summer Internship - A Cup of Distinctive Coffee

What does summer vacation mean to you? A reliever of stresses and strains? A chance to indulge yourself in entertainment? In fact, we can make it more significant by creating a stepping stone to your future prospects - A 2-week Summer Internship organized by the Careers & Life Planning Committee in collaboration with several corporations. For me, I have grasped this precious chance to work as a barista intern in Liliale's Café.

What springs to mind when it comes to the job duties of a barista? Just brewing coffee? There's no denying that selling coffees is one of the job duties of a barista. But actually, there's more to it than that. I had to remember a multitude of complicated coffee recipes, such as espresso, latte, espresso lungo, to name just a few. I also had to practice a lot in order to ensure that I knew how the brewing equipment operated. Another crucial job duty is educating customers who are not familiar with the diverse types of coffees. I had to take the initiative to answer their questions in a bid to help them gain a deeper insight into coffee. But what are the daily routines of a barista? It goes without saying that preparation is the key before we operate the store, such as grinding beans, cleaning tables, preparing some snacks and so on. During the operation of the store, I had to not only brew a myriad of coffees at the same time but also perform latte art. When I wasn't making coffees, I replenished the coffee beans' supply and cleaned the working area.

There is a host of merits of doing an internship. I have acquired one characteristic skill which is latte art techniques. Another barista in the shop taught me the essential skills of latte art - height, flow and control. I can now perform latte art without my hands shaking. It is incredibly beneficial to my goal of becoming a genuine barista. Another skill I have learnt is communication. By talking with customers, I am capable of communicating with strangers more confidently now. I used to be shy and timid at school, but now I can present my ideas to others without hesitation. The ultimate skill I have gained is multitasking. During peak hours, a flock of people would enter the store, we were too busy to serve all of them. Not only did I make coffees but I also served desserts. I had to finish all the orders in a click of a button. Making ten coffees in a minute, I could hardly breathe. But those were the days! I can now

handle different tasks at the same time.

Besides the above enlightening skills, I encountered an unsurmountable plight – being neglected during the first week of internship. Despite being busy with work, the majority of duties were trivial errands. Rarely could I brew coffee for the customers as I just ended up cleaning tables and serving coffees. It was perplexing that I did lots of work which was not valuable to me. I decided to be proactive, so as to alter the dreadful scenario. I spoke to the manager and asked for additional work in order for an opportunity to fulfill my obligation as a barista intern. Thanks to my courage, I ultimately could make coffees.

When I mitigated the problem of not having adequate work, I entered into another peril which was overwhelming stressful. During peak hours, swarms of people were walking in for coffee. The huge workload was the main reason why I was flustered. Not only did the customers pull a long face but they also complained about me to the manager. I was given a lecture by him. As the old motto goes, turn the grief and indignation as strength. My solution to stress is to spare no pains. I asked colleagues about their experiences of handling hectic work and jotted them down in a notebook. I exerted myself to work industriously and not to make the same mistakes again. At the end of the day, I could work smoothly and easily.

My internship in Liliale's Café was phenomenal. It was like a coffee served with milk and sugar - fragrant, mallow and bittersweet. Why don't we give it a try to broaden our horizons and add spice to our lives? The genuine working experience is more practical than aesthetic, which can be rarely learnt from fossilized textbooks. Attitude determines altitude. Only if you work assiduously will you succeed. Under no circumstances should you waste this precious chance to learn a valuable lesson!