

Interns, trainees and apprentices

A Interns

'Hi, I'm Phoebe. Ten years ago I was doing an economics degree at university and I wanted a career in **financial services**. I checked online for **paid internships** and I found one at Hearst Banking Group (HBG) which I did while I was still studying. They said we would:

- receive **training** and information on all the careers available in financial services
- gain actual, **hands-on experience** in a real **work environment**
- develop **professional skills** such as leadership and communication
- work with and **learn from** other people with a wide range of knowledge and experience
- **develop** our **network** of contacts
- **build** our **confidence**

'It was all true: I did an internship while I was still a student, and what's more, I got paid! With my experience as an **intern** and just after I **graduated** from university, I was offered a place on HBG's **graduate leadership programme**. And now, 10 years later, I manage some of HBG's most profitable **financial products**.'



Note

Organizations also talk about offering **work placements** or **job placements**, instead of 'internships'.

B Experience or exploitation?

However, some interns say that the tasks they are given to do are very **menial** – ordinary and boring, like renaming computer files. Another criticism is that there is such a **range of tasks** that interns don't gain particular knowledge of any of them. They may complain that they are **exploited** – some are on very low pay or completely **unpaid**.

Note

The noun related to **exploit** is **exploitation**.

C Trainees and apprentices

Trainees are employees in **entry-level jobs** – the lowest level jobs in an organization. Some companies offer a number of **traineeships** every year. Some governments pay part of the costs of employing trainees and you can apply if you have little or no work experience.

Apprenticeships combine practical training for a job with **part-time study**. **Apprentices** work with experienced employees, gain **job-specific skills**, and study towards a **vocational qualification** at the same time, perhaps one day a week.

Apprentices often train to work in manufacturing, construction – building work – or catering – working in restaurants.



Note

Interns may or may not get permanent jobs in the organization, but trainees and apprentices are usually employed long-term.

Exercises

- 1 Complete this conversation about an internship in an advertising agency with appropriate forms of words from A and B.

Where and when did you do your internship?

It was in an advertising agency, just after I (1) university.

Were you paid?

They said that we would get €300 a month, but it turned out to be completely (2)

What sort of tasks did they ask you to do?

I wanted to gain actual (3) , but they just asked me to do totally (4) things like making coffee. And there was such a (5) that we didn't get to learn any of them properly.

Were you able to develop in any way?

No, they promised we would develop our (6) , like meeting skills, but this never happened. They said that we would feel more sure of ourselves, that we would (7) , but at the end I felt less sure of myself! And they said we would (8) other people, but we never met anyone from whom to learn.

What about making new contacts?

As I say, we didn't meet anyone, except other interns, so there was no chance to (9)

So, it wasn't a positive experience?

No, the agency just (10) us, basically.

- 2 Which words and expressions in C do these examples refer to?

- 1 Schemes to help new technicians in a television company to gain the required skills, and the people who are helped in this way. (2 words)
- 2 People getting coffee for technicians working on a film.
- 3 Going to classes two evenings a week to learn the maths you need in a particular job.
- 4 Schemes to help manual workers in a metal products firm gain the required skills for operating machines by learning from other employees, and the people who are helped in this way. (2 words)
- 5 The studies that someone has followed and the skills they have acquired to be a hairdresser, as proved by a certificate.
- 6 The knowledge and abilities needed in order to be an airline pilot.



Over to you

Look on the internet for information about internships in an organization that interests you. What kind of experience would you get? Is there anything you don't like about it? Is it paid or unpaid?

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