

Meet Brandon Paynter: A Sherwin-Williams Success Story

For senior Brandon Paynter, it's the conscious, daily effort of creating and pursuing focused goals that has earned him the title of the 2015 Sherwin-Williams Intern Champion Award – the highest achieving intern award in Florida for this company.

Question #1: Please provide a brief overview of your summer internship, responsibilities included.

Brandon: This past summer I had the opportunity to complete a sales internship with Sherwin-Williams. During the internship, I was able to work in the retail store as well as in the field with Sherwin-Williams sales reps. As part of the internship, I was tasked with calling on property management accounts to develop a strategic growth plan for the segment. I was given a lot of freedom by the company to grow this particular market and increase customer loyalty however I saw fit. At the end of the program, all the interns from across Florida met in Orlando to share their findings and compete for the 'Intern Champion Award.' I used the knowledge and skills I have developed through the FSU sales program in my presentation and was able to take home the top award.

Question #2: In what ways has this internship prepared you for the real world upon graduation?

Brandon: In school you are often given a problem and shown a set of steps to reach a particular answer, but in the real world that's never the case. Internships are beneficial because they put you in situations where you must come up with your own solutions to real life issues. Through the Sherwin-Williams internship I was able to gain experience with cold calling, event management, and numerous sales skills that I will take with me in the future.

Question #3: How did you overcome any obstacles or challenges faced?

Brandon: At the beginning of the internship, I faced many of the common sales issues with prospecting and cold calling companies. I was fortunate enough to have a strong support system of employees who were invested in my success and offered advice whenever I would ask. No matter what issues came up, there were always people around who had faced a similar issue and were eager to assist.

Question #4: Looking back at your experience, would you have done anything differently?

Brandon: The only thing I would have done differently would have been to be more proactive and hit the ground running earlier on in the internship. One piece of advice my supervisor offered is that in the business world you cannot wait for opportunities to come your way, you must go out of your comfort zone and obtain them.

Question #5: What are the key takeaways from working at this internship?

Brandon: Through the Sherwin-Williams internship I was able to pair my knowledge from the FSU Sales Institute with practical field experience. I learned to never take rejection personally or you will never be effective with cold calling. I also learned that it's important to be honest with yourself and continually evaluate areas in which you must improve in order to be successful.

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