No title

Student’s Name

Institution of Learning
During the ten days I was an intern at a telecommunications company that constructs and maintains cell phone towers. I was working with a supervisor whose job was making sure the employees closely followed all safety instructions and that all safety equipment was up to code.

Day 1

When I arrived to the company for the first time, I was nearly shocked. When I thought about it previously, I imagined several offices with the president of the company, the secretary, several managers and an accountant. All those people who construct the cell phone towers sit on the benches in the yard and relax, when they are not out working. Now I understand that I mixed the images created by the movies about the middle of the century, but my first impression was strong. I saw a big business center all built from glass that made it look high-tech and modern. The company had numerous departments and was not only constructing and maintaining the towers. It also investigated into the research in this field. The workers were not smoking in the yard, they all came to the office in the morning, listened to the instructions of the manager and supervisor. Then they changed their civil clothes to the special uniform, signed the accident prevention instructions and went to the “object”.

I did not go with them during my first day in the company. That day I listed to the detailed description of what the company is doing and how it is doing it. Of course, I had to read carefully the safety instructions and to retell them to the supervisor. I was very curious about all the details of the working process in the company. Though, not all people were happy when I came up to them and asked different kinds of questions. Perhaps, I was too annoying and interrupted their working process with my curiosity.
However, I felt that I could do something in this company. When I was passing by the group of young women who seemed to have a problem with a computer, I suggested my help. It turned out that the screen was off, but the girls thought it was broken. When I turned the screen on, they appreciated what I did. It was funny, but I was pleased.

**Day 2**

On the second day, I needed to be at 7 AM in the hall of the business center, waiting for my supervisor to come. The group of workers had to go to the new object, but I did not know all the details in advance. I am really not used to wake up so early in the morning, so I had troubles getting up. When I was going to the office, I could think only about the idea that it is great to be a student. Of course, the student has to go to the college every day, but being the employee of some company is a lot more responsible. I arrived to the office at 6.45 and waited for the supervisor to come, thinking that I am a serious grown-up person.

Finally, the supervisor came. He looked like a military sergeant – a big healthy man with a broad smile and a loud voice. During all those ten days, I thought that he might be a protagonist of a heroic novel about the World War II – a strict and brave officer, who scolded his soldiers for minor mistakes, because he wanted everybody to return home alive. My supervisor was just like this officer. Every time he reminded the workers about the safety rules, everyone understood that he does not want someone to fall and kill himself not because the company will pay for the accident, but because he was deeply responsible for “his guys”.

There was a scandal on my second day in the company. The supervisor and one young worker discussed the issue that everyone has to wear a hard-hat during the construction. Perhaps, they had some problems before this, because the discussion was too loud and no one wanted to step back. Though, in the end the supervisor sent the worker home for his disobedient behavior.
At that moment, I was totally shocked by this situation and could not understand why there was a need to be so principled in such minor issue. Though, the third day showed me this on vivid example.

Day 3

The work of those men who construct and maintain the cell phone towers is dangerous and difficult. They are working on the height and with electricity which creates additional risks and can have a fatal outcome. On the third day, the guys were working in the building area. Two cranes were working; people were running from one place to another, the noise was so loud that I could not get rid of the headache. It seemed like the dust substituted the air and from now on all people will breathe the micro parts of bricks and cement. The atmosphere was really horrible, but no one seemed to be exhausted, so I could not show how tired I was.

On the third day, as usual, the supervisor told everyone the safety instructions, kindly asked to wear a hard-hat so that “a random brick will not disclose the lack of brains in your heads to the wide audience”, as he said. Everyone was slightly tired of all these instructions, but preferred to wear a hard-hat and not to give the supervisor another chance to scold them.

We were all standing in a group near the house, having some rest, talking and telling anecdotes. We saw that the crane was working on the other side of the building and no one expected something extraordinary. Though, the person in the crane did not know that there were people standing on the other side of the building and so he decided to throw the parts of broken bricks accurately to the place where we were standing. Thank God everyone was in the hard-hats and even if something strokes the hats, no one would be injured. Or, perhaps, thanks to the supervisor. The workers were silent till the end of the day, which was quite strange. No one made jokes about those “unnecessary instructions”. Sometimes one vivid example from the real world
life is more efficient than hours of theoretical persuasion.

Day 4

It was the day of a small, yet very strange trip. The operator saw that one tower far from the city does not respond to the signals the way it should. It was clear that something had happened to it, thought it was impossible to understand what in particular. That is why our brigade went there on the bus. It is necessary to say that it was not the usual bus. It had a diesel generator, so that it could produce electricity autonomously for a day. No one knew whether the problem is serious or not, and how much time will it take to cope with it so we were having an extra container of diesel.

We had different equipment on board. I could not even imagine that there is so much diversity in this sphere. It was nearly 5 AM when our car left the skyscrapers and business centers behind. The number of farms also reduces and in the end I could see the sun rising in the plains. The view was really strange for me as a city-dweller. As I mentioned before, I am not used to getting up so early to see the sun rise. In addition, even if I do, the buildings prevent me from looking at the extremely big circle of the rising sun above the clean horizon. There was something right in this picture. It was something that I seemed to know in the past, but forgot with time.

Well, the story is not about this lyrical atmosphere. When we arrived at the place, we saw no tower at all. Someone had taken it into pieces and stole. I did not know whether it was normal to laugh or not. It seems we are living in a civilized modern state in the 21st century. One part of the humankind works at genetic cloning, space expeditions to Mars and tries to solve the mysteries of the brain, while another part steals the cell phone towers at night and sells it as a metal scrap. It seems like the guys from the brigade thought something like this too. Perhaps,
they were calling those “geniuses” to themselves very kindly, as they were constructing the new tower till midnight.

Day 5

This day I started to practice actively. In the morning, I instructed the workers as the supervisor told me to. I felt uncomfortable when I told all those things to the brigade. They were all older than me, they were professionals, who work with electricity on the height every day. Of course they knew better than me what to do and how to do it. Though, I had to tell them to wear hard hats, to use the safeguard elements, not to start the work if they feel bad. It might be funny to look at this situation from the side, but the guys did not laugh at me. They were absolutely serious when I instructed them. Perhaps, they understood that I was nervous about the situation and tried to support me. However, I think that they just have a serious attitude to their work. They risk their lives often and understand the value of life those safety instructions try to guard.

The fifth day was interesting for me from a psychological perspective. I clearly understood that if the person wants to be the head in the group, its supervisor and the leader, he needs to be an authority for the members of the group. That means that the professionalism and the competence of the leader are known to everybody. I did not feel like I had the right to teach those people, because I am not an authority for them. It made me want to work harder and to achieve real results, because as I have mentioned before, nothing persuades better than one real vivid example. Hours of talks will not have such effect as the practice will.

There was another issue I understood clearly that day – the supervisor does not treat himself as the person of a higher rank. He feels the responsibility he has. This is the right key characteristic of power. Being the leader is a privilege. From one point of view, you are successful, but from another point of view you are not that free as it was without this privilege.
Day 6

The sixth day was difficult for me. I made a serious mistake, but I will write about it later. The day started with good news. The supervisor told me that he will not say a single word and I will have to show how I can deal with the working process by myself. I was excited by this opportunity, because I thought I have seen enough during the last days of passive practice and I will show good results. Though, the destiny was cruel and I was just in a bad mood.

The brigade was constructing a new tower in the country. The guys worked, I regulated their work sometimes, and the supervisor was not interrupting me. The workers were welding the cables and blocks on the ground, and then one took a block from the ground and gave it to the person in the tower. The guy who was on the tower and could not reach the cable asked me to give it to him. Well, I did not understand why I should not help the person, because it was not difficult for me. In addition, I felt like I am not needed in this brigade at all, as I am not really working. So, I wanted to take the cable... and felt that someone hit my hand. The supervisor was keeping silence all the day, but he was constantly monitoring my work and the work of the brigade. I had no right to interfere in the work, because I have no qualification for working with electricity. In addition, I forgot that it is prohibited to take the cables without dielectric leather gloves. Perhaps, I might have had serious problems with my health if the supervisor was not watching me carefully.

A strange thing is that I do not feel that repeating safety instructions every morning is a waste of time. No matter how professional the person is, he needs to remember that he can hurt himself from one wrong step and motion. The feeling of success makes the person more relaxed; he might think that bad things happen to everyone except him. Though, it is not true and I repeat it in front of the mirror for ten times to gain more confidence.
Day 7

I was as serious as I could that day. The previous failure made me concentrate and do my best. I am writing down all the steps the supervisor does and even how he communicates with the workers. I understand that it is not my style and I would rather be polite and reserved with the workers. The supervisor is loud, he is like a friend to all the workers, and he seems to be one of them. Well, he might have been a worker, I think. He does not look like the refined manager who perceives the cow as a reincarnation of a stake. Even though his style is absolutely different from the one I would like to apply, he is more efficient. Perhaps, he is just less arrogant and more practical than me, and communicates with the workers on their language.

This day I understood that I should be more flexible in the ways of approaching people. We were fixing the cell phone tower on the roof of an apartment house and many people came out to scandal with us. They think that the tower is harmful for their health and after we have placed it on the roof of their house, they started to suffer from constant headaches. As I had less work to do that the others in the brigade, I became the PR manager for nearly 4 hours. I was talking about the medical issues like the fact that the level of electromagnetic radiation is normal. I showed them the medical conclusions, the papers and various documents. Though, people were very active in discussing this issue and very confident in their position. I did not capitulate till the brigade had done their work and we drove away finally. It was a real challenge, for sure.

Day 8

On the eighth day of my practice I was not doing that many mistakes, as in the beginning. The proverb is right – practice makes perfect. It seems like I will even sleep in a hard hat soon. Though, I do only the elementary things like telling the brigade the safety instructions automatically, it turned out that the supervisor has to solve all organizational problems too.
This day we were working in the subway. We were fixing small cell phone towers on each station, so that people will be able to talk under the ground and use the Internet. The stations are overcrowded, there are no space for work, all people are talking loudly and I feel nearly exhausted by the noise. Though, I am not working with potentially dangerous blocks. The workers are tired too. I see it and I really do not know what to do. From one point of view, the work needs to be done in time. From other side, tired people make more mistakes and in this case a single mistake can lead to death or injury. The supervisor told me this is an average dilemma he faces during the working process. It is really difficult to deal with people, their productivity depends upon a big number of circumstances.

Day 9

I have previously mentioned that the more professional the person is, the more relaxed he becomes. After I told the brigade the average morning safety instructions, we sat in the bus and went to the distant village. We were driving early in the morning, the sun was rising as I described before, but there was one peculiar thing in it – I did not feel so excited by this natural phenomenon. To tell the truth, I was not excited at all, I was just tired. The men in the brigade were trying to sleep for several more hours. They were even more exhausted than I was.

Have you ever seen a squirrel running in the wheel? Of course you have seen it, it is a banal image of a tired person who continues to do the work without achieving any results. Those men reminded me the squirrels in the wheels. On the ninth day, one of the workers told me he does not want to use the safety elements, while working on the height. He told me something like “do not teach your father to make children”. The man was sure he was a professional. And I had not enough authority to make him obey me. Though, when the supervisor appeared nearby,
everything was done as it should have been. The respect is the key to successful cooperation in the group of people. It does not appear itself, it is necessary to work hard for it.

Day 10

It was the last day of my practice in the company. I felt like I knew all those people from the brigade for many years. It was a strange feeling, because the term was not that long. I can imagine the connection the supervisor has with his brigade if they work together for a long period of time. He might be responsible for those workers not only on the official level, but on the personal emotional level too. I saw how tired and exhausted those people are after work. They do not have enough time to relax and they start the new working day.

Those ten days showed me the challenges I might face in my future work. First of all, I need to become an authoritative figure for the brigade. Without certain respect the workers will not even listen to the supervisor. Even if they will, they might only show that they do the things right. It is not an efficient way to work with people. Then, I need to be more concentrated on work, because it deals with potentially dangerous things like height and electricity. Even the minor mistakes can lead to serious problems with health. The last issue to mention is the style of communication. The supervisor deals with organizational problems, as well as with the safety ones, and different people require various approaches. Otherwise the communication will not be efficient.

The last day of my practice was absolutely normal. I was doing the supervising from the very beginning to the end, and even did not make the mistakes in the process. So, perhaps I can say that the practice finally made perfect. The progress was evident for me. I learned to apply gigabytes of theoretical information.

After the working day was over, I went to the office and signed the documents that I
needed from the practice. I felt excited and sad at the same time, leaving the company.