

“My Week at Clifford Chance Law Firm in London”

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Applying to the Social Mobility Foundation’s Residential Programme was definitely, the smartest thing I did all year! It was the first time I had ever travelled to London, and my first stay away from home. I didn’t know anybody else attending and had no idea about what to expect from the week ahead; so naturally I was anxious. When I arrived at the accommodation and met the group leaders alongside the rest of the rest of the group, immediately I felt at home. Within minutes of introducing myself and meeting my group I felt like I was among friends and I knew then that I was going to have a great week.

I arrived in London on a Sunday afternoon and began my first day at Clifford Chance bright and early the following morning. Waking up and jumping into a suit was definitely a strange experience; but not one I couldn’t get used to! Shortly after arriving we were escorted to a small conference room: this is where we spent most of our time throughout the internship. After a brief introductory talk about what to expect from the week ahead the group were handed over to professional speaker: Luan DeBurgh who went through his inspirational lecture on Impact and Presence. During this I gained some great information on how to appear confident in front of an audience and how to command attention during a pitch without having to demand it. These skills would prove invaluable for some of the week’s activities to follow.

Throughout the week we worked on a project, a business challenge. For this challenge, the group was divided into smaller subgroups. Each of these subgroups took on the role of a soliciting firm who have been called to an interview by the managers of a food chain looking to purchase a coffee company who were willing to sell their business. Working together in our groups, we had to devise a pitch that we would deliver at the interview in the hope of being hired by the food chain to be their legal advisors throughout the process. Furthermore, in order to complete this task we obviously needed to know some of the law surrounding this issue. This was presented to us by various speakers throughout the week in both an enjoyable and informative fashion. I was genuinely surprised at how much I enjoyed the theory behind as business law is not a sector that had previously appealed to me, yet now that I am more informed about it I’d love to learn more about it!

In addition to the business challenge, throughout the week I got to develop so many different skills that would prove useful not just for a career in law, but for life in general. For instance I got to attend a mock interview for a job where I put my interview skills to the test and received personalised feedback that will prove extremely useful for any future interviews that I will attend. Moreover throughout the week I made connections with lots of different legal professionals which made it possible for me to expand my knowledge about law during a number of *Networking Lunches*.

Personally, my favourite part of the week was meeting James Fieldsend. James has been a barrister in London for the last ten years. Since my ambition is to become a barrister I thought this was excellent opportunity. I learned so much from him about life as a barrister, and the journey from university to the chambers. On this same day we went to visit one of the barrister inns as well as the library inside, and also the Royal Courts of Justice. I thought this was brilliant experience and one that only fuelled my motivation to succeed and fulfil my ambitions.

Finally, in addition to all the activities during the internship, there was a number of fun activities that took place during the evenings. For instance on the Wednesday we went to see a west-end show *The Railway Children* at a theatre in London. And on the Friday we took a trip to the London Eye.

All in all the Social Mobility Foundation provided me with an amazing week and definitely one that I'll remember for the rest of my life. I made so many great friends and had so many life changing experiences. I would encourage absolutely anyone who can apply, to apply! Before I went on the residential I believed that I might be able to succeed, after returning from the residential I not only know that I can succeed, but also that I will succeed!