



Alibaba Group

2021 SUMMER(MAY-AUG) /

SELINA LIU

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY, SOCIOLOGY



ABOUT ALIBABA...

It is a company that excels in digital ecosystem with businesses comprising commerce, cloud computing, digital media and entertainment, and innovation initiatives. It is known for creating the first online retailing platform in China—Taobao.

Founder: Jack Ma

ABOUT MY CO-OP EXPERIENCE

1st Co-op

- **Hikvision, China**
- **Human Resources**

2nd Co-op

- **Alibaba Group, China**
- **Product Manager**

International Co-op

- With the job-hunting experience, I got in my last co-op, I managed to compete with the Chinese graduate students for this position. It is a highly competitive position, and I went through 4 rounds of interviews – turns out the Interview tricks I learned in class are also useful Internationally!

Self-Designed Co-op

- The only problem with designing a co-op in a non-English-Speaking organization is that I have to translate all the materials into Chinese.

THE CO-OP ROLE: PRODUCT MANAGER

“..who identifies the customer need and the larger business objectives that a product or feature will fulfill”

- Visualize online retail promotion process in forms of Flowcharts
- Identify the problems within existing promotion system (coupons, rewards, credits)
- Explain/communicate ideas with project teams that consist of programmer, designer, customer service, etc.
- Supervise the project process, make sure it sticks to the schedule



CHALLENGES...

- **Fast-paced, little time to settle down**
 - They give me less than a week to get used to every aspect of my job which required full attention all the time
- **9-9-6 Working mode**
 - 9AM to 9 PM per day, 6 days per week
 - It is the normal working mode / over working culture for Chinese Internet companies, but I find it hard to separate my life from work when little spare time was left



Get off work at 11:30 pm

CHALLENGES...

- **Creative Thinking**
 - The employers expected to see results/ new ideas coming from interns, so I had to keep observing and thinking all the time, which was not the case for my last co-op
- **Pressure from getting the Formal Offer**
 - Interns were competing for the limited spots of getting the formal job offer, but we managed to be friends eventually



Alibaba's Mascots 

WHAT I LEARNED...

**Analytical
Skills**

**How to
articulate my
Ideas**

**Visualize my
thinking
process**

**Stress
tolerance**

**Managing
myself as
well as the
team**

**Active-
learning
from
colleagues**

**Interview
skills**

INEQUALITY

Due to the close observation of the customer behaviors from different platforms, I have noticed the inequality in social-economic-status

- All online commerce platforms want to attract "high quality customers" which refers to those who have high purchasing power; these customers constantly receive coupons and deals to encourage them shopping;
- While for low-income level groups, they received little attention and did not enjoy benefits from marketing since they are not "ideal customers"
- The inequality appears when two groups are treated so differently yet no one thinks it is wrong
Relying on business instincts is "not wrong", however, if every company does so, the inequality gap will expand even more

SUPRISES!

- Outings!
- Got invited to a lot of after-work events
- Intern friends!
 - Established strong connections among 7 interns
 - We are still staying in touch with each other, helping out with each other's career exploration
- Activities
 - Participating in Basketball Cheerleaders
 - Interviewing the most popular live-commerce host
 - Mid-Year Gala!



THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE CO-OP...

- **Don't Panic**
 - Try your best at work, but remember, the colleagues are usually very understanding to interns
 - don't be afraid of making mistakes (as long as you correct them and do not repeat them).
- **Your relationship with your supervisor directly affects your co-op experience**
 - Talk to them about your feelings!
 - Get close!

(I tried to share snacks with her and it worked well!)



THANK YOU