



DIANE KORDAS

JEWELLERY

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Sociology major
Sp18 co-op in London

Job Description

- Self made co-op: Digital Marketing Intern @ Diane Kordas Jewellery.
- Location: 91 Old Brompton Road, London, UK.
- Length: January 9th- May 8th 2018.
- Paid: Rare in the fashion industry. But important to ensure the work I was given was productive for everyone.
- 40 hour week.
- Dress code: Smart casual, with the exception of activewear one day a week.

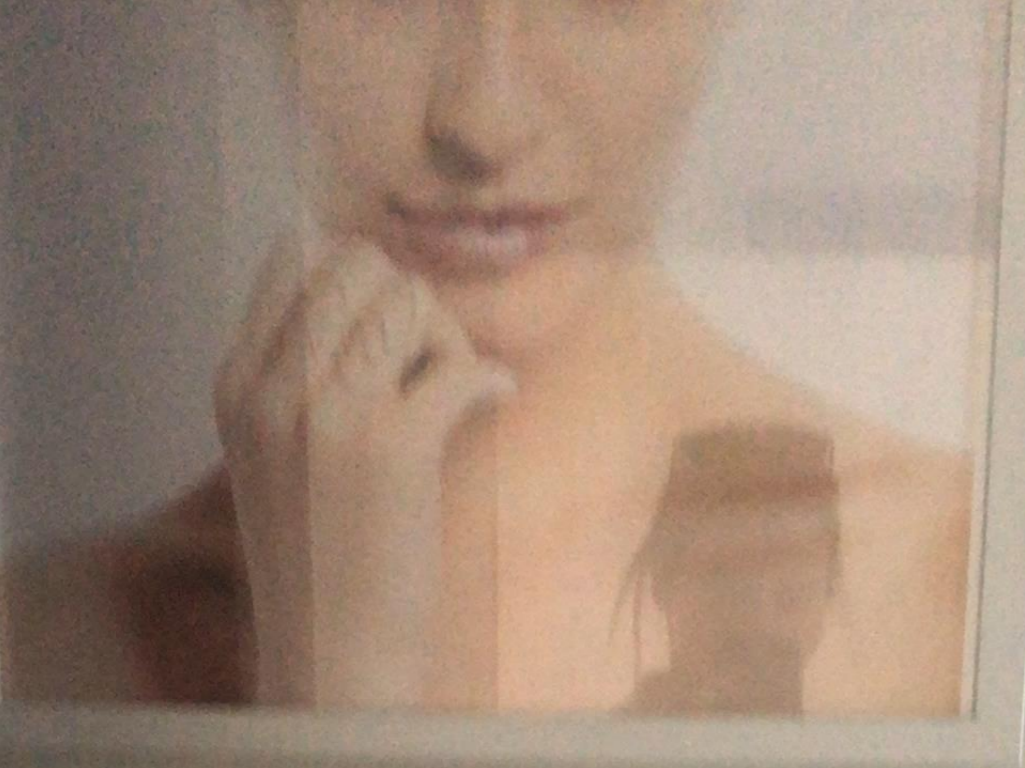
Timings & Daily responsibilities

- To beginning with, I was very much thrown in the deep end. Working in the fashion industry, is very fast paced, if you can't keep up you will be left behind, (there is always someone who will work for longer hours and for less), so in that sense it was a slight shock when I arrived. For the first couple of weeks, I would have absolutely no idea what I would be doing that day. They would tell me what needed to be done. It would usually consist of working with Milli, head of global sales and Steve, the CFO. With Milli, I would be working on spreadsheets, sitting in buyers meetings and running small errands (like carrying the jewellery to a shoot or taking it to one of our stockists). With Steve we would be working on the digital marketing side, as well as the website. However, once I gained their trust, they loaded me up with a lot more responsibility.
- As time progressed, the responsibilities increased. Within a month, I was running their entire digital marketing. This was fantastic experience, because there was no one to show me how to do anything, so everything I was asked to do I had to figure out myself. This would be things like google adwords, google analytics, shopify (website builder platform) and mailchimp (for email marketing). Obviously I had no experience with these websites but I had to learn... quickly. If I did not know how to do something, or how it worked, I would have to call the specific websites and try and get someone to explain it or I would troll google to find some answers, as I was the only person in the office with any sort of marketing experience.
- On top of that, there were also jewellery images that had to be edited, before arriving, I had absolutely no idea how to use photoshop. If you have never used photoshop, its really quite difficult, it is like another language. I used youtube to understand and learn how edit these jewellery images. This ended up saving the company \$1,700 which is what a professional was charging to edit the images.

The Show Room

We use this room for:

- This is where we would hold the buyers meetings, with harrods, net-a-porter, matches fashion, as well as private clients
- All the jewellery would be laid out on the table (see below).
- The buyers would look at all the jewellery and decided which pieces they would be selling in their stores.
- This is where we would hold the digital marketing meetings.
- Potential digital marketing agencies, would come and pitch their ideas to the CFO and myself.
- We would meet with different companies every 2-3 weeks, to play the field and hear their ideas on how they could make a real impact on our ecommerce business.



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The Work Room



- This is where I would spend the majority of the day.
- As it was such a small office, we had the kitchen in our work space, so wasting time for lunch was not an option.
- My desk was the black desk underneath the enormous picture of Louise Follain (Model for Diane Kordas Jewellery)
- My job was not always fun and games. My job description also included:
 - Ordering and setting up the water cooler, printers, and scanners.
 - Ensuring the dish washer was turned on every night, and the safe was locked.

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New to me

- At DKJ, I learnt a lot. My daily responsibilities mostly consisted of things I had never done before. Whether that be learning how to read analytical charts on google analytics or setting up and printer. I would say, I was unprepared for the majority of new things, because I would have no warning of what task it was going to be. But with the DKJ motto “work the problem”, I had to apply myself and figure it out, because the majority of the time, no one was there to help. I would do a lot googling, as well as youtube videos, and calling companies, to figure out that particular task. The majority of the time I was very successful, because “I don’t know how” was not a sentence that was really allowed to be said. In a way, it really helped me to push myself and figure things out for myself, making me a way more independent employee. I have already noticed the effect of this at my new workplace.
- As a lot of the things I was doing were completely new for DKJ, I had to make sure that the new interns were capable of doing them. So I spent 3 weeks training the new intern, as well as producing a document of instructions for her and future interns to follow, to ensure that no one was confused when I left. To see the document, click here: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1rewKmDGIVp76oUzEI_wOPoO5_IMmLrgI

Preparation

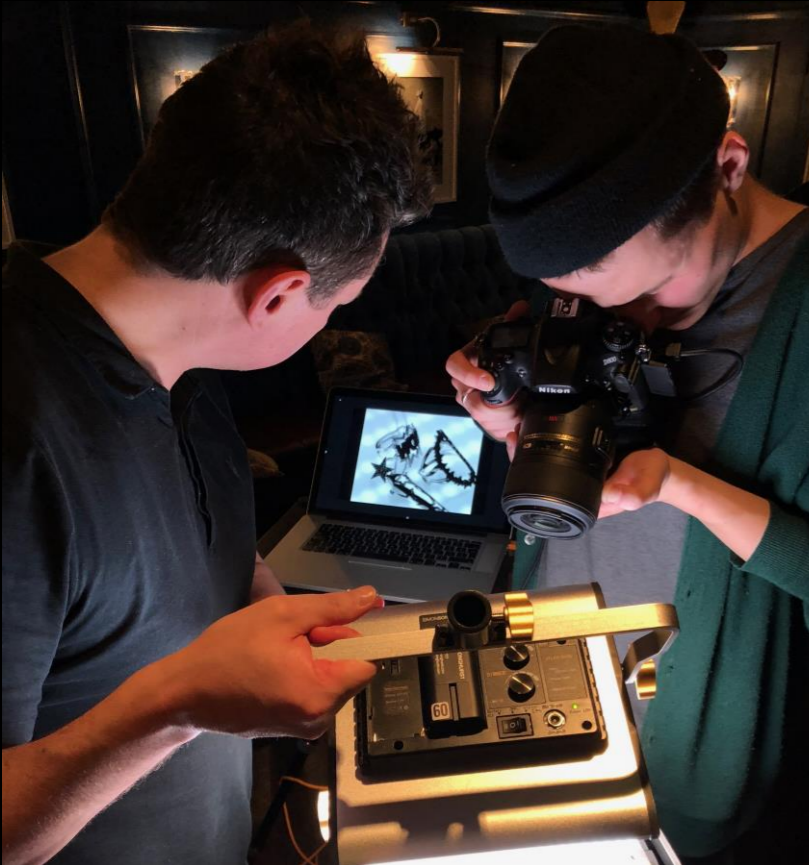
- As this co-op was my second internship, I felt that I had a slight advantage. A lot of the topics that were mentioned in class such as appropriate dress code, being punctual, and general work etiquette, were all areas that I had experienced first hand. Therefore, I really enjoyed Lisa's co-op classes because I really felt like I was adding value, as well as being able to listen and compare my own experiences with that of others. In particular, I really enjoyed when we did the interview activity (sudden death?). Where a group of co-op students would answer interview questions on the spot, and we would decide anonymously who should be put through to next round depending on their responses. Although, I did not personally participate, I thought it was really interesting to see the way my peers coped with the interview questions that were thrown at them. Considering that fact they were in front of the whole class, I was really impressed with how well they dealt with it.
- Tips: Don't be dishearten if you do not get your first choice or even your second. I did not get mine signed off until the day before spring semester started. Lisa is amazing and will help you out!

Surprise!!!

- One thing that really surprised me about working for Diane Kordas Jewellery, was how cut throat the industry is. On my first day, I remember my boss was trying to get hold of somebody at Net-a-porter. Apparently she was on her lunch break at the time. When my boss got off the phone, she said “Who takes a lunch break anymore?!!, You can’t do that in this industry.” At Diane Kordas, at least one person had to be in the office at all times, to make sure that we never missed a call. For me that was a real shock, it was a very different working style to what I was used to. It was very clear from day one, that I would be working from the second I walked through the door, to the second I left in the evening. A lot of the time, I would be working before and after my technical work hours, because there was always more to be done. This was a real shock because it was something I had never really experienced. At my previous internship, we were encouraged to take our hour lunch break, to make sure we came back refreshed for the afternoon. But it was good to experience the working style in a different industry.

Exciting part:

- My best experience @DKJ was the styling all the models in all variations of Diane Kordas Jewellery, for a Hairdresser called Rene Aubrey.
- When I arrived, they had already started shooting. I quickly got out all the jewellery. I thought they already had jewellery picked so I would just be showing them how to put it on. However, that was not the case, they were all asking me what pieces would work with what the models were wearing.
- It was slightly overwhelming because it goes from 0-1000 in 2 seconds, and you have to be prepared for that, but it was really good fun and showed me a window into the fashion world.



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Challenges

- As an intern, my job would vary from day to day. I found this quite challenging at times, because it meant that I would have no sense of routine. For me planning my day was quite an important thing to ensure a more stress free working environment, but I had to learn that this was not something that was going to be possible here. Coping in a high stress environment was going to have to be something I would have to get used to, if I was going to excel in my job. My direct boss Milli, is definitely someone who helped me cope in the very high pressured situations. She and I got along very well and having her experience in the industry, helped me to learn very quickly how to handle different situations.
- Another challenge I faced at DKJ was dealing with photographers. To begin with, it was not my responsibility, it was the production managers, and I would only hear the hassle. However, it became clear that it was taking up too much of her time, and so it was passed on to me. The issue we had was getting the right angle and exposure of these earrings, called the chandelier earrings. These earrings were very expensive, so it was extremely important, as DKJ is prominently E-commerce based, that we got the right shoot. I ended up going to 3 different photographers, but the pictures just weren't right. Dealing with Diane, who knows how they should look, and the photographers, who are photographing them, was a real challenge. This is because everything went through me, I was the middle man. So portraying both sides to each other, without anyone being offended was a real struggle. But from this, I learnt how to be very diplomatic when speaking, and how best to structure negative feedback to both parties.

Next steps in my career

- Working for DKJ, came with a mixer of emotions. It has become clear to me that I don't think I will be entering the fashion industry. I would like a slightly less cut throat, fast paced, high pressured environment. I am currently working for a Digital Marketing Agency called BMAS. I applied as an intern, but got promoted to a social media consultant, before starting because they do not pay interns, but they thought with my experience, I deserved to be paid. This job is way more suited to me and I feel that the work I am doing right now is something I might want to do in the future.
- **My daily tasks at BMAS consist of:**
 - Monitor and track conversations taking place on social media for clients. This can include digital coverage, mentions, tags and hashtags using our social listening software and additional monitoring tools.
 - Champion our community engagement initiatives, taking full responsibility for engaging with our client's communities within across their social outlets.
 - Write creative, qualitative and grammatically correct content that matches client tone of voice at all times.
 - Research and be aware of forthcoming events that will be relevant for our clients to engage with. This includes the maintenance of the rolling annual event calendar.
 - Assist in monthly reporting for each respective client on social media & digital activity.
 - Respond on behalf of full service clients to queries arising through all managed social media channels in a polite and timely manner.
 - Ensure each client receives sufficient time and attention to achieve the required results, as set out and monitored by your Manager.

Academic Reflection

- From working at DKJ, it really opened my eyes to the inequality in the fashion industry. As I have said before, it is a very cut throat and fast past environment, that thrives on who you know and how you can utilise your connections. Interestingly, the industry focuses on less about the money you make and more about the title of your company. As only the very senior people get paid well. Unfortunately, this means the fashion industry is subject to a lot of inequality. Most companies will never pay their interns, meaning only those with money can accept these internships and move up the ladder. Moreover, once you are on the ladder, the pay does not increase by much. Therefore, it becomes very difficult for someone with less to enter the industry. For me that seems very unfair and it creates quite a malicious and competitive environment.
- Having said that, clearly the industry is predominately run by women and therefore less prejudice. What was really nice about working for DKJ was that it is a business that is run by both Diane and her husband Steve. Diane is the designer and Steve is the CFO and runs the business side of the company. I thought it was really impressive how well they worked together. They both had their roles in the company, and they did not interfere in each others roles. Given that DKJ has stockists worldwide, as well as major online retailers such as Net-A-Porter and Matches Fashion, together they built a very successful business.