Connor Ganyo

Summer Internship Report 2018

Name of Employer: Lincoln Saltdogs

Address: 403 Line Dr Cir, Lincoln, NE 68508

Supervisor: Colter Clarke

 In the summer of 2018, I worked for the Lincoln Saltdogs which is an Independent League baseball team in Lincoln, Nebraska. They are a part of the American Association of Independent Professional Baseball league. They play all their home games at Haymarket Park which is the same stadium the University of Nebraska Lincoln Baseball team uses. The Lincoln Saltdogs were founded in 2001 and the service they produce is entertainment because they are a baseball team that performs in front of fans. The employees of the Lincoln Saltdogs also have the job of entertaining fans. The front office of the Lincoln Saltdogs consists of sixteen employees all fulfilling various duties. Various departments include Marketing, Sales, Stadium Operations, Broadcasting and Communications, Promotions, and Catering. The Lincoln Saltdogs organizational structure starts at the top with the President/General Manager, Charlie Meyer. It branches down into the Director of Marketing, Bret Beer, the Director of Sales, Steve Zoucha, the Director of Stadium Operations, Dave Aschwege, the Director of Broadcasting and Communications, Michael Shively, and the Director of Promotions, Alex Hanus. From there I believe the organizational structure goes down to people like my immediate supervisor, Colter Clarke, who is the Ticket Sales Manager.

 I would describe my job as a Ticket Sales Representative. There are so many different things I did over the summer but there are things I did more than others. Through my internship this summer I spent most of my time sitting at the ticket windows on the west side of Haymarket Park. My main duties included selling tickets to anyone that walked up to the window or selling tickets to anyone over the phone who happened to call in. I also spent a lot of my time selling tickets right before game time in what we call a walk-up. The windows get busier right before game time when people are looking to buy tickets and walk right in the gates for the game so each game walk-up was maybe the biggest part of my job.

 My duties on a game day were a little bit different than my duties on an off day when I just sold tickets at the window and over the phone. The first thing I needed to do when I got to the ticket office on a game day was taking care of will call which meant I needed to get everyone’s tickets ready who ordered online so they could just come up to the will-call window before the game that night and just pick them up because they’ve already been printed. Getting will call ready required me to find the tickets that had already been printed for the game that day and organize them in our will-call box alphabetically by the last name. I also had to go online to our ticket selling website, etix.com, and print the will-call orders that hadn’t been printed yet and put those in the will-call box. Either before or after doing the will call on game days I also had to check the ticket office voicemails to make sure everyone who left a message we got back to and fulfilled whatever they needed. The rest of the game day up until the walk-up I would just hang out and occasionally check will call until online orders shut off to make sure we print all the ticket orders that need printing. I would also answer the ticket office phone until calls shut off for the game and I would print the guess pass lists for each team before the walk-up started.

 Once the walk-up was over on a game day, I turned into a promotions intern, unless I was working the team store which I will discuss later. Most days when walk-up was over I would go out to the Ameritas Fun Zone and help a promotions intern take care of that. The Fun Zone is an area with three inflatables that kids twelve and younger can play on for five dollars, and there’s also a basketball hoop. At the fun zone, my job was basically to put wristbands on kids who paid and make sure that everyone was following the rules to stay safe. It was also my job to take down the inflatables and put them away towards the end of the game with some other interns. Another thing I did after the walk-up was over on certain game days was the back window. On days that I had the back window, I would see if the promotions interns needed help with anything before the top of the sixth inning when I had to open the back window. The back window is the ticket window on the inside of the stadium and its main purpose is to sell tickets for future games to the fans inside the stadium watching the current game. Selling tickets to future games and swapping out unused tickets for future games is all I did at the back window. The last main job I had on a game day when I wasn’t in the team store and I was finished with the back window or the fun zone was to help with Runza Run the Bases. After each game, kids twelve and younger get to run the bases on the field and my job was to stand by second base and make sure none of the kids ran anywhere but the infield dirt. Once all the kids were off the field, run the bases was over which was the end of my day on game days.

 On game days when it was my turn to do the team store, that’s what I did the entire game from when the gates open until Runza Run the Bases is over. This meant that whenever I had the team store, I didn’t sell tickets during the walk-up. When you work the team store during games you’re the only worker in there so you’re doing retail when people buy things. I learned how to use Retail Pro which is our merchandise software for our store. I would scan every item and I learned through Retail Pro how to run cash and credit card transactions. Larger items usually had tags on them with a bar code so I would just scan that but the smaller items like baseballs had bar codes behind the counter I would scan. By working the team store I also learned how to sell lottery tickets. There was a separate lottery machine that printed the tickets and I had to scan the bar codes for whatever people wanted so it was in our system that we sold lottery. Working in the team store was a terrific experience because I learned how to sell merchandise instead of what I’ve always done, bought merchandise. It was very fascinating to see the other side of things.

 I acquired many skills while working as a Sales Representative for the Lincoln Saltdogs. I learned how to use the ticket selling website Etix very effectively and learned how to use our merchandise software Retail Pro very effectively. I learned how to properly use a ticket printer down to how you need to replace the ticket stock when it runs out. I learned how to listen to voicemails on the ticket office phones and also how to transfer calls when it would be better for a caller to be speaking to someone else. I learned a lot about different equipment and technical things through this internship.

 I acquired several human relations skills while working in this internship. I learned how to properly talk to people over the phone when they called in and when I called out. I learned how to properly speak to people when they walked up to the window and wanted to buy tickets or needed an answer to a question. Through this internship, I also got a lot better at interacting and supervising kids. I helped quite a few kids while I was working at the Fun Zone and while I did Run the Bases. I was supervising kids in both of those areas also but also supervising kids whenever I worked in the team store. I would say that new human relations skills and communication skills are two huge things I learned and got better at through this internship.

 My main work station throughout most of the summer was in a ticket office. Directly in front of me was the ticket window for selling people tickets that walked up. To my left, while I’m sitting at the ticket window would be my computer and monitor that I do the ticket purchasing from. Right behind the monitor is the ticket printer that I print all my tickets to and they come out in a little tray slightly to the left of my monitor. Up above the monitor and ticket printer on the wall is the phone that I’ll answer if someone calls in and the same phone I do outgoing calls on. Behind me is a counter that stretches the length of the ticket office and to my left are three other ticket-selling stations the same as the one I just described beside the last window which is only for picking up will call tickets and not printing.

 The method of training that was utilized to train me was trial by fire. We got shown a few basic things we would need to know but my supervisor Colt knew the best way we were going to learn was by repetition and he was correct. The more I answered the phone and the more I sold tickets to people at the window the easier the job got. I think my training objectives were met because looking back on it now, I learned pretty quickly. The job when I first started was a little shaky because I was still training and learning, but pretty quickly I think I met my training objectives because I started doing well.

 I don’t think I encountered many problems this summer but there were some. The main problem I faced being a ticket representative was when we couldn’t find people’s tickets at the time they came to pick them up. There’s a whole bunch of reasons why this could be but I figured it out. I solved this problem most times by looking up a customer’s order ID number and reprinting their tickets if I couldn’t find them in the file cabinet. Sometimes my supervisor Colt would have them and he just hadn’t given them to me yet so I would get them from him. The only other problems I had this summer were problems that fans brought to me because they saw I was a staff member and sometimes fans were not polite which can be a problem but I think I handled all situations professionally. Most of the time when fans had a problem I could help them solve it but if I couldn’t, I used my radio to call someone who I knew could solve it or sent them to the welcome center where solving problems for fans is most of what they do. A simple example would be during one of our games, a woman came up to me asking if there was a place she could smoke, I pointed out to her both the designated smoking areas in right and left field.

 I would say the biggest accomplishment I had as an intern this summer was completing the walk-up on the first game day. Scott Frost threw out the first pitch so there were a bunch of people who bought tickets, and it was the first time I had sold tickets nonstop for at least an hour or two. That walk-up was the first day I got thrown into the fire to learn by repetition and it also happened to maybe be our most packed crowd of the year. I did great, and I felt very accomplished and prepared for the rest of the season after that game. I would say the other big accomplishment I’m most happy about would be the improvement of my human relations skills. Going into the internship I felt that I might be nervous about answering the phone constantly or calling people myself but now I can do it easily with no worry.

 Overall, my training site this summer was amazing. I would recommend this job site for a future internship position. The people I worked with this summer made this job site so enjoyable and terrific that it did not feel like work all the time. I think all the supervisors of the interns did a terrific job training us so we could be as successful as possible. I think the training site does most everything well. The positivity among workers could be a little better but I think some of the negativity comes from the team not performing all that great this season. Overall, the training site was a lot more fun and exciting than what I anticipated going into the internship.

 I honestly don’t think much of what I’ve learned at Concordia prepared me for this internship. My Business Communication course is one of two courses that come to mind when I think about was courses helped me get the job and what courses helped me on the job. My Foundations of Rec and Sport class also helped me acquire the job and helped me on the job I believe. I don’t believe there is a course I’ve taken that could be improved to the point where it would help someone with this position. I don’t mean for that to be taken badly like I didn’t learn anything helpful from any courses I’ve taken, I just think there are only a couple courses I’ve taken that helped me specifically for this position.

 Lastly, I just want to reiterate, my internship experiences this summer were a lot of fun. Some of the people I met I hope to stay in touch with the rest of my life and they were the biggest reason the summer was so enjoyable. This experience consisted of me managing sports in a ticket sales way and my major is sports management so they match up very well. In my future, I want to at some point work in the front office of a professional baseball organization, and this summer I did just that. I did an internship this summer for a temporary time doing things that I want to do in my future career for a long time. This internship with the Lincoln Saltdogs is only going to help elevate me in the sports management field.