

Hannah Anderson

Hometown: Valley City, ND

School: Valley City State

Internship: Valley City Times-Record



As my internship with the Valley City Times Record comes to a close, there are definitely some great takeaways I would like to reflect on. Working in the newspaper business is not as simple as one may think. There are many ups and downs, changes, last-minute jobs, and frantic moments. While the front page may be a beautiful spread, organized with great detail, what goes on behind the paper is a lot of work and adaptability. I am thankful to have had this opportunity, and I would like to present to you some of the concepts and skills I have learned.

When working in the newspaper business, you cannot always choose the content. Of course, you can here and there, but when it comes down to it, you must aim to please your audience – the audience being the community. I have learned how to write about what could become a controversial topic in a non-biased light. It is important to write with your heart and soul, but when it comes to topics such as politics or death, one must be careful not to overstep any lines.

Going together with that point, I must add that writing for the newspaper is not the same as writing an essay or blog post. Being a college student studying English, I have written my fair share of essays. It is a much different process, for me at least. In essay writing, I can typically write a shorter essay in one sitting and feel good about it. For the Times Record, I often find myself needing to take a step back or re-working pieces. With this line of work, one cannot just sit down, type what they want, and be done. There is a lot more that goes into it. Interviews, phone calls, event covering, and working with your team are all major parts of writing even the smallest of articles. It is more comparable to a long research paper that takes days to write, except in the newspaper world, you don't have days – you have an hour or two.

My time with the Valley City Times Record has taught me the importance of communication within the workplace and reliability. I already knew that communication and reliability were vital parts of work, but in this setting, it works a little differently than a typical team, class, or business. There have been times that I have had to work with people in my office, and there have been times I have done things on my own. I learned when and how to communicate with my coworkers in order to keep my work up to par, without disturbing their ability to get their jobs done as well. I have done my best to treat this as a typical position, whereas I must be independent. Of course, being an intern and new to the job, I made sure to ask questions when necessary. If you don't know, you ask.

I'm grateful for all of my coworkers. They have all taught me how to be an efficient, good worker. I have juggled interviews, meetings, and work within a small time frame of 3.5 hours most days. My coworkers help keep me on track and have taught me how to manage my limited time in the office – especially my mentor, Ellie. She has been helping me along the way – assigning me stories, preparing me for the day, providing me with contact information, and giving me a few laughs throughout the process. I am very blessed to have been given this opportunity, and I am so glad I decided to spend some time with the Valley City Times Record.