**Intro**

This summer, I worked for Travelers Insurance in Hartford. My position was in a program called ITIP which stands for Information Technology Internship Program. At Travelers, I worked in the Personal Insurance department with a team known as TVS or the Technology Value Stream. The TVS team was responsible for upkeep and updates to the main Systems that Travelers uses. For example, one of the large projects that I was involved with throughout the summer was a SQL Server update. When I first came here, I wasn’t too sure what to expect. Since I was knew to the company and to being an intern, I outlined some of the goals that I wanted to work on throughout the summer and highlighted some of the areas that my manager wanted to see me accomplish. I will go through a few of the objectives which I thought would be most important to my experience.

**Seeing Both Sides**

When I first began my internship, my manager asked me what interested me the most and what projects I would enjoy being involved with. My answer was that I was not sure. One of my biggest hopes for the internship was to be able to see both sides of IT; the technical side and the planning side. Luckily, I had the opportunity to experience both! Being a Computer Information Systems major and a Computer Science minor, I often feel as though my preferences are split. While major focuses more on the project planning side, my minor is based on the technical side of things. After experiencing this first hand at Travelers, I realize now that the two areas are often split. Those who do the technical things are not as involved with planning, and those who do the planning are not all that technical. When I explained my situation to my manager, she helped me answer my own question by bringing me in to multiple teams in Personal Insurance, each with different responsibilities. As such, I spent my summer doing project management, developing code, and much more. This helped me realize that I think my interests lie somewhere in between the two sides of the IT department. I figured this must be the bridge between business and technology that CIS majors always talk about.

**The Agile Process**

One of the areas I was very curious to learn more about through this internship was Agile. Coming into this internship, I was only vaguely familiar with the process, but luckily they helped me sort that out right away. Soon enough I was working directly with Scrum Masters and learning how to plan and implement the Agile process. My original misconception of Scrum Masters was that they were the lead developers on the project. It surprised me to learn that Scrum Masters really do not need that much coding experience at all. Instead, they are responsible for upholding the principals of the agile process which ultimately helps keep the team on track. This type of position is very interesting to me and I would definitely consider trying to take on a role like this sometime in the future.

**Learn as I Go**

Since this internship was the first that I had ever done, my main goal was to essentially be a sponge. I wanted to soak up as much information as possible for two reasons. One reason was so that I could become a useful asset to the teams I was working for and give valuable insight. And the other reason was so that I could learn more about myself. I wanted to put myself to the test to truly find out where my interests lie so I did just that. I threw myself into uncomfortable situations and ended up discovering areas where I can thrive, and others where I falter. I discovered that the process of planning in Agile, while tedious to others, is extremely interesting to me. It is like having a pile of cogs and wheels and putting them together in a way that makes the machine run. And once it gets going, I find the work to be very satisfying. I also learned that I am not a fan of meetings. While I know that they are important to keep everything on track, I have found that I prefer to put my head down and keep on coding rather than be interrupted every hour or so. I know some of these points seem contradictory, and they are. I suppose I prefer to take on big projects that I can devote all my attention to at once without having to stop and take breaks or to switch my mindset to something else. I’m still trying to figure out what all this means for me and what kind of position would suit my particular interests.

**Assignments**

The largest assignment that I worked on this summer was a project called the Innovation Showcase. I have talked about this project in the class before, but I am bringing it up again since we finally completed the project and gave our presentations. My main role in the group was to be in charge of the technical process and create a demo in Java. I found this to be a very rewarding role because I enjoy coding and this was the first time that I was ever really given the opportunity to showcase what I can do. This was probably the most technical project that I had this summer and while it wasn’t something that was company-wide, our four person group was designed to act very much like the company at large would. We had a mix of majors, departments, and programs in the group that I think played off of each other well in the end. Even though the group was small, I can see how it would relate to a bigger picture and appreciate the things that going through that process taught us.

**Technologies**

This summer I was introduced to a variety of technologies that I had never used before. While some were similar – programs like eclipse and powerpoint – they had us using very interesting tools that I plan on using again in the future. Across the company, many employees use OneNote to store and share notes with their team. I never realized the versatility of that tool before this internship and I am surprised that I haven’t been told to use it at Quinnipiac before as it would be very applicable to some of the classes that I have taken. In addition, I also used a software called Rally throughout the course of the summer to plan and maintain the Agile process. It contains all of the stories and other aspects of the various teams that Travelers has in IT and I have found it to be a very unique and extremely powerful tool – particularly when trying to coordinate work with offshore teams that work in completely different time zones.

**Assessment and Conclusion**

Overall, I really enjoyed my experience here at Travelers. I would say this is definitely a company that I would appreciate working for again. My issue with this internship really wasn’t the work at all, it was the location. I live in Massachusetts which is about a two hour drive from Hartford without traffic. So commuting was definitely not going to be possible. As such, I had to live in Hartford. Thankfully, the internship program at Travelers paid for our housing which in general was a very comfortable living arrangement with excellent proximity to the office – just another reason while Travelers is a great place to work at. But unfortunately, if you live more than half an hour away from Hartford, I can’t recommend this internship. Hartford has all the infrastructure to be a great place to be, but it just isn’t set up for living in. The city is essentially a compilation of offices and parking garages. During the work days, the place is bustling with people. But as soon as the afternoon comes or the weekend creeps in, the city is eerily quiet. This has the unfortunate effect of causing most restaurants or stores to close down at 8 o’clock and stay shut down for the weekends. For these reasons, I have found myself making the two to three hour trip home every Friday and come back every Sunday night. This has been a huge pain and saying that I am excited to not have to do that every weekend anymore is an understatement. If Travelers had their main campus in a city like Boston, I couldn’t recommend this company enough. But unfortunately, I think the situation of their location is going to force me to explore other options going forward. I know Hartford is trying to be better, but it has a long, long ways to go until then and at this point, that city is the last place I want to find myself in. But I have to reiterate, Travelers is an amazing company and I know that I will be disappointed with any other company that I work for that doesn’t meet the Travelers standards.