My First Day as an Intern at Surfboard Payments

I am Sunil Kumar from Chennai, currently in my third year of pursuing Artificial Intelligence and Data Science. I have joined Surfboard Payments as an intern to enhance my technical expertise and expand my knowledge. When I first arrived, I wondered how I would adapt to this new environment, considering I had no prior exposure to the company's operations. However, I was eager to learn new things and gain valuable experience to help me grow both personally and professionally.

Rather than traditional teaching methods, the company focused on practical learning through problem-solving activities. They introduced concepts through interactive exercises instead of direct instruction, which made understanding much easier. Solving puzzles was one of the key approaches that helped improve my logical thinking and problem-solving skills. This method made the learning experience both engaging and insightful.

Through this internship, I have developed essential skills such as adaptability, research, writing, mathematical thinking, and problem-solving. Initially, grasping some concepts was challenging, but the company provided sessions that explained how to approach and resolve problems systematically. These sessions not only helped in improving my technical abilities but also enhanced my analytical thinking in real-world scenarios.

Steps to Problem Solving:

- Do not ignore the problem when it arises.

- Try to understand the nature of the problem.

- Identify the constraints involved in the problem.

I learned that avoiding problems is not a solution. Instead, I must analyze them and develop effective solutions while evaluating the possible outcomes. Every day, we encountered challenges, sometimes resolving them successfully and other times overlooking them. However, I realized that problems should not be categorized as small or big—if they exist, they need to be tackled. This approach has helped me become more proactive and logical in solving issues.

Furthermore, my experience here has made me aware of the various skills I need to improve—not just

by understanding their definitions but by applying them in real-world scenarios. It made me rethink how I handle challenges and question my thought process. I often asked myself, “Why didn’t I take the initiative earlier?” This realization encouraged me to take action before problems escalate. The company provided insightful examples, such as car engine oil maintenance and the Hen, Fox, Rice, and Farmer puzzle, to reinforce this mindset. These examples illustrated that some problems cannot be ignored and must be solved logically.

As I explored the office, I enjoyed the ambiance and even the food. Observing the hard work of my colleagues, I wished for an opportunity to communicate with them and understand the difference between academic learning and workplace experience. There is a significant gap between theoretical knowledge gained in college and its practical application in the industry. While I had heard about this before, experiencing it firsthand was an eye-opener. In college, coding is mostly theoretical, with limited real-world implementation. However, I do not see this as a flaw in the system—professors teach what they are required to, but it is up to us to go beyond the syllabus and learn more.

Through projects, I explored new programming languages and realized that the focus here was not only on academic learning but also on applying knowledge in a broader context. This experience encouraged me to think beyond textbook concepts and look at problems from different perspectives. It motivated me to develop a deeper understanding of problem-solving and explore diverse learning methods.

After assessing my skills based on the given set of criteria, I took time to reflect on my abilities. While I had knowledge in various areas, I realized I was not proficient in many of them. As we rated ourselves based on expertise, I noticed that I lacked a standout skill. Instead, there was one dormant ability—waiting to be nurtured and developed further.

One skill I always believed I was good at was drawing. I had thought I was quite skilled in it, but upon self-assessment, I realized I still had a long way to go. This experience taught me that expertise is not just about innate talent but also about continuous learning and improvement. To truly master a skill, dedication and consistent effort are necessary. I need to read *Extreme Ownership* because I believe it will help me develop consistency—something I have lacked. So far, I have read only a couple of chapters, but they have already shown me the importance of consistency in achieving mastery.

In conclusion, today, I have gained valuable insights into problem-solving techniques and skill assessment. By evaluating my skill set, I understood my strengths and areas for improvement. I realized that while I assumed I had expertise in drawing, in reality, I still have a lot to learn. This reinforced the

importance of continuous practice and self-improvement in mastering any skill.

Moreover, in problem-solving, I learned that identifying and analyzing an issue is crucial. Merely rereading a problem does not lead to a better understanding; a structured approach is essential for finding solutions. Avoiding problems only postpones their resolution, whereas facing them head-on with logical strategies leads to better outcomes. These lessons have given me a fresh perspective on learning and growth, motivating me to refine my skills further.