

My Internship Experience: When in Rome...

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On the first day of my new internship, my supervisor greeted me with a warm smile and a bubbly personality. She began to discuss my role as a designer and photographer at a publishing service in lower Manhattan, where I would be interning over the course of four months. As a designer, I was tasked with photoshopping thumbnail articles for the writers. Additionally, as a photographer, I would be given small monthly assignments to shoot at various locations in the city. I thought to myself, "This would be easy, no problem."

However, when my supervisor explained to me the full details of what she wanted aesthetically, I panicked a little. The art style on which this company bases their thumbnail articles is in collage form. I do not specialize in crafting collage in Photoshop, but I had to create something. I thought to myself, "When in Rome, do what the Romans do!" I frantically rushed to my desk and began doing research, looking for inspiration on different platforms such as Pinterest. With that aiding my creative process, I was able to put together something, while still being unsure if they were going to like what I created. I nervously submitted my work through Slack and awaited their pending response. It felt like I was on a game show awaiting the results on whether I made the cut or not. Finally, I received a notification from my supervisor stating how much she genuinely loved the collage design that I had made for an article.

Through that experience, I've gained confidence to believe in my skills as a designer, and not give in to anxious questions like "Can I actually do this?" or "What if I fail?" Through that first experience of designing my first collage, it became natural to me and I knew what I had to do. While there were a few times my supervisor had to give me constructive criticism on certain collages I've done, I didn't take this the wrong way; I knew deep down she wanted to help me improve as a designer while making sure what I created, catered to their audience. While working there, my supervisor and a few other co-workers also complimented my turnaround time. They stated that my ability to work efficiently with swiftness is amazing, which gave me a confidence boost.

The biggest take away I have is that, as a creative, you must let go of whatever fear you have and trust your instincts. You'll be surprised with what you'll be able to get out of just taking the first step to do something out of your comfort zone. Most importantly, be willing to accept failure as a way to learn and grow from it. When I submitted my first collage, I knew that my supervisor could have told me to try again or do something differently, but I didn't let that sense of failure rule over me and prevent me from trying something. To any future intern or anyone afraid to try something new, I challenge you to first realize your worth, then step out of your comfort zone and be amazed at what you can produce.