

Roarke Jennings

## Final Report

1. Peace Boat is a very organized business and the first day of the internship was quite enlightening and not too overwhelming. The intern coordinator facilitates a half-day orientation that does well to ease you into working at the office. In this first session, one learns all about the different sectors and functions of Peace Boat, the legalities of being an intern, login instructions, expected tasks, and introduces themselves to everybody in the building. Although it is a lot of information and a bit overwhelming, the intern coordinator gives the interns a comprehensive pack of information that one can refer to in times of need. We also went out for an Indian curry lunch at which we were able to meet our fellow co-workers and begin to develop relationships from the beginning.

2. As for being functional in an office environment, my language ability was unfortunately a bit sub-par. The wide breadth and novelty of the words used to speak about peace, sustainability, voyages, etc. were beyond my level and thus everyone spoke to me in English as to not waste time. Regrettably, the share-house in which I was living was also a mainly English-speaking environment, which did not help in my efforts to use and practice Japanese. Other than these drawbacks, I was able to practice Japanese at the weekly lecture series, restaurants, travelling, watching tv, going to karate, and at various social events. Overall, I feel that I was able to begin to understand some conversational nuances in the Japanese language and learned quite a bit of new vocabulary.

3. In the broadest terms of accomplishments, I was able to develop gain insight into the inner-workings of an international NPO, create meaningful relationships and receive valuable feedback regarding my plans.

Analyzing Peace Boat and discussing how the business made ends meet was quite interesting. To my surprise, they were entirely funded through selling voyage tickets, which has some interesting implications. Firstly, the reliance on paying customers significantly constricts the demographic of people who can enjoy the journey. However, they have done a good job trying to develop other ways for younger people to volunteer, study, and get involved. Naturally, this source of income is much more reliable than grants and donations which can be abruptly terminated. But if they were to pursue special grants, they could perhaps sponsor numerous people on every journey.

The networking I had in mind before I departed was hopefully another strong accomplishment. Within Peace Boat I was able to make strong connections and discuss future plans and potential collaborations. I hope these connections will remain strong as time goes by and that we will one day work together in some capacity. Besides the staff, the other intern, who had in fact started her own NPO, was quite knowledgeable about NPOs and NGOs and provided some great feedback about my ideas and ways to move forward.

Another one of my major accomplishments was the development and implementation of the "International Culture Night" (ICN) series that I hosted. Through the experience I was able to develop skills pertaining to the development of events, communication, budgeting, marketing, and facilitation. In the beginning

stages, I was able to exercise my creative abilities and developed numerous options for Peace Boat to choose from ranging from rooftop gardens, meditative art courses, and the ICN. From my proposal and on, I gained experience collaborating with fellow co-workers and working out the details of the event including costs, space, time, etc. At this point, I learned a lot about budgeting and the importance of having a mechanism for identifying the number of participants. The budgeting was quite difficult as I was never quite sure how many people would end up following through on their reservation and who might just show up. The marketing aspect was fun and I was able to create fun posters, which I hung up at my share-house and to the Peace Boat facebook group. Lastly, was the facilitation aspect. Because of the TOL curriculum and constant practice, I felt quite comfortable facilitating the event and felt that they went fairly smoothly.

Outside of the office, the internship also enabled me to gain further experience with martial arts, which I would like to teach later in life. The opportunity to study karate in Japan was a unique and rewarding experience. I learned a lot about the subtleties of the art and enjoyed analyzing the similarities and differences between karate and wushu. As far as accomplishments, I was honored to participate in a Shinjuku tournament and to have been awarded a brown belt in a November belt-testing.

Finally, I would like to note my improvements in understanding Japanese. Although I did not advance as much as I had expected or hoped to, I do feel that my skills have improved as I learned many new words and had a lot of practice speaking and listening.

4. Overall, I feel that the internship went fairly smoothly and felt quite prepared to perform the tasks that Peace Boat expected from me. Having said this, the greatest challenges included improving Japanese, budgeting the event that I created, and enduring the lack of personal and natural spaces. As for the Japanese challenges, they are outline above. Budgeting for my event became difficult despite having a mechanism for people to sign up for the event. Sometimes they would not show up or others who had not signed up would arrive, and so it was difficult to buy the right amount of supplies. Finally, the lack of personal space and forests was a bit difficult to deal with. However, the city was quite clean and I was able to often go to the park and satisfy these cravings for 6 months.

5. I certainly wanted to make a good impression on Peace Boat for the fact that I would like to collaborate with them in the future. In order to accomplish this, I set out to be as productive and reliable as possible. I showed up to work everyday 5-10 minutes before the start time, I frequently communicated with my coordinators about jobs they needed help with, volunteered to work weekends when they needed help at certain festivals, and helped develop new programs in attempts to boost awareness of and participation in Peace Boat activities. Other than being creative, communicating effectively, and serving as a reliable person, I tried to always bring an upbeat attitude to the office and contribute to the positive atmosphere of the office.

6. Fortunately, my coordinator and the other people in the office were all quite approachable and willing to help in any situation. Like I mentioned above, my coordinator did a great job from the start at helping us interns with the workings of

the organization and continued to help us solve problems throughout the experience. She was also quite helpful when I was developing my personal project for OSU. And through the bi-weekly check-ins with my academic supervisor at OSU, I was able to receive further assistance in developing my project. Other than this, everything was going so smoothly that there seemed to be little need for outside guidance.

7. Throughout my experience in Japan, I was able to further understand the culture of Japan. Through my experiences in the Karate dojo, travelling, and familiarizing myself with local issues, I realized new insights into Japanese concepts of harmony, dedication, and hospitality, which are all quite inspirational. On the other hand, I was a little disappointed by the environmental awareness of everyday people despite the country's initiatives towards mitigating climate change.

8. Again, I felt that I was quite prepared and that everything went quite well. The minor things that I wish I had known about include Peace Boat's monthly futsal games, the best supermarkets to go to, and the amount of extra work it would take to improve my Japanese.

9. I usually got up around 6am, put rice and beans into the rice cooker for the 3 meals of the day, and then meditated or did some pertinent research for the week's activities. After breakfast I would bike to work at which I would develop the news of the week or work on the various projects of the day. I usually ate lunch on the roof and practiced some Tai Chi or Karate for a bit before finishing the day in the office. Some days I would then go to Karate before going home where I would make dinner, socialize, or work on personal projects and go to bed around 10pm.

Mondays I would help teach English and Wednesdays I would help set-up and run the weekly lecture series.

10. Overall, I would say that the opportunity is worth the investment and that there are a few things to keep in mind. Obviously, everyone has different goals and lifestyles and what I advise may not be pertinent, but there are many roads in Tokyo.

First I will start with the cost of living in Tokyo, which can be daunting. However, in reality Tokyo can be quite affordable. First of all I would recommend finding a 'share-house' to live in. Although you may not have much space to yourself, the costs are relatively low and it is interesting meeting such a wide variety of people from all over the world. As for food, I would advise to cook most of your meals to keep costs down, but there are also quite economical places to eat all over town. Finally, I would advise buying a cheap or used bike for the duration of the internship. Not only is it a great way to remain active, it will save you money in the long run and you won't be limited to train stations.

Six months is a long time and so I would also suggest trying to get involved in some kind of social network outside of work. Everyone in the office is quite friendly and you may go out every once in a while but everyone has their own lives and not always excited to hang out with the intern. So I suggest that a student join a club or some kind of group with a shared interest, whether that be dance, martial arts, sport, art, etc. If the student likes soccer, I would suggest getting involved as quickly as possible with the monthly "Peace Ball" games with Peace Boat comrades. And the last potential friend source, besides the people one may meet in their share-house,

are the volunteers down in the basement. This is one thing I didn't really do that I felt would've been nice.

Lastly, I would recommend that the student communicate effectively with the staff at Peace Boat. As I've mentioned, it is a very flexible organization that is willing to hear out creative ideas and implement those that are consistent with their mission. Through effective communication a student can then create something unique and consistent with one's own goals.