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I worked for the Foreign Commercial Service in Buenos Aires for ten weeks this summer. Although I did not have one set project to work on, a resulting benefit was that I was able to experience a great deal of all the services and assistance that the Foreign Commercial Service offers US and Argentine businesses. I did spend a great deal of my time in the office translating various Argentine market research reports from Spanish to English, or researching Argentine industries in order to complete different types of sector reports. I helped author a number of these market reports, which are sent to US companies interested in doing business with Argentine companies.

Some of the other projects I worked on this summer included briefing guides that I wrote on the Commercial Service for the incoming ambassador. I also helped match potential Argentine business partners with compatible U.S. companies interested in doing business in Argentina. I was able to go on a number of meetings with one US company that came to meet with several potential Argentine business partners. I found this to be particularly interesting because it allowed me to see the differences between how US companies and Argentine companies function, and how trade relationships are formed.

Additionally, I assisted with a marketing plan for an international forum that promotes trade within the Americas called the America's Competitiveness Forum. I also did a number of various office tasks, such as answering the phones, etc. Additionally, I was able to work and attend the 4th of July ball at the Ambassador's residence, which was definitely a highlight of my trip.

Initially, it was difficult for me to get an understanding of every function and service

provided by my office, as well as how I could help on a deeper level during my short period of time there. It was frustrating because the ten weeks really did go by so quickly, and at times I felt that the people in my office only gave me short term projects to work on because they realized I was there for a limited amount of time. I would recommend that future interns definitely try to learn as much as possible about what the Foreign Commercial Service does and the different services they provide. That way, the intern would perhaps be able to begin the internship with an idea of what he/she would want to work on. A benefit of my office was that I really was able to work on anything that interested me. After learning about the different sectors that my office deals with, I realized that the Information Technology and Renewable Energy sectors appealed greatly to me, and towards the end of my internship I was able to work on more substantial projects with the commercial specialists in these sectors.

One of my favorite experiences this summer was definitely the 4th of July ball at the US Ambassador's residence. Everyone at the embassy is able to attend, and the interns get to work the event in the beginning of the night, and then enjoy the rest of the event after all the people have arrived. It was a really beautiful event with great food, and lots of politicians, businessmen, and other interesting people. My office has a particularly important part at this event, as they are the ones who get businesses to sponsor and attend. One of the specialists in my office told me that this event is where many trade relationships between US and Argentine companies are formed.

Looking back on the experience, I do think that I was successful and learned a great deal from my internship. I was able to experience first hand how international trade relationships are formed, the barriers to these relationships, and how to overcome them quickly. I enjoyed working in a bilingual office that enabled me to practice and improve my Spanish language

skills. Considering the limited amount of time that I was able to work, I do feel that I accomplished several noteworthy and substantial projects and had an impact on the office and the people I worked with. I thoroughly enjoyed working with the Argentines in my office and learning their perspectives on Argentine and American politics, world events, etc.

Regarding potential future interns, I think that it is important that they have strong Spanish language skills, because many times I had to quickly translate documents or answer the phones in Spanish. It is also important that interns be proactive, as often times I felt that I had to actively seek out the specialists in my office for work, rather than relying on them to hand me projects.

I would highly recommend this internship to anyone interested. It was a great opportunity for me to get a feel for how a US embassy runs, understand the functions of the Foreign Commercial Service, and experience Buenos Aires. I worked forty hours a week, thus there was not too much free time during the weekdays to travel and explore the city, but I took full advantage of my weekends. Buenos Aires is such a beautiful city, with a unique character very different from other places I have been in Latin America. It is a mixture between Latin and European culture, and between a developed and developing nation. I was able to go to tango shows, ferias, concerts, and generally just sightsee and experience the daily life of Argentines. I was also lucky enough to be able to form amazing relationships with both Argentines and the other Americans working at the embassy. Though there were several challenges along the way, my internship experience was both rewarding and satisfying, and again I highly recommend it to anyone interested.