



CLH INSURANCE

YOUR INSURANCE CONNECTION

Meet Sam VerMeer

Summer Business Intern 2014

CLH Insurance

We were so blessed this summer to have young man come our way for an internship exploring the Business world of Insurance.



I asked Sam to give me a little background information about himself, so we could get to know him better.

My name is Sam VerMeer. I was born and raised here in St. Louis and I am the eldest son of Lincoln and Gwen and older brother to Hannah, Abby, and Mikayla. A few unique facts about me might include being homeschooled from 1st-12th grade and I owned, operated, and built a commercial lawn care business for 7 years before selling it this past winter (2013-14). I greatly enjoy quality time with family and friends, soccer and basketball, and anything St. Louis Cardinals or Ohio State University. All of these are blessings, but my introduction would be pointless without mentioning my purpose here on earth. Pastor and author John Piper wrote, and it is my goal to, "joyfully display the supreme excellence of God in all spheres of life." I sinned against Him and I'm deeply messed up, yet God sent His son, Jesus, to die for my sin that I might receive eternal life having been forgiven and delighted in as a child of God because of Jesus. Nothing else matters if that last sentence is not true. But it is true! Therefore, though I fail daily, everything I do is in response to that great truth.

You can see that in Sam, his life is deep in his thinking, his decisions and purpose. I asked him about his plans for the future.

I am about to begin my third year at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, MO, where I am pursuing a Bachelor's of Science degree in Economics. My dream is to potentially combine my gifting in the area of business with my love for churches and ministries. I enjoy people and learning about what gets them out of bed every morning, while I also love to serve them. Ultimately, I hope that my career, no matter the path, encompasses each of these characteristics.

I know that Chuck Hembree, the owner of CLH Insurance, put a lot of time and focus in on this and other internships and I wondered what Sam thought about the internship and how did the experience compare to what he expected.

The internship here at CLH Insurance was appealing for a couple reasons. First, I greatly respected Mr. Hembree and I knew there would be outstanding opportunities to grow and learn from a summer with him. Secondly, I wanted to, at the very least, experience an office environment. Having worked in the landscaping industry for the 7 years prior, I knew it would be helpful to experience the day-to-day in an office setting and what that entailed. Lastly, my dad is in church banking, and I knew from spending significant time in his work environment and meeting with Mark Robison (Chairman and President of Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company) that, if possible, I would love to work in an industry that focuses on churches. CLH Insurance certainly fit that description with their representation of Brotherhood Mutual.



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To be honest, I didn't fully know what to expect. I was excited/nervous and grateful for the opportunity, but I was unsure what my role might be and how it would play itself out. I had minimal knowledge of the insurance industry coming into the summer, so I was curious how I might be able to contribute. My experience this summer turned out to be extraordinarily helpful and impactful. The learning and growth I experienced in real-life situations, while surrounded by high-quality people here at CLH, is irreplaceable. Though my education at Lindenwood University has been important, this internship has stretched and challenged me in ways school never could.

Was there any one thing that surprised Sam about the insurance industry or something he didn't know before coming?

I would say the most surprising aspect of the industry was how much information and knowledge a professional needs to know in order to be successful. Again, beyond the little I knew from homeowners and auto insurance, I did not know much. After a summer of working through a textbook focused on even the basics of an insurance policy and seeing it played out each day in the office, I better understand and respect quality agencies, like CLH, and its employees.

What did Sam enjoy the most about his time at CLH?

What I enjoyed most was the project I was assigned during the last month and making prospect and servicing calls throughout the summer. The project was certainly difficult at times, but I loved it overall. It forced me to work hard, but I enjoyed it and grew immensely from the experience. Also, it was exciting to meet with prospects and customers of all shapes and sizes. As I mentioned, I love people and getting to know their background and purpose, and these calls provided opportunities to meet numerous people from diverse backgrounds all over Missouri.

What did he think was the hardest part?

The project and the learning curve were both difficult at times. The project was certainly a highlight, but there were stressful times, especially as I attempted to fill a prospect list with 6,500 names and numbers. Secondly, I like to be able to know a topic well enough in order that I might speak with confidence on the subject, and many times I simply lacked experience in the industry that would allow me to be able to do that.

Goals from this point forward?

Currently, as I am about halfway through my college experience, I want to take advantage of this special season of life. I see too many of my peers who find themselves on two opposite, and many times harmful, sides of a spectrum in relation to pursuing their goals in college and career. One side of the spectrum is constantly in pursuit of better grades, more resume experience, the highest paying job, etc. The other extreme tends toward spending all their time focused on the college experience building community on campus, spending time with peers, and pouring into their lives. These are all certainly worthwhile pursuits, but many of them miss out on the unique opportunities this season of life offers. My goal is to combine the two. I want to live wisely and rationally, preparing for my future and career, while also spending my time pouring into other young men's lives and changing the culture on campus. This time of life is too important to not find a good balance between the two.

My final question to Sam was whether or not he would recommend this internship to others and why or why not?

I would most certainly recommend this internship to others who are considering a career in business, sales, or management. If you have a desire to learn and grow, no matter your experience or career goals, those at CLH will challenge and encourage you as pursue your unique gifts. Though I realize it will take some time and reflection before I fully understand how much I learned and grew from my experience as intern at CLH, I thoroughly enjoyed the past 3 months. I'm so thankful for the opportunity and all the people at CLH.

We were thankful, too, that Sam VerMeer came our way. He is a hard working, young man with integrity, self drive and good heart. He loves God, enjoys getting to meet and know other people and strives to do his best. We hope he will come our way again. But for now study hard, Sam, and finish well.