

How to (Not) Know: My Internship with Osborne Holdings

By Andrew Fullerton

When I came across copywriting for the first time, I was instantly intrigued. Who were these secret rainmakers, these English graduates, these creatives with such a profound role in this world of business and conversion rates?

I started reading and watching everything I could about copywriting, but I needed to know more. I wanted to know all the ins-and-outs; I wanted real-world experience. Before long, I came across Osborne Holdings and reached out to Oliver Osborne, founder/director, sending him a brief cover letter and inquiring about internship opportunities.

“While I recognize that any resume or cover letter of mine won't show that I have a ton of practical experience in this field, I think that my work ethic, my interest, and my discipline do more than compensate for this,” I wrote.

Even though the brief cover letter I sent to Mr. Osborne had emphasized “my work ethic, my interest, and my discipline,” before the first day of my internship, I was struck by the feeling that I was a complete fraud. I didn't know how to be a copywriter; I didn't deserve this internship, I thought. When I presented Mr. Osborne with my first set of sales emails, the first deliverable of my internship, I was convinced that I would be found out and dropped from the internship.

Thankfully, this was not the case. Instead, Mr. Osborne thoughtfully read over my

work, asking me about each of my creative decisions as he did.

It wasn't important that the emails were perfect (note: they weren't). What mattered to Mr. Osborne, was that I had been intentional and thoughtful in writing them. What mattered was my willingness to embrace this unfamiliar challenge, ask questions, and act on feedback.

This first meeting established a theme that would persist throughout my internship.

The emphasis was never on being perfectly knowledgeable and executing to perfection. The emphasis, instead, was always on asking questions, listening, and learning.

Even as I became a much more capable copywriter during my time at Osborne Holdings, each week began with identifying and acknowledging the gaps in my knowledge and understanding. Each week began by addressing those feelings of fraudulence that I felt before my first day. After this, Mr. Osborne and I would discuss how to address the gaps in my understanding.

This became like a ritual for me, a source of strength amidst self-doubt, and I soon began to realize that this was not just a strategy for me as an intern. Rather, it is a motto that Oliver Osborne himself lives by and a key to success at any level: “listen more than you talk.” He didn't just promote this belief but demonstrated it himself throughout my internship as he pursued a mini-MBA.

Being a successful copywriter, marketing expert, or professional in a rapidly evolving world is not about always being the most knowledgeable in the room. Success begins with acknowledging the gaps in your knowledge and experience. It is found not in the comfort of knowledge, but in the discomfort of embracing what you don't know. It is found in embracing lifelong learning.

Thank you, Oliver Osborne and Osborne Holdings, for your generosity and your commitment to giving young people and students real-world opportunities. Above all, thank you for teaching me what it means to be a true expert and a lifelong learner.