

Research Assessment #4

Name of Professionals: Spencer Langley, Nikki Mouton, John Classe

Event: ISM Business Symposium

Date of Event: October 6, 2020

Assessment:

This week I had the honor of participating in the ISM business symposium. I was interviewed by three generous professionals, Spencer Langley, Nikki Mouton, and John Classe, who gave their time to speak with me and other students. I gained much valuable information from speaking with them which I plan to share in this research assessment.

The first professional that interviewed me was Spencer Langley, a regional sales manager. I spoke with Mr. Langley about where I currently am in ISM with my topic of study. Originally my topic was hedge funds, but I realized that my focus was too narrow and that I needed to broaden my search to other aspects of finance. Mr. Langley gave me some great advice, telling me that it is always best to start broad and then narrow down the options once you have more knowledge. This is excellent advice that I will most definitely use while I am in college. Although hedge funds are still my dream job, I am not opposed to other occupations. While in college I will apply what I learned by interning at a variety of different companies and positions (if possible) so that way I can have a greater understanding of what I am specifically interested in.

The second professional I spoke with was Nikki Mouton, an equity, diversity, and inclusion strategist at Frisco ISD. I had a great discussion with Mrs. Mouton about my plans for the future and my personal life. I explained to Mrs. Mouton who I am as a person and what kind of student I am. Additionally I told her what colleges I aspire to attend and what I want to study

in college. I didn't think much of it during the interview, but I mentioned how I love making people laugh and smile and how I greatly enjoy the company of others. At the end of my interview Mrs. Mouton caught me off guard by asking me to tell her a joke. Admittedly, I froze up a bit because I was not expecting the question. I had no clue why she asked me to tell her a joke until she told me that if I say I have a skill during an interview that the interviewer is going to expect me to perform that skill right then and there. This taught me two things. One, I need to make sure that I am paying extra careful attention to what I am saying during interviews and making sure that I remember everything I say. And two, to be ready for interviewers to ask me to display my talents. Going into the interview I was not expecting anything like that to happen, but I'm glad it did and I learned to be prepared for similar situations. Another, more implied takeaway was to have a skill that you can demonstrate during an interview. If I have a skill that I can show during an interview (other than interpersonal skills), then I could really wow an interviewer and separate myself from the crowd. I plan to use these insights for future research interviews as well as any professional interviews I land in the future.

The third and final professional I spoke with was John Classe, a certified financial planner. I spoke with Mr. Classe about the ISM program and high school. One of the questions I asked Mr. Classe was if he had any former experience with the ISM program. He said yes, and told me about how impressed he was with the students he had seen in the program and how amazing it was that students could learn transferable skills that will always be beneficial to have. It was really inspirational to hear him speak so highly of the program and it demonstrated how much responsibility ISM students have in representing the program. It also excited me and grew my excitement to wow professionals with my work. I want to be able to represent the ISM program well and leave that same lasting impression. One of the questions Mr. Classe asked me

that stuck out to me was what advice I would give students entering high school. My advice was to have a plan and to enjoy the years in high school. While I was talking about the advice I would give, I thought about how I could use my own advice moving forward. After further consideration, I came to the conclusion that I want to have a better plan for college and that I want to make sure that I enjoy my experience. Looking back I feel like I didn't enjoy my high school years as much as I should have, and I would like to change that moving forward.

The ISM business symposium gave me a lot to think about. The professionals that interviewed me were all incredibly kind and helpful. I want to end my assessment by personally thanking Mr. Langley, Mrs. Mouton, and Mr. Classe for taking the time out of their busy days to interview me. I am going to send them all hand-written thank you letters and mention them in my blog for this week, but I wanted to thank them here as well. They didn't have to take the time to interview me, but they did. I appreciate the opportunity I've been given and will be sure to apply what I've learned moving forward.