

PII Internship Report by Wentao Wang
Hokuriku Broadcasting Co., Ltd.

During the summer 2016, I spent two months interning at Hokuriku Broadcasting Company(MRO), one of the most time-honored private stations in Japan. Shadowing broadcasting staff at the company and observing the procedure of making actual TV programs, I was able to learn the logistics of broadcast as well as Japanese business culture. As a foreigner, I further saw history and culture of the Hokuriku region from a Japanese perspective, and probed deeper into the present international exchange taken place in Kanazawa.

During my internship, I rotated through four different departments: the Announcers Department (アナウンス部), the Television Production Department (テレビ制作部) each Wednesday, the Radio Broadcasting Department (ラジオ放送部) each Thursday and the News Reporting Department (報道部) for the rest of the week during the first six weeks, and then spent the remaining two weeks at the News Reporting Department making my own five-minute TV program.

Even though I was only able to spend one day in the Announcers Department, I felt much challenged by practicing accurate Japanese pronunciation and mocking radio shows on-air with announcers. I used to regard the job of an announcer as simply reading out scripts, but through this one-day experience I realized how it demanded much more like quick responsiveness and accurate time control, sometimes even the ability to write attractive scripts. It also taught me the power of phrasing and wording to convey appealing ideas.

In the Television Production Department, each Wednesday I followed staffs to restaurants and scenic spots in Ishikawa for shooting VCRs for the weekly live variety show called 絶好調. To ensure the perfection of camera angles and flow of dialogue, the same 20-second scene might be shot several times. When we returned back to the station, I shadowed directors to see how they edit separate VCRs and put them into a coherent program with background music, sound effects and subtitles. When the live show was on, I was able to observe directors backstage instructing staffs and announcers to perform in accordance to switch between live comments and completed VCRs. I came to realize the difficulty of presenting a TV program flawlessly, since everyone from the director, the announcer to the staff in charge of pulling up subtitles needs to act right on time. I was also very lucky to join the staff during weekends to observe them broadcasting soccer game relay.

My experience in the Radio Broadcasting Department each Thursday was the most interesting as I traveled with announcers during a radio show called おいねどいね to broadcast live in all kinds of places from watermelon fields, good leaf handicraft shop, to Kanazawa Noh Museum where I could take part in cultural activities like tasting watermelons and playing the traditional hand drum, as well as give my thoughts and interview local residents for deeper insights. Speaking on-air was especially challenging for me as I had to organize my sentences correctly for the audience to understand, while responding to unexpected follow-up questions. On the other hand, being exposed to precious culture experience, I was even more amazed by the glamour of the Hokuriku region.

Spending most of my time in the News Reporting Department, I became most familiar with the daily routine of reporters, who contact the interviewee, cover reports, write scripts and edit the news videos for the daily evening new program レオスタ. As I joined in with their interview trips around Ishikawa, I witnessed how reporters at MRO strived hard to unveil unnoticed details or present diverse viewpoints, given the fierce competition between different local stations. For example, when the Brexit result came out, in order to include the perspectives of British people in the evening news, reporters searched hard for exchange students in Kanazawa, and even traveled to different scenic spots to look for British tourists. Learning the flexibility and openness to challenge of a reporter's job, when it came to my turn to prepare for my own 5-minute presentation with the help of experienced reporters, I managed to make the program from scratch as I grasped the idea, conducted interviews and wrote scripts. The final presentation on TV marked the peak of my internship, as it allowed me to combine all the skills I had acquired throughout the past two months while conveying my affection for the city and people of Kanazawa.

The two-month internship experience was more than rewarding. Working with the broadcast talent of MRO, I challenged myself and learned from them constantly. Apart from improving my Japanese language skills, I not only got to know the broadcast industry and Japanese working environment, but also enjoyed the splendid culture of Hokuriku to full extent. This unforgettable summer proved to be an enlightening life lesson.

