

Enhancing Learning from Internships: Lessons from Solomon  
and the Fortune 500

by

Kent W. Seibert, D.B.A.

Dept. of Business/Economics  
Wheaton College  
Wheaton, IL 60187

[Kent.W.Seibert@Wheaton.edu](mailto:Kent.W.Seibert@Wheaton.edu)

Christian Business Faculty Association national conference  
Buffalo, New York  
October, 2000

## Enhancing Learning from Internships: Lessons from Solomon and the Fortune 500

Dr. Kent W. Seibert (Wheaton College)

As the coordinator of off-campus student internships in my department, it is my hope that undergraduates experience growth in each of the following as a result of their internship experience: wisdom, discipline, understanding, the ability to do what is right and just, knowledge, and guidance. These outcomes are derived from the book of Proverbs, where they are presented in the first chapter as the desired outcomes of those young people who would learn from the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon.

The first five verses of Proverbs chapter two describe *how* these characteristics can be acquired. Interestingly, Solomon explains how to learn in a way that closely parallels the experiential learning cycle developed millennia later by Kolb (1984). This involves a cycle of perceiving (hearing in v. 2), thinking (understanding in v. 2), feeling (crying in v. 3), and behaving (seeking in v. 4). Here and throughout Proverbs Solomon emphasizes that genuine learning requires two things: the fear of the LORD (1:7) and reflection. Prov. 24:32 says, “When I saw, I *reflected* upon it; I looked and received instruction” (emphasis added).

The importance of these two elements is given further support by the apostle Paul in his instruction of Timothy. In 2 Tim. 2:7 Paul writes, “Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.” Likewise in Isaiah: “Consider and gain insight” (41:20; Luke 12:24, 27). Ultimately it is God who provides understanding, but such understanding requires that people “consider” or “reflect” upon what is presented to

them. Dependence upon God *and* reflection, then, are central to learning from experience. The book of Proverbs provides Solomon's insights into life, which he gained by reflecting on experience. In one sense Proverbs is simply a book of Solomon's reflections (recognizing, of course, that God was the ultimate source of Solomon's inspiration and wisdom).

Based on Solomon's wisdom (as well as current experiential learning theory), we know that everyday experiences are a rich source of learning. The proverbs are sayings about regular people in ordinary situations. They are intended to offer practical advice for living successfully, with that advice being derived not from erudite study, but from daily living and reflection. That God uses experience as a primary way to teach us is evident throughout Scripture (e.g. the book of Job (see especially 12:12); Jesus' work with the disciples and use of parables in His teaching).

Scripture clearly appreciates the value of experience to learning. It also recognizes that we do not learn directly from experience, but from the meaning we give to experience; and we give meaning to experience by reflecting. Taken together, *experience* and *reflection* provide an unbeatable source of learning.

Scripture, echoing God's wisdom, has long understood this. Fortune 500 firms have discovered it only more recently. They have long valued the importance of experience, but have been slow to appreciate the role of reflection in learning. But this is beginning to change. This paper will briefly describe recent research on the role of reflection in learning at three leading firms and then consider the implications of this research for student internships. Businesses are beginning to use reflection to leverage learning from employees' experiences. Examining businesses' attempts to enhance

experiential learning should produce insights with direct relevance to internships, where students are expected to learn from experience. Indeed, it is the thesis of this paper that reflection (of two different but complementary forms) is central to enhancing learning from student internships and to developing experiential learning skills.

### Research on Reflection in Business Organizations

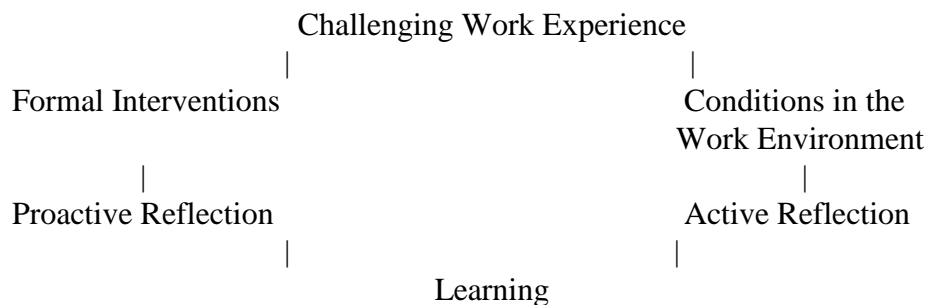
A major study in the late 1980s verified what had long been suspected by businesses: on-the-job experience is the primary source of learning and development for successful managers (McCall, Lombardo & Morrison, 1988). Job assignments, relationships with other people, and hardships (e.g., demotions) were found to be much more important to managers' learning than were formal education and training. (Interestingly, life experiences, other people, and hardships are also primary sources of spiritual growth.) Prior to this research, reflection had been well established as a core element of experiential learning (Dewey, 1910; Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983). But reflection was rarely studied in business organizations because it was assumed to be of questionable relevance in the fast paced, action oriented culture of the marketplace (Mintzberg, 1973).

Recent research conducted independently by a colleague and me (Seibert & Daudelin, 1999) found that reflection is indeed crucial to how managers learn from challenging experiences on the job. We studied over 70 managers at three Fortune 200 firms who were undergoing experiences of the type identified by McCall et al. (1988). For example, one manager was on a project team responsible for introducing a new distribution technology at his company. His firm was a major food producer. The other two firms were a health insurance company and a high technology business. In our

respective studies we were interested in examining the understudied role of reflection in managerial learning.

The basic finding of our research is that two different (but complementary) forms of reflection exist for managers: “proactive” and “active.” *Proactive reflection* is a *planned* activity that contributes to learning *from* a challenging experience. It involves the process of stepping back from an experience to carefully ponder its meaning. In contrast, *active reflection* is an *unplanned* activity that contributes to learning *during* a challenging experience. It is a naturally occurring cognitive dialogue involving moments of inquiry and interpretation, which are intended to produce increased insight into on-going experience.

The relationship between the two forms of reflection is illustrated in the following figure:



In both cases, learning results from a challenging work experience through the operation of reflection. Both forms of reflection at their core are about asking and answering questions, but they differ in how that questioning comes about. In *proactive* reflection, a formal intervention is structured by someone other than the learner to require the learner to reflect. An example is giving the learner a set of questions about her experience to answer in writing. (This is the connotation most people have of the term “reflection.”)

*Active* reflection happens naturally and spontaneously without provocation from anyone else, provided certain types of conditions exist within the work environment surrounding the learner's experience. Active reflection is the experience of having one's mind shift from "neutral" into "drive" as one actively seeks to make sense of something new and unfamiliar. Active reflection is similar to (although not exactly the same as) what Schön (1983) describes as "reflection-in-action."

Our research identified two specific formal interventions (proactively reflecting alone following specific guidelines and proactively reflecting with a coach) that resulted in a statistically significant greater number of learnings than a control group (that experienced no proactive reflection intervention). This implies that providing managers with the tools and the time (only one hour is necessary) to reflect significantly enhances what they learn from an on-the-job challenge.

The research also identified four conditions in the work environment that were associated with active reflection: autonomy; feedback; specific types of interactions with other people; and pressure. A truly challenging experience imbedded in these conditions made it easy for managers to actively engage their experience mentally. Indeed, they could not help but form questions and develop interpretations about what was happening to them while it was happening. This study also provides an in-depth description of just what managers' active reflection entails by elaborating on the cognitive processes of inquiry and interpretation during learning experiences.

This extremely brief discussion of the results of the two studies is expanded on in great detail in the book that presents our research (Seibert & Daudelin, 1999). Although student interns are very different from practicing managers, both face significant

experiential learning challenges. Based on experiential learning theory and the research reported here, it is reasonable to assume that proactive and active reflection should be important to business students' internship experiences.

### Implications for Student Internships

What can be learned about student internships from managers' experiential learning? There are two basic lessons:

1. Helping facilitate students' active *and* proactive reflection should increase what they learn from their particular internship experience. Most internships probably already require some form of proactive reflection. Incorporating active reflection should produce additional benefits.
2. Helping students develop active and proactive reflection skills should make them better experiential learners in general. The ability to learn has emerged recently as a key workplace skill. Helping students to understand that they will need to learn throughout their careers and that reflection will help them do that should be an important outcome of an internship experience.

So exactly how can we help students in these areas? *Some specific activities, tools, and assignments for facilitating reflection during internships and for developing experiential learning skills follow.*

Below is a template of a schedule for a 12 week internship. Please note that the more business-friendly term "debrief" is used to refer to proactive reflection activities (which appear in regular print), while the term "*inbrief*" is used to refer to active

reflection activities (which appear in *italics*). **Prebrief** and **postbrief** meetings are also held with the student (these appear in **bold**).

<u>Reflection Activity/Assignment:</u>	<u>Due the Week ending:</u>
<b>Prebrief Meeting</b> (Syllabus; Debriefing, Journal, <i>Inbriefing &amp; In'ship Notes</i> Handouts; "New Professional" Memo Due)	Before in'ship starts
<i>Handwritten Internship Notes &amp; Typed Journal Update</i>	1st week of in'ship
<i>Handwritten Internship Notes &amp; Typed Journal Update</i>	2nd week of in'ship
[ <i>Subsequent daily In'ship Notes made &amp; saved</i> ]	3rd week
<i>"Inbriefing" O.D. Article Reaction Paper</i>	4th week
Typed Journal Update	5th week
[ No formal assignment ]	6th week
Typed Journal Update	7th week
[ No formal assignment ]	8th week
Typed Journal Update	9th week
"Debriefing" O.D. Article Reaction Paper	10th week
Typed Journal Update & <i>Accumulated Internship notes</i>	11th week
Final Learning Paper	12th week
<b>Postbrief Meeting</b> (including Learning Style Inventory)	After in'ship done

In the Prebrief meeting, students are prepared for their internship by reviewing its objectives and their expectations for the internship. Students also bring to the meeting their written reaction to selected chapters from the book, *The New Professional: Everything you Need to Know for a Great First Year on the Job* (Holton, 1991).

Although the book is written for the new college graduate, its advice about how to conduct oneself in a professional work environment is equally applicable to undergraduate interns. The book also talks about having realistic expectations about one's job duties when one is new to the workplace. Students summarize which of Holton's ideas they believe will help them adjust to their internship experience.

Debriefing and Inbriefing are also explained to students in the Prebrief meeting. To facilitate this, students receive a Debriefing Handout and an Inbriefing Handout (see Appendix A and B). Debriefing -- having students periodically step out of their internship to contemplate its meaning -- is primarily accomplished by having students regularly reflect by writing in a journal. Inbriefing -- helping students become more conscious of the active cognition they will naturally experience in the midst of their internship -- is supported primarily by having students learn what inbriefing is and by having them keep internship notes when it happens.

Students are required to submit handwritten internship notes (see Appendix B) at the end of the first two weeks of their internship. Thereafter they continue to make the notes but do not need to hand them in until near the end of the internship. The notes are important, but providing too much structure for inbriefing is as detrimental to this form of reflection as is providing no structure at all. Students are sent a copy of the Inbriefing Handout (Appendix B) in the eighth week as a reminder that inbriefing is an on-going activity. In the fourth week they are also required to read and respond briefly in writing to an excerpt from an *Organizational Dynamics* article (Seibert, 1999). The article, which discusses inbriefing tools, reinforces the importance of this type of reflection to experiential learning.

As indicated earlier, regularly submitted typed journal updates facilitate students' debriefing (Appendix A). During the tenth week of their internship students are required to read and respond briefly in writing to a different *Organizational Dynamics* article (Daudelin, 1996). This article discusses the role of debriefing in learning from experience. It helps solidify students' appreciation of the value of the journals they have been writing, and it helps prepare them for the final paper and the postbrief meeting which are yet to come. This article (as does the previous one) presents strong yet readily accessible research evidence of the importance of reflection to experiential learning.

The final learning paper provides the opportunity for students to proactively reflect (debrief) on their *entire* internship experience and consolidate what they have learned from it. This requires reading all previous journal updates and considering what the internship has meant for the student academically, vocationally, spiritually, and personally. Particular attention is given to five key areas: (1) What specific job skills has the intern acquired? (2) What experiential learning skills have been acquired? (3) What has the student learned about the professional work environment (and how it differs from school)? (4) How has the intern's self-awareness of his learning style, strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes increased? and (5) How has the student applied Christian values in the workplace? Students complete the Kolb (1976) learning style inventory before writing the paper and reflect in the paper on how their style influenced their learning in the internship.

The postbrief meeting, where I meet one-on-one with the student for about 15 minutes, ties up any loose academic ends and enables a final debriefing. Research suggests that discussing two simple questions at the conclusion of an on-the-job

experience increases the learning from that experience (Seibert & Daudelin, 1999).

Those questions are: What are the two or three most significant things you learned from this experience *and* how can you use/apply those lessons in the future? These questions are discussed with students as is their learning style (Kolb, 1976). Helping students realize that their internship was just the first of many experiential learning experiences to come is an important objective of the postbrief meeting. This meeting also allows me to do a quality control check on the internship site by asking interns if they would recommend the experience to other students.

### Conclusion

The intent of the activities, tools, and assignments described above is to provide structure and support to enhance learning from internships without over-bureaucratizing the process. It is important to allow for flexibility in the use of the tools and to encourage students to tailor them to their own styles and needs. It is better that a student adapt and even abridge an activity than not do it at all. Forcing strict adherence to all requirements can produce compliance but it will not result in commitment to the experiential learning tools.

My hope is that students will find the tools useful and perhaps even enjoyable, but mostly that they will come to appreciate their relevance to enhancing real-world learning. I want them to learn from their specific internship experience, but I also want them to *learn how to learn* from experience in general. This is one of the most valuable marketplace (and life) skills they will ever acquire.

Recent research clearly demonstrates that two different but complementary forms of reflection -- active and proactive -- are central to managers' on-the-job learning. This

paper has suggested the relevance of these findings to enhancing students' learning from internships. So what is something King Solomon and the Fortune 500 (at least some of its more progressive members) share in common? They both recognize the pivotal role of reflection in learning from experience. We would do well to recognize this also.

## REFERENCES

- Daudelin, M.W. 1996. Learning from experience through reflection. *Organizational Dynamics*, 24(3): 36-48.
- Dewey, J. 1910. *How we Think*. Boston: D.C. Heath and Co.
- Holton, E. 1991. *The New Professional: Everything you Need to Know for a Great First Year on the Job*. Princeton, NJ: Peterson's Guides.
- Kolb, D.A. 1976. *Learning Style Inventory: Technical Manual*. Boston: McBer.
- Kolb, D.A. 1984. *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- McCall, M.W., Lombardo, M.M. & Morrison, A.M. 1988. *The Lessons of Experience*. New York: Lexington Books.
- Mintzberg, H. 1973. *The Nature of Managerial Work*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Schön, D.A. 1983. *The Reflective Practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.
- Seibert, K.W. 1999. Reflection-in-action: Tools for cultivating on-the-job learning conditions. *Organizational Dynamics*, 27(3): 54-65.
- Seibert, K.W. & Daudelin, M.W. 1999. *The Role of Reflection in Managerial Learning: Theory, Research and Practice*. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.

## APPENDIX A

### DEBRIEFING HANDOUT

#### Introduction:

Research demonstrates that managers who engage in a type of reflection called *debriefing* during a challenging on-the-job experience learn more from that experience than managers who don't reflect. The ability to learn from experience is a key marketplace skill today.

#### Debriefing defined:

Debriefing is a planned activity that involves having you periodically step out of your internship experience to carefully consider its meaning.

#### Debriefing Tools:

The primary tool for debriefing is a *journal*. Most people are disinclined to keep a journal on their own; however, journal writing is one of the most powerful tools for surfacing learning from work experiences. Thus I will be asking you to send me a 2-page typed journal update periodically during your internship. (See the Internship Schedule for specific due dates.)

The raw material for your journal is your recent experiences on the job. A journal is *not* an hour by hour, event by event record of your week. Rather it is a summary and reflection upon *significant* events and issues. You should review the questions and reactions you recorded in your Internship Notes (see Sample) when writing a journal update.

The best journaling is when you write about what *you* feel a need to express. In addition, I would like you to at least consider writing about each of the following issues whenever doing a journal update:

*Emotional* (have you felt strong positive, negative, or conflicting emotions?); *Social* (have you had significant interactions with your boss, co-workers, customers, etc.?); *Spiritual* (have you experienced ethical or spiritual conflicts; opportunities to share your faith; etc.?); *Technical* (what specific job skills are you developing?); *Academic* (how is what you're experiencing consistent/inconsistent with what you've learned in your coursework?); and *Personal* (what are you learning about your own strengths, limitations, interests, dislikes, etc.?).

Every journal update should conclude with a short "*learning log*." The log is used to capture general insights or lessons from your journal entry, along with the implications of those insights for future action. Simply conclude your update with a section labeled: Insight and corresponding Implication for future action.

For example: Insight and Implication - "I didn't remember everyone's name after the staff meeting" (Insight). "I need to take notes on things like that" (Implication). Although this is a simple lesson to learn, it's a very powerful and important one for the person who has trouble remembering names.

You will also engage in other debriefing activities during your internship (write a reaction to a "Debriefing" article, write a Final Paper, and meet with me for a Postbrief after your internship). These activities are explained in the Internship Syllabus.

JOURNAL UPDATE (for Debriefing)

Your Name:

Update #:

Date:

Significant Events:

Issues:

Emotional –

Social –

Spiritual –

Technical –

Academic –

Personal –

Learning Log:

Insight-

Implication-

NOTE: Your Journal Entry may be written in a narrative style rather than following this format as long as you cover all the items listed here. Either way each entry should be about 2 pages.

## APPENDIX B

### INBRIEFING HANDOUT

#### Introduction:

Research suggests that managers who actively reflect, or *inbrief*, while they are *in the midst* of a challenging on-the-job experience are more likely to learn than managers who don't reflect while doing their work.

#### Inbriefing defined:

Inbriefing involves those times during your internship when your mind is turned on and actively engaged in trying to figure out what is happening. This occurs spontaneously and in real-time as you go about the work of your internship.

#### Inbriefing Tools:

Although inbriefing usually happens spontaneously, there are tools to help you be more deliberate about how you do it. Four tools are:

1. *Double-thinking* - This involves thinking about your own thinking. Try to notice when your mind is actively engaged during your internship in comparison to when it's not. This is the kind of mental activity that happens, for example, when you are driving somewhere you've never been before (vs. driving a familiar route home). Pay particular attention to the questions and reactions your mind is forming (see below).

2. *Questioning* - Being curious and asking questions is a core aspect of inbriefing. Many questions will occur to you naturally during your internship (especially at the beginning). Make yourself consciously aware of what you're finding puzzling and the questions it's evoking. Jot these questions down.

3. *Reactions* - Reacting to experiences in your internship is another core aspect of inbriefing. Not only will your mind spontaneously pose questions, it will naturally form reactions as well (especially as you seek answers to your questions). There is value in double-thinking about your reactions, i.e., thinking about the reactions you're having and even informally jotting down significant reactions.

Reactions tend to be of five kinds: Observations (reacting to something by thinking "Um, that's interesting"), Confusion (being puzzled by something, an "I don't get it" reaction), Educated guesses (reacting with "I think I get it" and forming a tentative explanation), Insights ("I get it"), and Feelings ("I love/dislike it").

4. *Internship Notes* - This specific tool is designed to give you a convenient way to capture your Questions and Reactions. It can also function as a daily planner for your internship responsibilities. You are required to keep internship notes over the course of your internship (see the Internship Schedule for when I will want to see these). These notes will also help you write your Journal Updates. A suggested format for Internship Notes is provided below.

Finally, you will also write a reaction to an "Inbriefing" article. This is intended to reinforce your own inbriefing. It is explained in the Internship Syllabus.

INTERNSHIP NOTES (for capturing Inbriefing)

---

Meetings/Assignments:

Questions:

Reactions:

Mon.  
/

---

Tues.  
/

---

Wed.  
/

---

Thurs.  
/

---

Fri.  
/

## APPENDIX C

INTERNSHIP SYLLABUS  
Bus/Econ 496  
Fall 2000

Supervisor: Kent Seibert  
Phone: 630/752-5315  
Fax: 630/752-7037  
Kent.W.Seibert@Wheaton.edu

### INTERNSHIP OBJECTIVES

I hope you will gain the following from being an intern this semester:

- Wisdom, discipline, understanding, the ability to do what is right and just, knowledge, and guidance (Prov. 1:2-5).
- Specific job skills in the area of your internship.
- Experiential learning skills (i.e. skills for how to learn from experience).
- Understanding of the behavior and attitudes that are appropriate in a professional work environment.
- Increased self-awareness of your strengths, weaknesses, likes, dislikes, and learning style as they relate to the marketplace.
- Exposure to the daily realities of applying your Christian values to the workplace.

### INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS

#### I. New Professional Memo

To help prepare you for your internship you need to read Chapters 1, 2 & 4 of Ed Holton's book, *The New Professional*. The chapters are on Reserve in the library and in the Bus/Econ office. I would like you to write a 1-2 page memo summarizing which of Holton's ideas you believe will help you adjust to your internship experience. We will discuss your reaction to Holton's ideas in the Prebrief meeting.

#### II. Internship Notes

In order to facilitate your learning during your internship you need to keep on-going notes of questions and reactions to your experiences. These may be informal and handwritten, but I prefer that they follow the format of the "Internship Notes" handout. This will be explained in the Prebrief meeting you have with me before your internship begins (as well as in the "Inbriefing" handout you will receive then).

#### III. Journal Updates

In order to consolidate your learning you need to regularly step away from the internship to consider what is happening to you. This is done by typing a 2 page journal update about every other week. The content of these updates is explained in the "Debriefing" handout you will receive in the Prebrief meeting.

#### IV. “Inbriefing” O.D. Article Reaction Paper

About a month into your internship experience you need to read an excerpt from an article in *Organizational Dynamics* (by Seibert) entitled “Inbriefing: Tools for Cultivating On-the-Job Learning Conditions.” Please write a 1-2 page memo summarizing how Seibert’s notion of “reflection-in-action” (which is also called inbriefing) is relevant to helping you learn during your internship.

#### V. “Debriefing” O.D. Article Reaction Paper

Toward the end of your internship you will read an excerpt from the article in *Organizational Dynamics* (by Daudelin) entitled “Debriefing: Learning from Experience through Reflection.” I would like you to write a 1-2 page memo summarizing how the reflection Daudelin discusses (which is also referred to as debriefing) is relevant to helping you learn from your internship.

#### VI. Final Learning Paper

The final written requirement of the internship is a paper that consolidates your learning. You may write either an Issues Paper (which meaningfully evaluates your internship on a personal level) or a Research Paper (which reports on research or other technical activities you performed in your internship). Normally 5-7 pages is an adequate length. My preference is that you write an Issues Paper. Please contact me if you prefer to do a Research paper. Regardless which type of paper you choose to write, you need to complete the Kolb Learning Style Inventory and reflect in your paper on how your style influenced your learning in your internship.

The purpose of an *Issues Paper* is to reflect on your entire internship experience and consolidate what you have learned from it. To do this you should read all the journal updates you wrote and consider what the internship has meant for you academically, vocationally, spiritually, and personally. Please incorporate answers to these questions:

1. What specific job skills did you acquire?
2. What experiential learning skills did you acquire?
3. What did you learn about how professional work environments function?
4. How have you increased your awareness of your learning style, strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes?
5. Do you want to work in this field/type of work environment in the future?
6. How were (or weren’t) you able to integrate your Christian faith into your work?

Feel free to comment on any other issues that you feel had a significant impact on you during your internship.

#### VII. Postbrief Meeting

After your final learning paper has been submitted, we need to meet for about 15 minutes to tie up any loose ends and have a final debriefing discussion about your internship.

## INTERNSHIP SCHEDULE

<u>Reflection Activity/Assignment:</u>	<u>Due the Week ending:</u>
Prebrief Meeting (Syllabus; Debriefing, Journal, <i>Inbriefing &amp; Internship Notes</i> Handouts; “New Professional” Memo <b>DUE</b> )	Before in’ship starts
<i>Handwritten Internship Notes &amp; Typed Journal Update</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> week of in’ship
<i>Handwritten Internship Notes &amp; Typed Journal Update</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of in’ship
[ <i>Subsequent daily Internship Notes made &amp; saved</i> ]	3 <sup>rd</sup> week
“ <i>Inbriefing</i> ” O.D. Article Reaction Paper	4 <sup>th</sup> week
Typed Journal Update	5 <sup>th</sup> week
[ No formal assignment ]	6 <sup>th</sup> week
Typed Journal Update	7 <sup>th</sup> week
[ No formal assignment ]	8 <sup>th</sup> week
Typed Journal Update	9 <sup>th</sup> week
“Debriefing” O.D. Article Reaction Paper	10 <sup>th</sup> week
Typed Journal Update & <i>Accumulated Internship Notes</i>	11 <sup>th</sup> week
Final Learning Paper	12 <sup>th</sup> week
Postbrief Meeting (including Learning Style Inventory)	After in’ship finished

**NOTE:** Please leave all written assignments in my mailbox, fax them to me at 630/752-7037, or e-mail them (Kent.W.Seibert@Wheaton.edu). *It is your responsibility to make sure I receive all assignments on a timely basis.* You cannot receive academic credit for your internship until all the requirements have been met.

If you have any questions or concerns during your internship, please do not hesitate to contact me.

## ABSTRACT

Enhancing Learning from Internships: Lessons from Solomon  
and the Fortune 500

by  
Kent W. Seibert, D.B.A.  
Wheaton College

According to King Solomon genuine learning requires two things: the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:17) and reflecting on experience (Provs. 24:32). This paper presents recent research on the role of reflection in managerial learning at three leading companies, and then considers the implications of this for student internships. Two different but complementary forms of reflection (debriefing and inbriefing) are described. They are argued to be central to enhancing learning from internships and to developing basic experiential learning skills (which are becoming increasingly crucial in the workplace and in life). Specific activities, tools, and assignments for promoting reflection during internships are presented. Solomon and some of the more progressive members of the Fortune 500 recognize the pivotal role of reflection in learning from experience. Business faculty would do well to recognize this too.