

STADT | LAND
FIRMA/INSTITUTION
STUDIENRICHTUNG
DAUER

Stockholm | Sweden
Futurniture
Communication Design
Eight Months

Goal before

Get as much technical knowledge from Andreas about layout, typography and print. Beside that I agreed with Futurniture before the internship that I will have the option to test as many different departments as possible. Before taking the internship we agreed on more digital design, video production and strategy.

The Introduction

I never felt that quick comfortable and welcome at a working place before. Right before I started my internship at Futurniture we were signing a contract on what my and their expectations are for the upcoming period. I admire and am very grateful for the time my Mentor Andreas and Fredrik our Creative Art Director took to enable me a good start. We had long talks to make sure that both parties will benefit, although it took some time in the beginning, it was much easier to get into real projects, have responsibility and learn a lot. In the contract we signed they wrote that they will make sure, that I am not just wasting my time on unnecessary tasks but much more would get a practical view on the branch and the clients they are working with – they fulfilled that perfectly.

My tasks and par tone:

Because we took time for each other's need I started with some projects within typography, layout and print. My mentor Prof. Andres Slättner is specialist, when it comes to typography! After 25 years of experience and even being a teacher at Beckmans College of Design, he was both very factual advanced and pedagogical. As usually I had many questions and things I wanted to become better in, he took a lot of time and patience to explain things, so that I understood. I don't think that I am particular good in typography, but what is tempting about that is the fact that you have to become better with details. Before I started to work at Futurniture I made an agenda of things I wanted to improve, here some thoughts:

- Become better in details, to often I just work on the wide angle without focusing on the finishing touch. I am impatient but highly motivated, which is an advantage to just get things started but part of my job is also to take a lot of critic or corrections from clients and redo things detailed good before you deliver.
- Work on my creative confidence. I have good thoughts, am childlike curiosity about every-thing, like to play and use alternative models to work creatively. But wild ideas are not easy, you have to be confident to share them.
- Collaborate, because your creative abilities will be always limited if you stay alone on your desk. I believe that it needs a very diverse group of people to get the best creative result. That was the reason why I attended beside the normal workflow at Futurniture a plenty of Events at Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship, OpenLAB, Hyper Island, Impact Hub, TEDxStock-holm, SUP46, Index, Konstfak, KTH, Kaospiloten, Epicenter or Kungliga Konsthögskolan. I am grateful for the freedom and interest Futurniture gave me – some cool projects I could even share with the staff on a Monday meeting. Here people know how important inspiration and an open door is regarding creativity. Even some friends were coming over and we had some workshops – just fantastic that people are open here for changes, fresh wind and innovation.

- Try just everything! During my first internship I gave myself the task to focus just on the boxes which I put on the table. That was book design, image editing and illustration. But now I allowed myself to go bananas and try whatever crosses my way. By doing so I was forcing myself to work divergent and convergent. Sometimes it is good to follow the red line and stay in a box, but I feel more comfortable and am better at discovering all the other options.

- The importance of the team. I wasn't really pleased with a good teamwork in my first internship, but that was one of the reasons why I came to Sweden. In Germany we have a working system that is strictly hierarchical; to ensure effectiveness, control and structure. But I question if that is the best way to work creative. First I found out, you have to feel accepted and welcome at work to dare being creative and second it is better to create in a team to get the most creative and innovative solutions.

The first weeks were just passed by in flight. I got fantastic technical equipment and was sitting next to my mentor who helped me a lot to just get into all responsibilities and networks. My first projects were mainly for IKEA and I did different kind of ads, so during this period I was focusing on typography, layout, graphic design and fine arts. Later on I was working for a project called Elektrisk Loppis, which is an event created as an electrical flea market. Besides just becoming better in my technical skills I see myself in responsibility as a designer to create something that is social, sustainable and useful. So I was really pleased to work with projects as Elektrisk Loppis. During the event in Stockholm we collected 1.8 tons of old batteries and electronic waste and thousands of old technical devices changed owner. The next project I was working on was for the Modern Museum. They were having an exhibition about the last 100 years of living in Stockholm. How did a home look like hundred years ago and how did the living costs change during the last years and much more. I was working on the layout and space design for the upcoming event. Mostly I was working with Indesign and Illustrator and made experiences with different printing processes.

Another fun job was to brand a football club, called FUTUball. So after branding I was creating a Logo, which enables new skills within Illustrator.

One of my favorite projects was Hållbara ihop in cooperation with IKEA, WWF and municipal energy and climate advisor, which motivated people to get committed with recycling. This could be an old IKEA furniture you turn to new life, or minimizing food waste, use electricity smarter, produce locally and maybe plant some own seeds or be more frugal with water. I even became a hand model for their campaign and could follow to the shootings and have a look behind the production of this project.

But one of the best days was when my mentor Andreas and some colleagues went with me on an excursion to Norrbacka Tryckeri, which is an old printing house where hand craft and old traditional printing processes are applied. You see, my mentor and colleagues made an effort to educate me and make this internship a fantastic time!

After 4 months my internship was about to end, but I could absolutely not imagine to leave! So I decided to stay longer and signed a contract for 8 months instead.

Part two- let's go bananas!

As I already mentioned in the beginning, in this internship I was allowing myself to discover and lose myself by trying everything. So after a wonderful period of focusing on typography, layout and print, I opened the angle again and jumped in different departments at Futurniture. Jakob your CEO said once that he sees the company as some liquid substance that is curious and constantly changing. That was the perfect habitat for me! Futurniture was born 23 years ago and had a great history within Swedish furniture design, interior design and builded during the last years a strong relation to IKEA. But since that Futurniture was jumping in many different projects and is now to my opinion strong in digital design and event- / or exhibition design.

During my second half Futurniture was managing the new shop opening of IKEA in Umeå and I was asked to create a website that documents that event. It was a fantastic chance to work a little more with interface design. As I was wishing in the beginning, I wanted to work more with video production. Luckily Futurniture moved to a new office

and I could document the process but beside that I also got a great client I could produce an advertising video for. HOT COD needed to present its new product and went to a school in Karlstad and I was responsible for storyboard, filming, sound design, cut and the social media of this project. Fascinated by animation and a very simple storytelling I learned to use After Effects and helped at projects for IKEA that were published on their Instagram account.

Riksbyggen is a local housing associations that hired Futurniture for its social media and I helped shooting and editing for their Instagram account too.

Another project I was allow to help was IKEA TODAY, a user- centered platform where IKEA publishes the production behind the scenes – from prototyping, sketching or testing new products. For this new website I supported with updating content.

Igor Sport is a very successful local shop in Stockholm that buys old collection from producers and sell them for a better price in their shop. They now tried to establish a new online shop and I was asked to have a look on usability, social media, branding and user experience.

But going back now to my agenda of things I wanted to improve I felt that I did not have chance to work on all points – which is normal in an advertising agency to my mind. Be-cause everything is so project-related, but lucky me, Futurniture was giving me a lot of freedom to discover and test at other places. But I would have wished to have more teamwork and to stay longer in projects.

Just to mention some of the greatest networks I was having workshops and events with;

- Event at Dome of visions (digital Storytelling with KTH, SU, Karolinska)
- Conference 2 days on creative education: Pedagogies of Space, Index, Open Form, Museum of Modern Art (Warsaw), Pratt Institute (New York), Columbia University (New York), TU Delft, KKH, Konstfack, Art Academy (Aarhus) and VCU Qatar (about Design, Arcitecture and social changes)
- Course with concluded certification at Stockholm School of Entrepreneurship within Human-centered Design (corporation with IDEO and +Acument)
- Event Architecture of Segregation (Kungliga Konst Högskolan)
- Future Breakfast with Hyper Island (3 times)
- Workshop Hyper Island (Black Lunchbox, in cooperation with Tempo Filmfestival) - Workshop OpenLab (How might we find solution for bulky waste in a town where cars will be reduced?)
- Food Innovation and Design Meet-up at OpenLab (Reduce food waist and how to use the technology smart.)
- SUP46 FemTech (Startup scene and women in tech)
- MASH UP: Sustainable Food at ImpactHUB
- Power of Storytelling at Epicenter Stockholm (Jennifer Aaker, from Stanford University) - TEDxStockholmSalon (We can reprogram life. And, what amazing creations can be created through life coding?)
- Visiting Kaospiloten in Denmark
- Starting with some coding (Processing, Code Academy, Generative Art)

Conclusion

It was fantastic, without any exceptions! Before I started my Internship at Futurniture, I had quite a lot of respect because I knew they were pretty good. To not look like a bloody beginner on the Swedish labour market I had another internship before in Stockholm to get familiar with the language, culture and workflow. Which was a good experience as well, but not necessary, because everyone in the company welcomed me kindly and with greatest respect. Being a Futurniture was so far the best working experience, finally it was tolerated to be myself, find my own way of expressing the million ideas in my head and to be appreciated and welcome with that. Creativity needs freedom o develop and in sense of innovation no idea is to wild. I am thankful that I could find a balance between working with big clients as IKEA but was also allowed to educate myself and discover the wide possibilities of design. A special thanks goes to Prof. Andreas Slättner that never got tired of the millions of questions and which

shared his extensive knowledge. Ok, below the line;

I could develop a variety of skills, all matched the contracted I signed beforehand. My personal masterplan was including a few more, such as 3D modeling, sound design, interaction design with programming and generative art. But it is always good to have some wishes left. Now after this intensive time at Futurniture I will be student for my last time and after that term I feel perfectly ready for the labour market – now I know that there is nothing to be afraid of. And now I am truly sad to leave.

