

Mattipedia E4 transcript

Lindroos Samuel

Hello and welcome to the 4th episode of Mattipedia and my name is Samuel Lindroos and I'm a university student from Xamk from Kotka campus and I'm currently studying Construction Technology and Engineering field. And today the topic is *Work in Finland* and our guest here is Mariia Ryndina and how about Mariia, you start by introducing yourself for the audience?

Ryndina Mariia

Yes, hello everyone. My name is Mariia Ryndina and I'm studying also here at Xamk, but I'm at the Kouvola campus. I'm studying Digital International Business and I'm already on my third year, so I have been living in Finland for three years, more or less. And I feel like I have quite some tricks and tips to give to the new coming students, or if you have any questions about the working life in Finland. Yeah, so, hello, everyone. Hello, Samuel.

Lindroos Samuel

OK. Thank you. So, how did you end up to study or work in Finland? What were the, like, the decisions you made or what made you come here in Finland to study or work?

Ryndina Mariia

Yes. So, I always knew I wanted to study abroad. I've been living in Russia my whole life. But my parents from very early on started to travel to Finland and to be honest, I fell in love with the country. So from early on I knew that I wanted to come to Finland to proceed with my education and I actually visited Xamk before my studies here began. And my sister also graduated from Xamk and I've always been kind of very interested and very close to the Finnish educational system and but yeah, I really found useful the programs that are offered at Xamk University, the Digital International Business and I decide to apply here. It was my priority university, I got in and now I'm already very close to finishing my studies. So, it's been quite a journey for me at Xamk, but I really, really enjoyed it. I'm also working. I'm having my internships and stuff like that that goes alongside with the studies, with the bachelor studies in Finland. Umm, so yeah, it's my kind of journey throughout the education system.

Lindroos Samuel

OK, So what are, like, the things that you find the most interesting in your field of study?

Ryndina Mariia

It's most likely gonna be the networking opportunities and all the people that I've met along the way of my studies here. Umm, probably the most interesting experience that I got, it's uh, it was my exchange semester that they did. It was all thanks to Xamk and the **all the guidance** that I got. I went to Spain for my semester and it was like the best networking opportunity that I got. It was introduced for the business students. Umm but yeah, I feel like there are many interesting opportunities that were open for me along the way throughout the years. Like, for example, recently I participated in the Suunta festival as the volunteer. We had the group of students that went to Hamina for like a day trip and it was actually very exciting and interesting. And I really, really like taking those kinds of opportunities that are being given to students that I see just like in our newsletters or at the Lux website. So probably meeting the people and networking and those kind of

like event opportunities that give those valuable opportunities are what is the most valuable for me during my studies and what I, like, remember the most.

Lindroos Samuel

So... Where did you work? What kind of, was the fun place or and what we are like your main job in that work. What did you do?

Ryndina Mariia

Well, I think all the students can relate. And as we all have to complete our internship trainings, they were my main kind of work throughout the years. I'm, I've already completed one internship training and now on my second one. Both internship trainings I found in Finland. It was very important for me that I get this kind of glimpse and like a portal to the Finnish working life. So, I was straight away searching for internships that are open for me in Finland and currently I'm completing my second internship. It's a very interesting project for me and I'm doing it for Finnish company that's located to Lahti and it's like in security sector and I'm doing a market research for them and it's a very, very interesting project that I took on as it's straight out of my like business field of study with all the like fun market penetration things. But it's actually something I value a lot that I'm getting to get this kind of working experience when I'm still a student. So, this is my work right now. I decided throughout my studies that I will focus on my studies, so I'm not working full-time. I'm just completing my internship so I can make better, have my study life balance. But the internship that I completed, they helped me a lot and I would consider them to be my jobs as I'm putting a lot of effort into them and they are straight out of there Finnish working life kinda.

Lindroos Samuel

What was the most fun thing during your internship? What were they like? The things that kind of stuck with you or where the most fun thing in your internship?

Ryndina Mariia

Yeah, I here would like to say about my first internship. I think maybe students that are studying at our Kouvola campus and know the place it's called Nuorten Kouvola and it this is the place where I got my first internship and this happened all very in a fun way. I just wrote an e-mail because I didn't know previously what the company was. I just wrote an e-mail and I was like, hi, I'm a student here at Xamk and I'm currently looking for my internship and the woman that I reached out to she later on became my supervisor and my boss as I may say she was very sweet and nice and she took me to be an intern at the Nuorten Kouvola and this is basically a Youth Services. So I got to actually work a lot with the teenagers and with kids and I was organizing a lot of events for that kind of like younger generation. And that was actually a very fun because when I was taking notes to my internship, I would never think that it's gonna, like, mean something like that. But again, I met a lot of great people. They also had some international volunteers that were coming to the company and I'm still keeping in touch with them.

I'm still keeping in touch with my supervisor, with my coworkers, it was a great working experience. I think it was, like, my first kind of glimpse into Finnish working life as it was very important for me, it was my very first job ever. But this whole experience that I got from my first internship I just probably cannot say a single bad thing about it. It was so well-organized there. Now, I would never imagine something like this for my first very, very first working experience. But probably yeah, like the all the help, all the guidance that I got on my first internships were incredibly valuable for me as

a student and as a person that in the future wants to be working in Finland. That was a very, very important and valuable experience for me to get that kind of like first apprenticeship.

Lindroos Samuel

So Maria, how did you find your internship contract?

Ryndina Mariia

I feel like as an international student, you always face more challenges in finding the internship training and there are some barriers. For example, the language barrier as I have been studying Finnish, but it's not on the professional level yet. What I have done is I visited websites, I just LinkedIn or Monster jobs at Finland and I started to look for companies. I started not from the vacancies but from companies and when I found like a suitable company that I was interested in like the operations and the study of the like of the field of that company it was fitting me, I just contacted them. There is always on the website a button "contact" and I just sent, like, a simple request like "Hello. My name is Maria, I'm an international student". I quickly, briefly wrote about my background, my studying background and then I just asked "I'm currently looking for an internship training so is that possible to have that at your company?" and it was rather easy to find my first internship training but I think I got lucky. I did it that exactly same manner I just wrote emails to the companies that I consider to be suitable for me.

But for my second internship training I was a bit struggling. I was sending a lot of emails, like maybe for a month or two and I still couldn't find like an internship. But then again I got lucky. The company that I'm doing my internship, second internship for right now they value me and they were very open to that possibility. I think it works the best with probably small to medium-sized companies not probably like Valio or Fazer, like, I don't think that they would really consider your application if it's not within the vacancy, but if there are some companies that you are actually really interested in, that you are following, the Finnish companies or any other, just write an e-mail and explain your situation, be very open and just write very clearly and briefly by reaching out to them and say why are you interested in the company. I noticed that it worked for me as I'm like now, 2 internships in. So I think it's a very working strategy if you really would like to find something because I noticed that on the website such as LinkedIn there is a very high competition for those kind of vacancies for internships, which can be very discouraging if you're an international student but just reach out and be hopeful. And I've, I am really certain that you will find the internship place suitable for you if you do it in that manner, maybe alongside with applying to some real vacancies.

Lindroos Samuel

So yeah, I would imagine you will you did come along with your colleagues so where your colleagues and he where they're nice persons or how did they? Uh, like, did you come along with your colleagues?

Ryndina Mariia

Yes, for sure.. it was. I had great colleagues. They were very, very helpful throughout my first internship and second one as well and the 2nd internship that I'm doing right now, it's mostly remote internship. So, I'm not that much in touch with my colleagues and the people who are as well working in the company. But I know if I need like some help or I need to reach out, I can at any time write an e-mail and I will get the response. I can schedule a meeting and things like that. I think in this, in this particular case is the Finnish people are very, very helpful. For like the starting employees or like the students, because they understand that we need a tiny bit more guidance

than already people have experience in the industry. But yeah, I get very along with my colleagues. I feel like they really offered me valuable opportunities for growth as a professional in the industry and that was very, it was very, very valuable for me to get to know personally my employees and my first internship. My supervisor, she took me to the offices of my colleagues and she was like, hi, this is Mariia and this is, for example, our designer so he's doing that and that. And by that I also got to know other people and their what they're doing their roles within the company. So, I think it's very important to be closer to your colleagues because so many times I had to ask for some help and while doing my projects. And they were the people who helped me. So probably my tip would be to always try to keep in touch with your colleagues and, like, go to places where you can meet and maybe help, use some help from them when you really need it because they understand then they're actually will help you a lot.

Lindroos Samuel

OK. So the last question I have is what do you think of the Finnish work culture? Does it differ from where you're from or are they pretty much similar?

Ryndina Mariia

Yeah, I think that work culture in Finland is very particular and not in a bad way. For sure it's it differs a lot from Russian work culture. I can see it from my parents' work and from the work that my friends had and for the small projects I was doing when I was still living in Russia. Finland work culture seems much more personal to me. I really like that I can just go and hang out with my colleagues. When I was at my first internship, we had kind of like the kitchen where everyone would gather during their break and had, like, a coffee and something like that. So, I feel, like, it's more personal, which is very important for me. I really like to see how actually the colleagues are getting well with each other.

There is a clear work-life balance in Finnish work culture. I really, really value that too because I was able to clearly differentiate between my studies and my work. I had a very clear schedule and I knew that unless it's my working hours, I will not be contacted. I don't have any kind of liabilities or like that "Ohh, I'd have to answer to the team e-mail that I got written like at 1:00 AM". There is nothing like that. People really know that work life balance. It's very important.

And that was also a great kind of like differentiation for me and also another thing that I noticed that in Finland the incentives are being very well rewarded and if you're working at some company and you are having some idea or some, I don't know, something clear, you just came up with something how to maybe optimize some operation or you have like a new product idea you can so easily tell that to your supervisor, to your boss, to the people who you think can help you with that. And this idea will be taken forward because their incentives that you might be having a very incentivized and like you are being encouraged to actually be helping to the company. So, I also really enjoyed that type of side because during my internship I organized an event that I fully came up with myself, so that was something else eye-opening. I just had an idea and the next thing I know is that I'm planning an event, ready to go, like, in two weeks and... Yeah, so there are definitely differences between Finnish work culture and probably foreign work cultures. I've also been living in Spain for half a year. So, I know that it's also different from the Spanish work culture, but I feel like it's very well-balanced and you can always communicate with your supervisors or bosses if you have some doubts or anything about your work. So, I just think that you need maybe tiny bit more time

adjusting from some foreign work culture if you've been having more experience working abroad. But it's definitely worth it and I'm really looking forward to continuing my work life in Finland.

Lindroos Samuel

OK, Maria, thank you for the interview.

Ryndina Mariia

Thank you very much Samuel. It was great for you to have me here and I really hope my tips helped someone. But yeah, good luck in your work life, everyone, and I really hope to hear about your achievements.