I have been taking classes towards earning my bachelors in Operations Management for three years now. And during this time I have learned a great deal about project management and leadership. When I first started classes I wasn’t sure how these classes were going to help my career, but I was hoping to figure it out as I went.

As it turns out these classes have impacted my career in a big way. Over the last year my current employer has realized the importance for these types of skills and has pushed to create project management roles in our organization. In the past the company relied on engineers to manage projects. This worked out fairly well because it was a technical field and most of the projects involved technical people. If something on a project changed it was easy to justify change orders, or adjust the schedule as needed.

Times have changed and now many of the projects we work on are run by investors. These people have little to no technical skills and don’t care about anything but the completion date and the budget. When something changes it’s extremely difficult to get them to understand why the changes are necessary. This is where project management (operations management) becomes a necessity.

I took my internship at my current employer. This meant that I was familiar with how day to day operations went on. I thought that I had a pretty good handle on how we did what we do. It turns out that that wasn’t completely true. This internship opened some doors that I didn’t even realized existed. I got the chance to see more than just the design aspects of the project.

The main goal of my internship was to complete and control a project management plan for a new project that we received. Initially I was nervous about completing this task. I hadn’t had much experience with project management besides the classes I have taken. Once I started digging into the
process I realized that I not only could handle the tasks, but I could also add to these tasks to make them better. A lot of the information that I was gathering and defining was covered in the classes I had taken.

My confidence grew rather quickly when I realized that I could contribute to these processes and better our projects. After I created the project management plan I held a meeting to go over what I created with the project team. After everyone reviewed the document I received a great deal of positive feedback. Everyone on the team, liked the completeness of the document, and the direction the document would take the project.

My internship also included other tasks. I took on more responsibility with the design of substations. This meant I had to communicate ideas and issues with clients via phone calls and email. I also had to work across offices to ensure that designs were collaborative and complete. I really enjoyed this aspect of the internship.

Other duties included working on standardizing processes within our designs. This task isn’t something that can be completed in six short weeks. But I started the process by creating learning modules to help new employees. I also worked on creating standard conduit and grounding details that can be used on almost every project we work on. I did this by working with senior engineers and reviewing old projects to see what worked well and what needed improvement. Using these updated details saves on time and in turn budget, and ensures a quality product every time.

There is one thing that I do feel that I could have done differently in my internship. And that is being involved earlier on in the project I created the project management plan for. I would like to see the very beginning phases of a project. These tasks include proposals, bidding, and budgeting. I would like to know how we propose on jobs and how we find these opportunities. I would also like to see how we budget time and money for these jobs. Usually by the time I work on the project everything is in place. I do my work and try to stay within the time and budget that I am allotted.
What I would like to do is go back to old projects and see how accurate we are on estimating to see if we could do a better job of coming up with these numbers. This isn’t something that we currently do and I feel it could be a huge benefit to our company. It could also make us more competitive in the market giving us the upper hand in a consulting world.

Overall I think the internship was a great experience that opened my eyes to some situations and processes that I was unaware of. I feel like the classes that I took did a great job in preparing me to step into a project management position and excel in it. Once I have graduated this May I plan on pursuing a role in project management within my company. I am completely confident that my technical abilities matched with my new knowledge with make me a shoe in for this role.
Internship Reflection Paper EX 2

My internship with Igulim LLC was a very good experience. The internship taught me on-the-job technical skills that a classroom cannot teach. I learned people skills and how to report to a manager. I learned office standards and how to be professional. I learned how to make decisions that benefit the company. The internship helped me believe in myself. I enjoyed going to work every day and trying to impress my bosses. Although I was unable to get hired on directly, I made an effort every day to make management want to hire me. If Igulim LLC had a bigger budget, I know for a fact they would have hired me on because they were able to see what I had to offer. Internships are good for this reason. Employers are able to see what each student can offer the company while the student expands on what is learned in the classroom. The internship provides an opportunity to the student to get their foot in the door at a company. At the very least, if the intern does impress management, the intern gains valuable references for future employment opportunities.

I spent a total of 400 hours at Igulim LLC. That equals fifty 8-hour days. I did many tasks in those fifty days. Many of my tasks were daily duties that I could do right away in the morning. Melissa would do her tasks and then give me tasks to help complete the job. These tasks were mostly filing inventory pallet tags, peeps pop scrap report sheets and making copies of metal detector sheets. I would put the metal detector sheets in a 3 ring
binder for easy access. Machine cleanliness and sanitizing is very important also. It is best that how and when it is done be documented very carefully too. One thing I learned is that easy accessibility to important documents is crucial to the food industry. When an audit from the FDA or Department of Agriculture does happen, it is important to make it easy to present all documents needed to prove the facility is running safely. I learned that lot code traceability is a huge part of food safety. If there were to be a recall of a raw material, it is important to make sure all raw materials involved are quarantined. Also, all finished product that used the recalled raw material, must be easily traced to where it was shipped. One way to make this easier is to use a Julian date. Each product is manufactured with a Julian date. The Julian date is a three digit code starting with 001 as January 1st and goes to 365, which is December 31st, unless it is a leap year, then it goes to 366. Another important factor in the food industry is allergens such as tree nuts, shellfish, peanuts and soy. Food companies have to disclose if their facility has manufactured food in a plant with allergens present for the safety of their consumers and I suppose for liability reasons too. I was exposed to daily labor and production documents that helped me understand the importance of finding the perfect balance of employees in production. These production documents are designed to help find the right amount of employees needed to maximize profit and production while getting the job done on time. When products are finished, retention samples are something that should be done in the food industry to test shelf life of the product made. These samples are to be held in inventory for 6 months after the best by date.

I was able to work directly with the warehouse manager and write some SOP’s for shipping and receiving. I wrote the SOP’s so that any “idiot” could come in and perform the
task. How convenient for Igulim LLC to have me, the “idiot” to test the SOP’s. While writing the SOP’s, I became more confident and learned valuable skills on how to report progress to a manager.

I got exposure to Excel and how to start a spreadsheet that is accessible and understood by all users. I used Excel to assist with cycle counts in inventory. I used Excel to assist with a program to measure chocolate inventory. The spreadsheet I made had 1 inch increments that told the production floor how many pounds of chocolate was in each tank based on how many inches from the top of the tank the chocolate is. I was able to utilize PowerPoint to present to 18 people about 5S and how important it is to a company’s success.

All in all, my internship at Igulim LLC was very important to my learning experience at MSUM. I learned valuable skills that I will be able to take with me to my next employer. I believe the objective of the internship and the OM program at MSUM is to teach each student how to be an asset to their future employer. I believe I reached that objective. Now it is time for me to prove it to an employer.