

Berlin Excursion, Company Roundtable – Evaluation/Assessment

Experiencing the vibrant city of Berlin where the startup scene is present in every corner of the city was a very interesting experience. The three days displayed the foundation, important aspects, approaches, risks and all sorts of applications one would have to encounter when thinking about a startup business.

The first day at Babbel I would have to say was the most intriguing to me. It was the only company I have heard of before and I do have the mobile app on my phone, even though it is yet to be used. The app has sadly been neglected, but visiting the company definitely triggers the wish to rediscover it again. The structure of the office and the vibe it emits gave it a professional yet playful feeling. It was a very creative environment where knowledge could flourish between all departments. The meeting itself was very interesting but I do have to point out that they were trying to market and sell their product more than actually teaching us something.

The second day visiting Co-Up and learning about the concept of a coworking space was a bit confusing to me. I did not quite understand what they were trying to sell at first, and as I have understood it, Co-Up was not in it to make any sort of profit but rather they wanted to boost this concept as it was for social purposes. I did not feel like they had any real focus and therefore their approach was not very appealing to me. The GTEC event was interesting, especially the first part where we got a glimpse of how start-ups can get support from very engaging people. It definitely inspired me to one day enter the start-up scene. Ms. Meier was very passionate about her work and the whole school there was very impressive. The second part however, with the open lecture, was a bit disappointing. I expected to learn more about the business but instead received a profound bibliography from Mr. Fahle. Which on the other hand is also interesting. But his approach made it seem like he is not taking his business very seriously and that his success rather had much to do with luck than enthusiasm and passion. He, much like the speaker from Co-Up, gave the impression that the coworking concept were “side-businesses” and not their main focus.

The third, and last day, visiting Event-Sofa was where I learned the most. Much because they provided relevant theory that they connected to their own practice so you could get a heads-on view of their company. I would have loved to apply for an internship there but seeing it as you need to speak fluent German, I do not know if my skills are sufficient. If they would manage to expand to the UK or Sweden in the near future I would be very thrilled.

All in all, I think the excursion was successful and I’m grateful I got to be a part of it.