

Interview with Ayfer Kaya

Internship at Ayko İç Giyim, a producer of underwear and lingerie
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Ayfer Kaya, a student of Management, Economics and Law at InHolland University in Rotterdam, came to Istanbul for her internship. Towards the end of this internship Güllü of Concordia met her at one of the cafes in Ortaköy overlooking the Bosphorus to ask her about her experiences in Turkey. Ayfer told Güllü that even the grapefruit juice she drank during their talk reminded her of Holland.

Why did you choose Turkey for your internship?

My family is Turkish, but they moved to Holland many years ago. I am regularly visiting Istanbul in summer vacations, but I was wondering about life in Turkey a lot. I wanted to come here so that I could live and work in my country of origin for several months.

During your internship knowing Turkish should have been an advantage for you. What that indeed so?

As my Turkish is not so fluent, it was not a real advantage, actually the opposite, but this internship has improved my Turkish.

Is this your first work experience?

No, I've worked for HEMA Stores as a part-time employee for two years. I was selected as the Employee of the Year twice. It was wonderful, it made me very happy.

Where did you work for your internship and what was your subject?

I worked at Ayko İç Giyim, an important and well-known producer of underwear and lingerie. I worked in the marketing department as a merchandiser's assistant.

Did you observe any differences between the business culture in Turkey and Holland?

Yes, but I think these differences are due to the different culture in each country. Working hours in Turkey are longer, at some factories they even work in the weekend and especially the workers in the factory work under difficult conditions. For example some tasks are always left to the last moment. I don't think they need to work so hard, there seems to be something missing in the system or planning. In Europe people work more systematically.

Any surprises or astonishments?

The thing that surprised me most is the attitude towards the factory workers. However, I am happy to have improved my Turkish and to have lived here for a while.

Interview by Güllü Deliduman
