

Google interns meet their Hollywood counterparts

June 1 2013, by Glenn Chapman

Google interns got an early look at a Hollywood take on their world and chatted with celebrities who play them on screen in 'The Internship' film set for release next week.

Actors Vince Vaughn and Owen Wilson along with director Shawn Levy walked on stage to a standing ovation from an audience of 'Googlers' in the wake of a private viewing of the film in a San Francisco theater.

"I had heard mythical, weird things about Google culture," Levy said while recounting how Vaughn pitched him the idea the idea of a pair of 40-something buddies challenged to re-invent themselves for the [Internet Age](#).

"When I came to Google with Vince and looked around, I was amazed to see all the things I'd heard about like nap [pods](#) and free food within 150 feet at all times were all true," he continued.

"It seemed a really good backdrop for a comedy and a good backdrop for an aspirational movie about two guys who were really trying to write their next chapter."

Levy was quick to point out that while the film was true to the spirit and scene at the [Internet giant](#)'s campus in Mountain View, California, the internship program was made fiercely competitive to power the story.

"There was no way to do this well if the company wasn't going to have a

sense of humor about themselves," Levy said.

Stickers, tee shirts, bicycles and other details down to equations or code written on white boards at Google were all authentic, and scenes on campus inspired lines or characters in the film, according to the director.

Google co-founder [Sergey Brin](#) ended up in the film by chance, after Levy noticed what he thought was a colorful character in "yoga clothes and fuzzy green slippers" pedal by on an elliptical bicycle.

When he asked who it was, someone whispered reverentially 'Sergey.'

'I loved the look," Levy said, adding that he coaxed Brin into peddling through a scene.

In true [Silicon Valley](#) style, many Googlers were as excited about Brin's involvement in the film as they were in seeing the actors on campus.

Levy recounted Vaughn and Wilson never passing a micro-kitchen on campus without stopping to sample edibles.

The actors rode off so often on Google bicycles that a tracker had to be assigned so they could be found for filming, according to the director.

"It seemed like a kind of nice resort," Wilson said of Google, confiding that he had tried in vain to use his film intern badge to explore buildings on the campus.

"It is not all loosey-goosey at Google, there is security there," he quipped.

Levy and the actors said that a big draw for them at Google was that workers there seemed to want to do good.

"The three of us are committedly non-cynical," Levy said. "A lot of people who work at Google are genuinely trying to make life better for humans better; I got that and I wanted the movie to have the same heart."

Vaughn recounted taking the idea to Google marketing vice president Lorraine Twohill two years ago with Wilson in tow.

"I had an idea where, unfortunately, there were a lot of people who were having a hard time in the economy; the types of jobs they were doing were going away," Vaughn said.

"If you lost your job, where is a fun, exciting place that seems foreign to you to go to work? Google."

Google associate product marketing manager Raymond Braun, who had two internships at the company before being hired last year, said his experiences were more collaborative than competitive, but that the film was fun.

"I love that they capture the essence of [Google](#) being a place that wants to make a positive impact and celebrate diversity in an open environment, but there is certainly a Hollywood take on the experience," Braun said.

In the film, a key quality sought at the company was "Googliness."

"Googliness is all the things that make you a complete person beyond smarts," Levy said.

"This idea of being a holistic person with an ethical center, and work ethic, and empathy and consciousness of people and the world around you."

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Citation: Google interns meet their Hollywood counterparts (2013, June 1) retrieved 3 May 2024
from <https://phys.org/news/2013-06-google-interns-hollywood-counterparts.html>

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