

## SAMPLE LEARNING CONTRACT

### **Professional Goal**

To have a career in multicultural education working for a non-profit or a non-governmental organization.

### **Professional Goal Statement**

In the on-campus phase of the program I focused my curriculum largely on enrolling in training courses. I wanted to have a practicum that directly correlated with my field of study and conduct research for the same organization. I wanted to work for an organization in which the training and facilitation skills acquired at SIT would be a benefit to any organization that hired me. I wanted to also work for an organization that would challenge me both intellectually and creatively. The organization that I chose to complete my practicum is The Posse Foundation.

The New York Posse Foundation awards 110 merit leadership full-tuition scholarships each year to dynamic high school seniors. I began working for The Posse Foundation June 15, 2005 in the position of Program Trainer. The Program Trainer position's responsibilities are structured in seasons. The first season is recruitment, and I will have the opportunity to assess various high schools students leadership qualities based on large group interviews, observations and one-on-one conversations. Using non-traditional forums to evaluate potential, Dynamic Assessment Process (DAP) offers students an opportunity to demonstrate their intrinsic leadership abilities, their skill at working in a team setting, motivation and their desire to succeed. I will learn the "Posse" style of evaluation, strategic questioning, and facilitation large group dynamics. The second season runs simultaneously with DAP season and that is the on-campus program.

From September thru May, I will have to travel to 3 college campuses and visit Posse Scholars to find out how they are integrating academically and socially. I will have to learn quickly how to foster relationships with students that I have just met and generate trust. I will also learn to conduct one-on-one conversations with an average 40 students per school. Toward the end of the on-campus season I have the opportunity to design and facilitate training workshops for the students on campus directly relating to a current campus issue.

The final component of my job beginning January is the Pre-Collegiate Training Program that the students that have been recruited as scholars participate. My co-trainer and I are given the opportunity to reorder the curriculum to fit the needs of the scholars. There are four parts to the program: leadership, cross-cultural communication, team building and academic excellence. I can add warm-up and icebreakers freely and am able to write, design and present any training to our National Training and Site Development team. I will have the opportunity to have a co-trainer and learn her styles of facilitation, our boundaries as trainers and strengthen our partnership.

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I believe that this practicum is a good fit for me. During the Pre-Collegiate Training Program my job is to make each workshop organized, provoke dialogue, foster camaraderie, and inspire Posse Scholars. I feel as though I am contributing to expanding the pool of which top colleges and universities recruit students by selecting dynamic student leaders that will impact one of the 11 campuses that New York partner colleges. In turn, I would hope that the campus becomes more welcoming to diverse student populations.

### *Learning Objectives*

#### **I. Increase knowledge around The Posse Foundation history, mission and goals and all components of the organization.**

- a) Learning Methods
  - i) Read the manuals for the Dynamic Assessment Process, Campus Program, and Curriculum
  - ii) Attend all mandatory and voluntary trainings offered by The Posse Foundation
  - iii) Become more familiar with the public, private and parochial schools from which we recruit
  - iv) Become more familiar with the 11 partner schools so that I may give positive attributes to potential scholars
- b) Evaluation of Learning
  - i) Outcomes
    - (1) Able to answer routine questions from community based organizations, public, private, and parochial schools without the assistance of supervisor or co-trainer
    - (2) Feeling comfortable engaging conversation around Posse's goals, mission and history using facts and figures
    - (3) Increased knowledge of partner schools will increase my ability to match potential scholars with schools of interest
  - ii) Demonstrations in Written Review
    - (1) Summarize knowledge gained during voluntary trainings to include my learning.

#### **II. Increase cultural competencies in the area of facilitation and training to foster dialogue between scholars and students**

- a) Learning Methods
  - i) Review reading material from courses in Training and Design, Training for Social Action, Training of Trainers and Training for Multicultural Managers
  - ii) Research a variety of facilitation styles and icebreakers
  - iii) Foster new relationships and maintain contacts with current trainers in the field of social justice and capacity building
  - iv) Co-design and facilitate three original workshops with training partner

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- v) Review seven “isms” provided in the Posse training curriculum
- b) Evaluation of Learning
  - i) Outcomes
    - (1) Able to create more links between theoretical knowledge and practical training experience
    - (2) Increased knowledge around training design and the effects on the participants
    - (3) A network of trainers will provide a fresh perspective and give me critical feedback to enhance my trainings
    - (4) More prepared in handling comments and discussions around seven “isms”
  - ii) Demonstrations in Reports
    - (1) Attach a sample copy of trainings created *-not to be reproduced*
    - (2) Provide a list of icebreakers/ warm-ups

### **III. Identify a research question for my capstone proposal**

- a) Learning Methods
  - i) Brainstorm research topics
  - ii) Identify gaps within the goals of The Posse Foundation
  - iii) Speak to the founder of Posse, and other training colleagues
- b) Evaluation of Learning
  - i) Outcomes
    - 1) Completion of Capstone proposal by October 2005
    - 2) Substantial research and work on capstone paper
  - ii) Demonstration in Reports
    - 1) Documentation of Capstone proposal accepted by capstone advisor in February
    - 2) Proof of Registration of July Capstone 2005

### **IV. To increase my skills in oral and written fluency level from intermediate mid to advanced proficiency in the language of Spanish to satisfy SIT language requirement.**

- a.) Learning Methods
  - i) Register for current Advanced Spanish.
  - ii) Practice speaking outside of course in groups 1 hour a week.
  - iii) Do outside readings in Spanish.
  - iv) Watch television in Spanish, see Spanish films
- b.) Evaluation of Learning
  - i) Outcomes
    - 1. Receive positive feedback from the instructor as to level of fluency.
    - 2. Comprehension of outside readings i.e. newspaper articles.

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3. Asking instructor to view letter for grammatical errors/feedback.
4. Taking the ACTFL and receiving Advanced level of proficiency by July 2005.
- ii) Demonstration in Reports
  - (1) Attach a copy of a letter that I have written in Spanish to my learning contract.
  - (2) Attach a document that I have translated from English to Spanish.
  - (3) Certificate from ACTFL attached to my learning contract

### **V. To change my behavior in time/stress management by increasing physical activity to raise energy levels so that I may remain healthy.**

- a) Learning Methods
  - i) Join a gym and exercise 4x per week.
  - ii) Get a support network of SIT students that are working toward 2006 graduation.
  - iii) Attend salsa lessons once a week.
  - iv) See a play or movie once a month
  - v) Getting at least seven hours of sleep.
  - vi) Go on the master cleanse to clean intestine, colon, kidneys and blood stream
- b) Learning Evaluation
  - i) Outcomes
    - (1) Learn to decipher between good/bad stresses so that it doesn't physically attack my body in the form of tension headaches and back pain.
    - (2) Assignments deadlines are prioritized by using a calendar and handed in on time and are met.
    - (3) I feel more relaxed and centered and able to focus on school deadlines and work related deadlines
    - (4) Having a support network will keep me on task
    - (5) I am rested and energized.
    - (6) Going out and doing more social activities will help with my acclimation of New York City
  - ii) Demonstration in Reports
    - (1) Copy of my schedule for 2005
    - (2) Documentation of the play or movie I attended