***Official Letterhead***

Denis Framboise January 4, 2010

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Centre for Learning Accreditation

Athabasca University

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Re: Samantha Sidhu, Letter of Attestation

Dear Ms. Conrad,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of Attestation for Samantha Sidhu. I have worked with Samantha in different contexts and in all occasions I have benefited from her knowledge and learned a great deal from working with her.

I obtained a Bachelor’s degree in Computer Science from Quebec University in 1999. Over the past 13 years I have worked in the field of IM/IT in both the public and private sector. I am currently a software development manager for Canada Justice and am responsible for managing all activities around the development, integration and deployment of enterprise systems used by the agency.

Over a span of 3 years, I had the opportunity of working with Samantha in two different contexts. Once as a subordinate in a web development team at the Federal Government and one as a peer with the Federal Government, Publishing and XXX Services (PXS). Over these years I’ve had the chance to observe Samantha in various contexts and feel I can provide some pertinent insight on her knowledge, skills and capabilities.

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| **COMM 329 – The Practice of Interpersonal Communication** | |
| **Learning Outcome**: Understand how to improve your interpersonal communication skills by examining how well you communicate with others. | |
| **Learning Statements** | **Evidence** |
| Discuss post-meeting results with a colleague that was present to review areas of potential improvement such as format of the meeting, preparation materials (agenda, presentations, etc.), delivery of information (verbal, non-verbal language), and timing of the meeting (day, time of day, etc.) as a way to develop improvement strategies for verbal interpersonal communication skills. | As mentioned above, Samantha and I often discussed post meeting results and outcomes to determine whether there were areas of improvement and how we each did in terms of delivering/presenting information and contributing to the meeting progression. Samantha always accepted feedback with an objective outlook and strived to use this feedback for self improvement. |

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| **Learning Outcome**: Identify ineffective communication skills that are counterproductive. | |
| **Learning Statements** | **Evidence** |
| Verbally communicate with colleagues and clients to impart various information on topics such as IT service requirements, business requirements, training needs, etc., taking care to speak at a proper speed so that listeners can properly process the information being imparted and understand and follow the conversation | Samantha is a very strong verbal communicator and I was able to observe her performance in terms of business requirements discussions and communicating with clients during our time together in the Web and Multimedia Services group. Samantha is able to communicate effectively and efficiently so that clients and other meeting participants can follow and understand what is being communicated. |
| Organize meetings, presentations, training sessions, and brainstorming sessions (such as preparing meeting agendas and stating the training goals at the start of a session) so that there is a clear purpose to the communication setting (i.e., what is being discussed, talked about, what the goal of the meeting is) in order to ensure that the listeners are prepared to address certain topics and can relate to the conversation by providing meaningful input. | While working with Samantha at the Federal Government, she held regular team meetings. She routinely organized and planned her team meetings with an agenda and time managed the meeting so that each topic was addressed and encouraged everyone to participate in the discussion.  Samantha is highly skilled at meeting planning, organization and direction. |
| Examine speakers (either myself or others) in order to identify barriers to effective communication in the speaker and listener such as being overly tired and unfocused, distracted, not listening properly (asking for a lot of clarification or lots of questions to items already clearly expressed), interrupting, and over eagerness to make a point and apply mitigation strategies as necessary such as suggesting an alternate meeting time, politely requesting less interruption, restating the goal of the communication, etc., in order to improve and maintain effective communication. | On the very rare occasion, Samantha and I had differing views in relation to addressing work load or problem solving. During these encounters, Samantha excused herself from the conversation. It was clear that we were both not in the best frame of mind for communicating and she took the action to take a step back and regroup. We would always reconnect at a later time to begin the discussion anew.  Samantha has the necessary and advanced skill set to navigate complex communication situations. |
| **Learning Outcome**: Describe how to establish a warm, environmental climate of trust that is conducive to an effective helping session interpersonal exchange between a helper and his or her client. | |
| **Learning Statements** | **Evidence** |
| Identify locations for communication activities such as meetings that will promote comfort and ease by ensuring a meeting place that is comfortable (temperature controlled, adequate seating, etc.) and is free from distraction so that the communication flow is not interrupted by outside distractions (outside noise, other meetings, etc.). | As discussed above, Samantha plans, organizes and directs meetings with ease. Part of these activities includes the proper selection of meeting facilities which Samantha always did with ease and appropriateness. |
| Start communication activities with setting the stage for participants by clearly establishing a goal for the meeting, gathering, session, etc., outlining what inputs would be helpful from the participants and what outcomes can be expected in order to establish an honest and open relationship. | Samantha’s meetings were nearly always agenda driven which would define the topics to be discussed during the meeting. The goals of these meetings were clear and usually attained. Samantha used the agenda to manage expectations of meeting participants and ensure we were prepared to provide quality input. Samantha also ensured that the ‘right’ people would attend these meetings ensuring that the decision makers and key stakeholders were on hand to contribute. This allowed for an optimal and efficient use of everyone’s time.  Samantha is highly skills at planning and organizing meetings. |
| Practice clear non-verbal body language such as smiling face, open body posture, pleasant tone and speed of voice, maintain eye contact, etc., to set the stage for a meeting in order to establish a pleasant environment for communication to take place and establish a feeling of trust with participants. | Samantha practices positive non-verbal language as often as possible by adopting the body language she describes to the left.  She is a pleasant individual to talk with and does provide honest and genuine input to a conversation. She is respectful and listens very well, pays attention to me and provides the best possible advice she can. |
| Practice honest and real communication behaviours during discussions such as active listening, contributing honest information about myself, and using positive non-verbal cues with clients and colleagues without using facades to cultivate a feeling of trust and establish a positive working environment that is free of suspicion. | Samantha and I developed a personal and close relationship shortly after beginning to work together at the Federal Government. This was in part due to her genuine and open communication style. |
| Communicate with colleagues, employees and clients in a completely respectful manner (not interrupting, validating their feelings, listening attentively, and keeping emotions at bay) in order to establish a trusting relationship. |
| **Learning Outcome**: Understand how to use these interpersonal communication techniques: Clearly identifying a problem and staying with the problem; staying in Stage I of the Helping Relationship Model; exploring the client’s story; identifying when judgments, assumptions and generalizations are made; perception‐check; handling emotions; brainstorming; paraphrasing; providing feedback; practicing self‐disclosure; problem solving; making value judgments; goal-setting | |
| **Learning Statements** | **Evidence** |
| Practice self disclosure with colleagues, friends, family and acquaintances to an appropriate degree by sharing information about my personal life such as what kind of work I do, what my favourite past times are, information about my family, aspirations and goals, and life challenges in order to progress relationships that are meaningful to a deeper level of connection. | As mentioned above, Samantha and I developed a friendship and have maintained contact over the years. We have each practiced self disclosure with one another, sharing personal information on our families, hobbies, aspirations, experiences, and past times.  Samantha and I have much in common and I have enjoyed our working and personal relationships. |
| Work with colleagues, employees, family and friends to effectively solve problems by asking and answering questions about the problem to gather information, brainstorming about possible solutions or alternatives to address it and deciding on the best approach to solve or overcome it in order to successfully solve problems as part of progressing the career and personal lives of these people. | While working at the Federal Government, Samantha organized a number of brainstorming sessions with the Web and Multimedia team to generate ideas toward a solution to client requirements on a number of projects. These brainstorming sessions were well planned and directed and consisted of a lot of questions and answers by various team members and the generating of multiple ideas toward the final adoption of a preferred solution. They were very useful for us as a team building exercise as well. This is one example of the approach to problem solving that Samantha followed. |

I trust the above will provide useful attestation for Samantha’s portfolio. Should you require any additional information or clarification on any points, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

*Attestor’s signature*

Denis Framboise

*Note: This letter of attestation addressed several other courses included in the original portfolio which have not been included in this example.*