

Official Letterhead
Canadian City Environmental Branch

Letter of Attestation

Centre for Learning Accreditation
Athabasca University
1 University Drive
Athabasca AB T9S 3A3

April 08, 2012

Attention: Learning Accreditation Director

I am pleased to write this Letter of Attestation for Gabrielle Harvey. I have worked with her directly for 13 years and know her work to be consistently of a high standard. Following is a list of learning statements provided to me by Gabrielle to which I have added my comments on her related skills and knowledge. Please contact me if there is need for additional information or clarification of what has been written.

I have been a fully registered professional engineer in the Canadian Province since 19xx and am the holder of the Canadian City's Permit to Practice in the Environmental Management field since 19xx. I have worked in the environmental sector in Canada for over 30 years and have been the Manager of the City's internationally recognized environmental management system since 19xx and established the City's Environmental Management Centre of Excellence, a non-profit corporation focused on research, technology demonstration and practitioner training.

I have presented on various aspects of environmental management to technical and non-technical audiences nationally and internationally. I have provided expertise to two Asian countries and have been a member of various panels and advisory committees on environmental management. I recognized that strategic community relations programs are critical to the success of a municipal environmental management system and specifically added Gabrielle to my team in a senior position. I am convinced that Gabrielle's competency in this area, specifically her strategic advice and practical behaviour change programs she has developed as we introduced innovative programs, are an essential component of the City's success. From my visits to other municipalities around the world and my extensive familiarity with other environmental management systems, I have no hesitation in stating the City has one of the best community relations programs among major municipalities. This is borne out by the requests for information from other municipalities and that City is the standing venue for the international conference, Environmental Management the Social Context.

In my capacity as Manager of the City’s Environmental Management Branch, I am responsible for a total contingent of 450 employees and numerous public-private partnerships. I have four directors who report directly to me. Gabrielle is one of those directors, leading the Community Relations Section with 24 employees. Gabrielle’s section is responsible for engaging the citizens of City in sustainable environmental practices by fostering an ongoing dialogue between the Branch and the citizens of City and delivering social marketing and education programs that achieve specific behaviours. Gabrielle also provides strategic issues management advice to me.

1. Ability to work in teams Ability to conceptualize, organize & actualize teams in a creative, flexible manner	Evidence
<p>Recommend the positions needed in the community relations section for the upcoming year by assessing the branch vision, goals and strategic plan, and identifying the skills and talent needed in my section to achieve those goals.</p> <p>Build understanding of my team’s vision and annual plan among managers and key staff in other operational areas, to ensure that we support each other, and everyone is collaborating based on a mutual understanding of and respect for each other’s teams.</p> <p>Identify potential synergies and efficiencies between my team and teams in other operational areas by paying attention to the work of other teams and assessing how and when it makes sense to collaborate more closely.</p> <p>Determine when to create a team for a project by assessing the importance of</p>	<p>My Branch can only achieve and effectively meet all its varied objectives if the commitment to teamwork at all levels is unwavering. Over the 13 years that she has managed the Community Relations Section, Gabrielle’s commitment in this regard has been outstanding.</p> <p>Gabrielle has built and mentored a strong team that is comprised of an excellent diversity of skills and talents. She excels at fostering a team environment through her personal interactions and by valuing the contributions of all her team members. On numerous occasions I have seen her positive tendency to focus on peoples’ strengths, rather than their shortcomings. Notwithstanding the challenges that posed, she is adept at aligning the work that needs to be done with the various strengths of her staff.</p> <p>Gabrielle has always treated her staff members fairly and with a high degree of respect. This has been confirmed in 360 degree interviews, where Gabrielle received very high ratings for treating people with respect. Gabrielle listens carefully when people speak and values her staff members’ ideas and contributions. This contributes to high levels of job satisfaction and low staff turn-over in her section.</p> <p>Gabrielle is also highly respected by her peers (the other</p>

<p>the project or problem to the organization, whether input is needed from more than one person to make the best decisions, whether a creative or innovative solution is needed, and if buy-in is needed from several areas.</p> <p>Clarify the role of the team to the leader by clearly describing the problem or opportunity, and providing clear objectives, timelines and budgets so that the leader has the information needed to effectively lead the group.</p> <p>Identify the people and groups that are interested in the team's work who may want to contribute and determine how to involve them to ensure that others not on the team feel valued and able to contribute and to ensure that all those who may have valuable input are heard.</p> <p>Guide teams through conflicts or confusion by assessing the source of the problem, listening to team members, helping the team to work through differences by facilitating discussions and clarifying priorities, roles or expectations if needed.</p> <p>Build on a team's success by expressing appreciation for the work being done, providing specific feedback about the positive work I see, and providing additional challenges if the group needs them, in order to help the team learn what is working well and stay motivated to continue their high performance.</p>	<p>directors who are highly skilled individuals in their own right), her colleagues throughout the branch, and the stakeholder groups she has contact with. She works very collaboratively with all operational areas in the branch, ensuring that her goals support the other areas and that the other directors are fully aware of her plans.</p> <p>I often rely on Gabrielle's advice regarding the need for greater collaboration between the operational areas of my Branch and the opportunities that Gabrielle presents for increasing our performance through collaboration.</p>
2. Ability to plan & execute projects	Evidence

Creative identification & problem solution; ability to alter plans or tasks at will no matter what circumstances might occur	
<p>Identify problems that require project management and prioritize projects by applying prioritization criteria such as: advance Branch goals, increase customer satisfaction, maximize citizen support and achieve with existing resources.</p> <p>Balance the competing demands of the project by considering the tradeoffs between quality, time, and cost and recognizing that adjustments to one will affect the other, in order to ensure the project meets objectives on time and within budget.</p> <p>Ensure that senior management supports the project and watch for any changes in company objectives or the external environment that could affect the project's success in order to provide effective guidance to the team leader.</p> <p>Ensure that the project's progress is communicated to senior management and others in the organization or external stakeholders who need to know, in order to ensure that expectations are realistic and no one is surprised by the final outcome.</p>	<p>One given in the work environment in which Gabrielle must operate and produce results is that change is constant. Additionally, at times external public and political influences can change agendas in short order.</p> <p>In my experience as her supervisor, Gabrielle has an excellent grasp on the issues and challenges that face our Branch and is able to identify challenges and prioritize projects effectively to realize success. She develops a strategic plan for her section each year, but she is also very flexible and able to change course if needed. The demands on our Branch, from our residents and from City Council, require us to be able to respond quickly to new directions. Gabrielle has an above average ability to adapt her plans and steer her section in a new direction when needed.</p> <p>Gabrielle's projects consistently meet objectives on time and within budget. In addition to being flexible, she is able to manage varied multiple projects at once, balancing work quality and tight timelines. I consider this one of Gabrielle's core competencies – the ability to manage multiple projects, shift priorities when needed, and deliver high quality results.</p> <p>Gabrielle keeps me informed of the progress of her projects and advises me when she thinks others need to be informed. She is skilled at interpreting the external environment and how issues could affect the Branch and the corporation as a whole, particularly as it relates to City residents' perceptions of our programs and expectations of us. This enables her to provide me sound strategic advice and to guide her staff teams effectively.</p>
<p>3. Ability to act on own initiative</p> <p>Seeks and assumes responsibility for</p>	<p>Evidence</p>

complex situations; can carry responsibilities independently & creatively; regularly assists others	
Make decisions regarding complex problems independently (without going to my manager) with input from key members of my group by framing the problem, spurring the group to generate alternatives, and evaluating the alternatives.	<p>Gabrielle works as independently as the other directors who report to me. She does not shy away from challenge and consistently demonstrates initiative by taking on challenges with minimal direction from me.</p> <p>Gabrielle sets ambitious, measurable goals for her section and independently initiates strategies and programs to achieve those goals. She is skilled at gathering input from her team, analyzing the options for reaching a goal and making decisions. Of note is that when faced with a difficult decision, Gabrielle brings me alternatives and recommendations, rather than asking me for a solution. This demonstrates to me a high level of independent thinking and initiative.</p>
4. Ability to develop & maintain good working relations <p>Exceptional consistent ability to form & use working & professional relations with a wide range of people in complex situations; regarded as a model colleague by peers & subordinates</p>	Evidence
<p>Build trusting relationships with peers and subordinates by demonstrating trust in others through allowing others to use their expertise and abilities in order to foster a collaborative and effective work environment.</p> <p>Establish an open door policy and be accessible to employees and spend time each day talking with them informally about their work, in recognition of the fact that an employee's relationship with their</p>	<p>As my previous comments suggest, Gabrielle has excellent working relationships with her staff and her peers. They trust her, her professional approach to her work, and are comfortable bringing issues to her. Coupled with her approachability, she is accessible and her staff feel supported by her.</p> <p>Gabrielle makes a confident and professional initial impression and because of her excellent listening skills and empathic abilities, she is able to build and develop effective ongoing business relationships. I never hesitate to direct her to work with any external stakeholders, including those who might be a challenge to work with, because of her</p>

<p>manager is one of the most important factors in their level of job satisfaction.</p> <p>Adapt my interpersonal style to a wide variety of people by paying attention to the different interpersonal styles of my colleagues and staff and considering which style works best for each person, in order to ensure that people are comfortable with me and to elicit a high level of cooperation and trust.</p> <p>Participate in assessments that include 360 degree interviews (with staff, peers, and managers) in order to receive feedback on my ability to establish and maintain effective relationships, learn from the feedback and improve where needed.</p> <p>Establish highly positive relationships with all my managers throughout my career by ensuring that my work meets their expectations and by anticipating their needs in order to ensure that I make their jobs easier.</p> <p>Be completely trustworthy so that my managers know they can rely on me, by ensuring I have a clear understanding of their goals and expectations, always meeting deadlines, and providing high quality work, which fosters a highly supportive relationship and contributes to organizational effectiveness.</p> <p>Establish rapport with higher level management by providing information that is particularly useful to them in a format that meets their needs (for</p>	<p>respectfulness and ability to work with all types of personalities.</p> <p>As part of a corporate initiative, I have identified Gabrielle as one of the future leaders in our corporation. As a result she participated in a very comprehensive analysis that included exams, interviews and 360 degree interviews. The results confirmed my assessment of her. One of the strengths identified was her approachable and respectful interpersonal style. This style enables her to build influential working relationships with her staff, her peers, our stakeholders, and senior managers.</p> <p>Gabrielle is very good at synthesizing information and clearly articulating the importance of community relations to our Branch. For this reason, when she presents to senior management, she represents the Branch in a highly professional manner and is able to succinctly explain the role of social marketing and its importance to our integrated environmental management system.</p> <p>Gabrielle builds positive working relationships with all the people she needs to interact with in her position, including the media, private sector partners, non-profit environmental groups and members of the public. She is able to diffuse potentially antagonistic situations with her empathic abilities, for example at public open houses, or with residents who call with a complaint and insist on speaking with a manager.</p>
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<p>example, extremely brief and clear backgrounders) in order to represent my section in a positive light and foster respect for the work of my team.</p> <p>Cultivate relationships with people across the organization by participating on cross-functional committees and getting to know others who may be able to assist me by providing information or guidance in the future, and by reciprocating and assisting them when asked.</p> <p>Build positive relationships with stakeholders by listening to their point of view, demonstrating empathy for their adversarial positions, and providing rationale based on easily understood facts rather than on emotion.</p>	
<p>6. Ability to develop & attain professional goals</p> <p>Acts upon long-range professional development goals including prof. designation & other formal & non-formal education; suggests & helps to plan professional development offerings at work & within professional organization</p>	<p>Evidence</p>
<p>Support my staff in their professional development goals by negotiating with my manager and advocating for my staff when needed and ensuring I have adequate resources in my budget to allow for their professional development in order to retain valued employees.</p>	<p>Gabrielle cares about her staff and supports their professional development. She helps them to identify their professional development goals and facilitates their ability to attend courses, workshops and conferences that meet those needs. She is unfailing in her ongoing requests for increased funding to assist her in this regard.</p> <p>As I review all performance reviews completed by Gabrielle, I see that she provides positive feedback and constructive</p>

	ideas and comments related to their development. The comments provided by her staff consistently reflect their admiration for her efforts to help them grow in ability and advance.
7. Ability to write clearly & convincingly Demonstrates superior ability to convince others through creative, articulate, well-structured argument; outstanding ability to self-edit	Evidence
<p>Develop a clear purpose for the strategic plan document through a collaborative discussion with my manager to ensure the document aligns with his vision and his needs.</p> <p>Identify the target audiences by reviewing the purpose in order to create a document that speaks to the needs and interests of the audience.</p> <p>Create an outline for the strategic plan by carefully analyzing the needs of the audience in order to ensure the most important information is included in a logical sequence.</p> <p>Provide the outline and purpose description to the other managers to ensure that the draft strategies they develop for their areas of operation align with the overall purpose of the document and the goals of the Branch.</p>	<p>Gabrielle is an excellent writer and editor. She is responsible for all the public information produced by our Branch, including brochures, annual reports, strategic plans, website pages, fact sheets and newsletters. She is also responsible for all internal communications, including a bi-monthly newsletter.</p> <p>Gabrielle's writing is always succinct and clear. She takes time to define the purpose of an information product and its target audiences, and writes for the intended audience.</p> <p>When I need a scientific or highly technical document rewritten for a more general audience, I automatically give the assignment to Gabrielle. She is very skilled at converting technical information into plain language that our City Councillors or members of the public can understand. This is a highly specialized skill that in my experience few professional managers possess.</p> <p>By way of an example, the environmental management strategic plan booklet that she drafted creatively captured the philosophy and the mission of our Branch, and clearly explained in an engaging manner the new directions and innovations we are initiating. Gabrielle received multiple pages of documents from the operational areas of the Branch and was able to extract relevant information and extensively edit the text to produce a final product that is highly readable and conveys the most important messages about our Branch. I have received very positive feedback on this document.</p>

<p>8. Ethical Conduct Expert understanding of complexity of ethics and the ranking of ethical considerations; directs others in making ethical considerations</p>	<p>Evidence</p>
<p>Weigh and rank a variety of factors that impact an ethical decision by assessing the consequences of various alternatives in order to ensure that my decision is the best one for the organization and I can defend my decision with sound rationale if needed.</p> <p>Make decisions about whether to intervene to assist an employee when obtaining information that was provided in confidence to another employee, by weighing the consequences of breaking confidentiality against the consequences of not intervening (and of intervening).</p> <p>Encourage staff to bring any ethical concerns about the organization's operations to me or to their direct supervisor in order to ensure that staff are aware of management's willingness to hear and act on concerns and thereby prevent staff from voicing their concerns outside the branch and jeopardizing the branch's reputation.</p>	<p>Gabrielle is a model of ethical conduct and I never hesitate in having her represent the Environmental Management Branch to local and national audiences.</p> <p>By modeling ethical behaviour, Gabrielle sets an example for her staff and makes it clear that honesty, integrity and transparency are paramount in all interactions, especially in relations to how we interact with residents of City and the information we provide them. I have no doubt that if Gabrielle's staff had a concern with the ethics of our operations, they would discuss it with her directly, knowing that she would be receptive to such concerns and would take appropriate action.</p> <p>Gabrielle is required to make ethical decisions and assessments regularly as the media spokesperson for the Environmental Management Branch, deciding which data and how much information should be provided to the media. She is able to be transparent, but at the same time explain issues or policies so that the media reports are accurate and not disparaging to the Branch, private company or individual.</p> <p>I expect Gabrielle to and she acts to assess and recommend when the Branch should confront actions by others that are of questionable ethics.</p>
<p>9. Ability to plan & execute research Superior ability to identify & define problems, determine appropriate methodology, assemble & direct research team in executing project & presenting results</p>	<p>Evidence</p>

<p>Identify specific objectives for customer satisfaction, awareness and participation survey of City residents, in a collaborative discussion with my manager, to ensure that results are useful to senior managers in making planning and policy decisions.</p>	<p>Gabrielle is responsible for leading the bi-annual customer satisfaction survey conducted for the Environmental Management Branch, as well as various types of research that enable other directors and I to make informed decisions about existing and new programs. She knows the limitations of her staff and when to engage private consultants' expertise.</p> <p>Gabrielle ensures that we get the results we need by discussing the research objectives for the customer satisfaction survey with me before finalizing the questions. She then interprets and summarizes the results, and provides me with critical information about what new directions or adjustments we should be considering for our programs.</p>
<p>10. Ability to lead others</p> <p>Able to translate policy into program & ensure that goals are met; takes frequent active measures to inform self about success of programs & corrects as necessary; is awarded leadership roles in prof. or non-prof. organizations; actively mentor other workers</p>	<p>Evidence</p>
<p>Review City Council's 10-year strategic goals to ensure alignment between my section's long-term goals and the City's long-term vision and goals. Discuss the long-term vision with staff to ensure that they understand the link between our programs and the broader City vision.</p> <p>Review annual branch budget document which identifies branch goals, strategies and outcomes, to ensure that my section goals and programs are consistent with what has been approved by City Council and all</p>	<p>Gabrielle is very much a big picture thinker without the detriment of not knowing when it is appropriate to pay attention to detail. She understands the vision created by City Council and the City's long term plan, and is able to link her programs to those goals.</p> <p>Gabrielle is respected by her staff as a decisive leader who listens to their ideas and concerns and provides firm and well reasoned direction.</p> <p>Gabrielle creates an environment where employees feel comfortable taking reasonable risks and being innovative and creative. I have seen this lead to a high performance climate where her staff feel empowered to achieve goals, but are also willing to change direction if needed. Given the</p>

<p>staff in my section are working toward common goals.</p> <p>Meet regularly with staff and listen to their assessments of the programs they are working on in order to steer change in direction if needed.</p>	<p>nature of the industry in which we operate, the latter is put to the test more often than not.</p>
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Please contact me at (xxx) xxx-xxxx should you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Signature

Steve Kuric, P. Eng.
Manager – Environmental Management Branch

SK/ca