



the **QA** commons

THE QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMONS
for HIGHER *and* POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Faculty Employability Fellows Impact Project

Student Immersion Assignments

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Dr. Brian S. Mason

Professor of Percussion & Associate Dean, School of the Arts
Morehead State University

OPPORTUNITY/PROPOSAL

The problems identified in the arts-based employment market (through Dr. Mason's interviews with multiple local employers) have direct ties to deficiencies in communication and teamwork skills, work ethic, and problem-solving abilities. It has also been determined that many of the potential employees have the capacity for overcoming these shortcomings, but the work environment does not support the development of these attributes in employees.

SOLUTION

This project provides opportunities for experiences that can be integrated by faculty into most courses within the existing degree program, making connections in authentic and relevant settings with the objective of addressing the stated deficiencies.

Students will complete assignments that require immersions within multiple and diverse sources, including interviews on relevant topics that are subject and career specific. Immersions will include problem-solving assignments that may contain real-life obstacles and scenarios for students to overcome. This communication will also require a reflection element to support the mindful and introspective nature of the assignment.

PROCESS

The first exercise is for the student to interview persons who are currently working in the field/career that is being studied or targeted. This will allow for the student to gain experience and perspective prior to engaging in a work environment.

Students will be given a set of instructions for the interview process in order to help guide them in a process that may be unfamiliar:

- Interview three persons. Interviewees should be of a different gender, ethnicity, and age.
- Reach out to interview candidates via email or phone to set up time and location of the interview, in addition to communicating an overview of the topic for discussion.
- Take notes during the interview. Notes should highlight key points made during the discussion and should also reflect the context of topics and responses. Appropriate permissions need to be obtained if a recording of the interview is made.

Discussion topics could/should include:

- Career pathways and obstacles faced/overcome
- Challenges in the work environment
- Career choice perspectives
- Communication style with co-workers, management, and clients
- Workplace and co-worker dynamics
- Dress code, attitude, and demeanor
- Perspectives on 'being the new person'
- Perspectives on 'helping the new person'
- Understanding boundaries and protocols
- Problem-solving

The summative assessment of these interview assignments will culminate in a video reflection of the students' experience.

IMPACT/IMPLEMENTATION

The expected outcome is greater confidence around interaction in the workplace environment. Additionally, students are expected to gain a better understanding of the expectations of employers and co-workers and workplace dynamics.