

LAB E: Co-Supplemental Instructor Practicum (COSI)

Purpose:

The purpose of this Skills lab option is to enable students to learn and apply good leadership, communication, and team-building skills within a group environment.

Eligibility:

This Skills Lab option is offered to students who have already demonstrated good leadership, communication, and team-building behaviors toward others within the group setting. Students who wish to enhance these behaviors must have already earned an A grade on their first major class assignment in their content course.

Verification and Lab Credit:

Interested students should discuss their desire to do a COSI lab with their SI. (The SI or student must verify the student's grade with the course instructor **before** arranging the COSI lab session.) Completion of the COSI is equivalent to two (2) Skills labs.

Directions:

To complete this lab, the student will need to:

1. Set up a time to do at least 30 minutes of one group session during the quarter
2. Read the group leadership, communication, and team-building strategies
3. Complete the pre-COSI planning form
4. Create and use appropriate visual aids
5. Conduct a group session
6. Complete a post-COSI evaluation, have the SI sign it, and submit it for lab credit.

Read the following leadership, communication and team-building strategies:

To develop leadership skills:

- Be a role model.
- Justify your position logically and appropriately. State your goal and agendas clearly.
- Be punctual, and establish credibility through competence and integrity.
- Take minority opinion contributions into consideration.
- Be willing to be uncomfortable. Often leaders have to make decisions or provide direction that is unpopular with the group.
- Practice confidentiality with those you lead.
- Help others see the big picture.
- Delegate. Promote initiative and leadership in others.
- Make requests of those you lead to demonstrate your confidence in their abilities.
- Follow up. If you expect others to complete tasks, they will expect the same from you.
- Focus on the problems, not the people. Most people will join in to find a solution if they do not feel they are to blame for the problem.
- Share the credit. The results you achieve are dependent on the efforts of the group.

To build communication skills:

- ❑ Listen. Divide your time equally between listening and talking. Make eye contact and show interest by asking questions and commenting on what's being said.
- ❑ Converse. A conversation is an interchange of ideas and opinions; don't dominate, interrupt or lecture. Stay calm and use an appropriate tone when talking.
- ❑ Encourage. Help people explain their opinions or thoughts without judging what they say, but express what you think too. If you are unclear about what you heard, restate it by saying phrases like "Did you mean...?" or "Did I hear you say...?"
- ❑ Have Fun. When appropriate, create fun learning activities or games (i.e., Jeopardy for learning terms) or Mnemonics (to remember lists).
- ❑ Be Supportive. Encourage others by showing your excitement about their ideas or theories. Being supportive means respecting others' opinions, being receptive to new ideas, and seeking points of agreement. Tell others when you have learned from them.
- ❑ Be Assertive. Being assertive means asking for what you want. It also means not giving in to people who try to make you do something you don't want to do. Assertive behavior is polite but strong and independent. As an assertive person, you will ask questions, seek out information, and be able to express clearly to others what you do not understand and what help you need from them. Encourage assertiveness from others as well.

To create an effective team:

- ❑ Share. Ask others for their answers, thoughts, opinions, and other information whenever possible.
- ❑ Motivate. Make sure you have clear goals. Establish an agenda. Then focus on what you accomplished before wrapping-up. Reward others with praise when they do well.
- ❑ Establish rapport. Encourage everyone to help each other. Create a friendly environment.
- ❑ Recognize and use strengths. Build on those strengths to develop the team. Invite members of the group (especially the "tactile/kinesthetic" learners) to get up and explain something by using the board, have auditory learners explain something to another member of the team, ask visual learners to draw diagrams or take notes.
- ❑ Resolve differences. For the benefit of the group, create win-win situations.
- ❑ Laugh. Laughter can break up tension and make learning easier.
- ❑ Find mutual goals. Let everyone take responsibility for achieving group goals.
- ❑ Be aware of cultural differences. Communication varies between different cultures, as does eye contact, how close you sit or stand to another, how long it takes to respond to a question.

PRE-COSI PLANNING FORM

Name: _____ Content Course: _____ SI: _____ Date: _____

My grade is currently an A in this class
(or at least 85% of earnable points to date).

Grade Verified by: _____

Instructor or SI signature

My SI and I have agreed that I will lead our group discussion on (date): _____

This is the general topic for my group session:

This is my agenda for this session (main ideas and goals):

My visual aids will consist of: _____

Here are at least 5 open-ended questions or activities that I can use to promote discussion:

Here are some listening and learning strategies I will use during my session:

This is how I plan to make this topic interesting and fun to learn:

These are a few things I think I can learn from the others in my group:

POST-COSI EVALUATION FORM

Name: _____ Content Course: _____ SI: _____ Date: _____

Now that you have completed your COSI session, evaluate your experience as a co-supplemental instructor. Place a check mark in the line to indicate the degree to which you feel you achieved the following leadership, communication, and team-building objectives.

To what degree did you maintain consistent eye contact with the group members?

Low *Moderate* *High*

To what degree did you include all members of your group in discussion?

Low *Moderate* *High*

To what degree did you listen without passing immediate judgment (displayed openness)?

Low *Moderate* *High*

To what degree did you show interest and enthusiasm for what others had to say?

Low *Moderate* *High*

To what degree did you communicate your topic(s) using the board, examples, or details?

Low *Moderate* *High*

To what degree did you set a positive tone, create fun, and motivate the students to get involved?

Low *Moderate* *High*

To what degree did you take minority opinion (or the less popular) contributions into consideration?

Low *Moderate* *High*

To what degree did you communicate understanding through responses such as "I understand", etc?

Low *Moderate* *High*

Have your SI complete the following and sign below before submitting forms:

What did you see as my strengths in leading the group?

How might I improve my group facilitation skills in the future?

SI (Please sign): _____ **Date:** _____

Student: Submit both the completed Pre and Post-COSI forms to the Skills Center for credit. Note: COSI labs can be conducted after the lab deadline with the Skills Coordinator's written approval.