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ISM 1

Mr. Speice

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### Trusting the Process

Being a part of the Independent Study Mentorship class is an opportunity that has allowed for both personal and professional growth and experience. The work that has been studied just in the first semester has allowed for a jump start in my career with advanced knowledge directly related to the tasks that would be completed on a day to day bases as a service dog trainer. Although there have been continuous struggles throughout the year, being able to grow from each mistake and failure allowed for overall success.

One of the highpoints of ISM is independent research. I thought it would be easy to be able to conduct research properly and give long speeches without any issues, but it was difficult to be able to convey all of my ideas in a way where I was just explaining the information but giving detailed about what was learned from research and how it could be related to the field of study. This was a skill that has become beneficial when giving presentations because being able to give practical applications for the information makes the presentation more personal because it is relating the research to the future in the profession. Speeches were first given at the beginning of the year it was struggled with remaining on topic throughout the entirety of the speech. Being able to create a speech outline that has talking points allows for the speech to flow from beginning to end without sounding overly rehearsed. In my first research presentation was a success; I was able to speak for the allotted time, but near the end of the ten minutes it became

difficult to find things to talk about any topic and sentences were repeated. This took away from the overall presentation. Creating simple but descriptive outlines became something that was worked on heavily after the first presentation. Having the short talking points also ensured that I would have content to talk about so the presentation would not sound redundant because of repetition of ideas throughout the presentation.

Being able to focus on my own passions was an important factor in continuing my success. In my mission statement, one of the main goals for the year was to inspire others with my passions, while beginning inspired by those around me. Finding a mentor was a short process for me because of how niche the topic of service dog training is. Having the opportunity to meet with dog trainers allowed me to grasp a full understanding of the process to become a dog trainer. Although two professionals interviewed who were not service dog trainers but had knowledge of the cognitive function of dogs that catalyzed more advanced research in how a dog should be trained in order to get the best results. It was important to me to find a mentor that could be connected with on both a personal and professional level because of the reasons related to my personal life that led me to choose to study service dog training. My mentor for the year is Maureen Bennett is the founder of her own service dog training company IDEA service dogs. She shared a similar experience with the reasoning behind becoming a service dog trainer. It was interesting to hear her speak about how she did not want to let a disability limit her success. Being able to hear her story inspired my original work project, writing out a business plan for a psychiatric service dog training company.

Having a mentor with immense knowledge in business creation aided in the process. I was able to come to her if there was any confusion on any specific portion of creating a business.

As time progresses and the final product starts to come into fruition, considering a project that relates to what Bennett does will make it easier if problems and issues develop. It was important for me to try to stay on top of the original work project and not wait until the last minute to finish. This was a goal was achieved, although it was difficult to learn how to time manage and balance original work as well as other class work. An abundance of information about managing a business that would not have been learned if a project that related directly to dog training was chosen. Even though it was easy to be able to meet the goals of eliminating procrastination, there were goals that were not achieved. Meeting with other people who started a small business was something that I wanted to do in order to have more knowledge about what to do and not to do from personal experience. To improve upon this for the next semester, calling more professionals outside of the field of dog training will have to become a more frequent occurrence. This is will ensure that work is done that will be easily understood by anyone from any professional background.

As the first semester is reflected one, many lessons have been learned about what it takes to be both an ISM student and an aspiring service dog trainer. Many mistakes have been made that have limited some overall success, but being able to bounce back and improve upon every failure has been one of the most important things that have been learned thus far. Putting more effort into each thing being done no matter how simple it may seem will transfer into better results.