Guideposts to a Successful Summer Virtual Internship

**Occupation:** Customer Service Specialist       **Industry:** Business Services

**Host Organization:**

**Mentor:**
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This playbook shall serve as a guide for the virtual consultancy experience. The main emphasis of this playbook is to provide guidance around the design of the consultancy activities to ensure that the supervisors and interns have a fluid and meaningful experience. As such, the playbooks have been designed around prompts and ideas that lead to a REFRAME Method for activity design:

**REFRAME**

- **Reveal Targeted Skills** for and within the week’s work during a beginning of the week check-in
- **Establish Performance Evidence** (what does success look like?)
- **Focused Activity Design** (tasks that will involve the targeted skills and reveal performance)
- **Reinforce Expectations**
- **Assessment Using Feedback** (to be evaluated upon receipt of deliverable)
- **Magnify Recognition**
- **Explore Meaning Making**

The above components have been pieced together to ensure that you and your intern have a structure for a productive consultancy. More information about the above **REFRAME Methodology can be found here.**
Project Summary

Summary:
Interns who participate in this consultancy will have an opportunity to practice customer service skills, technical data entry and call logging skills, analysis of live data, and social media content building skills. For the duration of the consultancy, the interns will be asked to reach out to existing clients/customers and follow a script that we have prepared. Interns will log the call results on a spreadsheet that we will provide, will complete an anecdotal analysis of the calls, and will build content and ideas for social media posts to address the needs found in the calls. There will be multiple touchpoints between the interns and supervisor throughout the week for periodic feedback. The conclusion will be a final presentation in which the interns will make a presentation of their findings to the host organization’s staff.
# Weekly Goals and Objectives

## Key Deliverables/Weekly Outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Interns are onboarded and become familiar with organization's mission, vision, and work culture. Interns will be introduced to the call script and will practice calls, log entries, and conduct an analysis.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Interns will continue making calls, logging entries, and analyzing calls. Interns will complete the draft for at least two social media posts based on analysis.</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Interns will prepare their capstone presentation that encompasses their internship experience. Interns will deliver the presentation at the concluding meeting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skill Targets

Targeted Skills:

- **Active Listening** — Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- **Speaking** — Talking to others to convey information effectively.
- **Service Orientation** — Actively looking for ways to help people.

ONet

Soft Skill Focus:

- Communication

Review the Soft Skill Building Blocks Here
Inviting interns to participate in additional work based learning experiences is a great way to make the experience rich. Don’t forget to include these invitations in your weekly check-in meetings and or communications. Below are the suggested additional activities that were chosen by the organization during the planning stages:

**Potential Additional Activities:**
- Team Meetings/Huddles
- Staff Development Activity
- Attendance at Webinars/Presentations
- Opportunities to meet with "Guest Speakers"
- Q and A with other staff

### Sample Weekly Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Supervisor Action</th>
<th>Intern Action (2-3 hours per day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Facilitate check-in, establish personal connection, discuss weekly work, provide detailed feedback from previous week, answer questions as they arise</td>
<td>Participate in Check-In, ask any outstanding questions, begin work on weekly project(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Reply to intern’s questions/needs</td>
<td>Continue work on project(s), contact supervisor with questions/concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Optional: Facilitate check-in Reply to intern’s questions/needs</td>
<td>Continue work on project(s), contact supervisor with questions/concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Reply to intern’s questions/needs</td>
<td>Continue work on project(s), contact supervisor with questions/concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Optional: Facilitate check-in Reply to intern’s questions/needs</td>
<td>Complete assigned weekly tasks, submit deliverables to Supervisor in timely manner, submit any questions/concerns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Performance Evidence:
**What does success look like?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Component of the Final Deliverable</th>
<th>Evidence of Mastery in Context/Project</th>
<th>When to Assess?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interns will submit call logs with analysis.</td>
<td>interns call logs will be neat and easy to understand. Analysis includes an understanding of how this client fits into our overall mission and vision, and how we can improve the relationship. ✓</td>
<td>Checkpoint 1 ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call logs and analysis, as well as drafts for two Social Media posts.</td>
<td>The call logs and analysis are neat and easy to understand, reflect how our vision and mission are impacted by client outreach, and the Social Media content serves as a call to action. ✓</td>
<td>Checkpoint 1 ✓</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interns will prepare their capstone presentation that encompasses their internship experience. Interns will deliver the presentation at the concluding meeting.</td>
<td>Interns clearly communicate the whole consultancy experience, utilize technology effectively, are able to summarize challenges and triumphs, and demonstrated a lasting takeaway from the experience. ✓</td>
<td>Checkpoint 1 ✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Share the rubric and tasks with the interns.
- It is critical that evidence of mastery is directly aligned to the deliverable.
One of the most critical components to growth is delivering and receiving effective feedback. Feedback that is honest, consistent, evidence based, and action oriented has proven to be a contributing factor to intern success. Below is a formula created by MHA Labs that is helpful for encouraging feedback conversations to stay on track:

- **Context:** At/During/With... *discuss the context through which the observable action was noted.*
- **Expectation:** My expectation was/I had hoped... *explain what the expectation for the action or behavior was, remind them that this was discussed and explained.*
- **Evidence:** I noticed you/I thought you... *be explicit about the action you are explaining. Be honest, don’t exaggerate, stick to observed actions.*
- **Feedback:** Have a conversation with your intern where you allow them to express their feelings about what has been shared.
- **Suggestion:** Always close with a suggestion for improvement (even if the intern “nailed it”).
An important component of the complete consultancy experience involves magnifying recognition and exploring meaning making with your interns. In both instances the goal is to continue to build confidence and further solidify the purpose of the experience (How does this fit into my long term goals?). As a supervisor, you are asked to find opportunities to magnify recognition and explore meaning making. Below are the strategies you identified you are able to execute. Be sure to place a checkmark, or highlight the strategies you use to keep track.

**Magnify Recognition:**
- Shout out via email (shared with other staff)
- Shout out in team meeting/huddle
- Shout out on Social Media

**Explore Meaning Making:**
- Facilitate a conversation with clients/customers about the organization's impact
- Request that the intern research this occupation, the training required, and the typical paths to employment
- Weekly journal/reflection that is shared with mentor (feedback provided)
**Week 1: Onboarding and Introduction**

**Estimated Time: 10-12 Hours**

**Key Goals, Tasks/Activities, or Deliverables for Week 1:**

- Interns are onboarded and become familiar with organization's mission, vision, and work culture. Interns will be introduced to the call script and will practice calls, log entries, and conduct an analysis.
- Interns will submit call logs with analysis.

*Reminder to supervisors: Make sure to follow the guidance in the Employer Toolkit for Day 1!*

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**Checkpoint 1**

**Assessment:** Use the rubric/assessment tool on Performance Evidence to assess the deliverables due this week.

- Interns call logs will be neat and easy to understand. Analysis includes an understanding of how this client fits into our overall mission and vision, and how we can improve the relationship.

**Feedback:**

- **If intern performed below expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:**
  - This week has been a great chance to get to know each other, but in this time you have failed to deliver on the expectations. We discussed the timeline and the tasks at the beginning of the week. Was there something else I could have done? What prevented you from being successful?
  - Next week I would like to have an additional check-in to see if we can get on a better working pattern.

- **If intern performed at or above expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:**
  - This week was fun. You listened well, communicated your needs, and delivered on the expectations that were discussed. Thank you for that. As we move on through this experience, be reminded of those things that make you successful...great listener, problem solver, good at time management, etc. These are things that will propel you forward.
Week 2
Estimated Time: 10-12 Hours

Key Goals, Tasks/Activities, or Deliverables for Week 2:

- Interns will continue making calls, logging entries, and analyzing calls. Interns will complete the draft for at least two social media posts based on analysis.
- Call logs and analysis, as well as drafts for two Social Media posts.

Checkpoint 2
Assessment: Use the rubric/assessment tool on Performance Evidence to assess the deliverables due this week.

- The call logs and analysis are neat and easy to understand, reflect how our vision and mission are impacted by client outreach, and the Social Media content serves as a call to action.

Feedback:
- If intern performed below expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  - I want to revisit our check-in on Monday and remind you of the expectations we discussed. It is important that we communicate clearly. How can we improve that? Next week I would like for you to send me a mid-week update of how things are going.

- If intern performed at or above expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  - The work you did in analyzing the call logs was outstanding. You are generating an understanding of this work, and it is showing in your productivity. Keep that up. I encourage you to continue to refine your call logs, and welcome any suggestions to altering/adjusting the script. Next week, I would like for you to increase your output.
Week 3
Estimated Time: 10-12 Hours

Key Goals, Tasks/Activities, or Deliverables for Week 3:

- Interns will continue making calls, logging entries, and analyzing calls. Interns will complete the draft for at least two social media posts based on analysis.
- Call logs and analysis, as well as drafts for two Social Media posts.

Checkpoint 3:
Assessment: Use the rubric/assessment tool on Performance Evidence to assess the deliverables due this week.

- The call logs and analysis are neat and easy to understand, reflect how our vision and mission are impacted by client outreach, and the Social Media content serves as a call to action.

Feedback:
- If intern performed below expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  ○ Your call logs were not up to our standard, and you did not meet the expectation for the social media content. I would like for you to tell me how I can assist. Next week, we will do a daily email check in to gauge your progress and needs.

- If intern performed at or above expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  ○ I have been impressed by your work thus far. You are hitting all the marks of a successful employee. Keep it up. How do you think it is going? Next week let’s just continue to deliver great products. I will invite you to a couple of calls so you can meet the people I work with.
Week 4
Estimated Time: 10-12 Hours

Key Goals, Tasks/Activities, or Deliverables for Week 4:

- Interns will continue making calls, logging entries, and analyzing calls. Interns will complete the draft for at least two social media posts based on analysis.
- Call logs and analysis, as well as drafts for two Social Media posts.

Checkpoint 4
Assessment: Use the rubric/assessment tool on Performance Evidence to assess the deliverables due this week.

- The call logs and analysis are neat and easy to understand, reflect how our vision and mission are impacted by client outreach, and the Social Media content serves as a call to action.

Feedback:
- If intern performed below expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  - We are almost near the end, and unfortunately you have missed the mark. I would like for you to reflect on what it was that hindered your success and ask that you consider that in your final presentation. I would like for you to finish on a high note. What is it that you think you need to do to finish strong? Let’s do a daily check-in to make sure your final presentation is your best work.

- If intern performed at or above expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  - I want to commend you for a great job done. You have hit the mark on the deliverables and done so with great pride. What do you think has contributed to that? As we move into next week I would like you to capitalize on how well you have done in this experience, and let that shine in your final presentation.
Week 5: Capstone Week
Estimated Time: 10-12 Hours

Key Goals, Tasks/Activities, or Deliverables for Week 5:

- Interns will prepare a capstone presentation that encompasses their internship experience. Interns will deliver the presentation at the concluding meeting.
- Presentations should include all the elements of the YouthForce Capstone requirements plus any additional artifacts that the intern has developed.

Checkpoint 5 Assessment and Exit Interview: Use the rubric/assessment tool on pg. 2 to assess the deliverables due this week and complete the final evaluation survey, which will be emailed to you.

- Interns clearly communicate the whole consultancy experience, utilize technology effectively, are able to summarize challenges and triumphs, and demonstrated a lasting takeaway from the experience.

Mentors are also expected to complete a final evaluation survey, which will be emailed to you from the YouthForce team. Be sure to complete the assessment prior to your exit interview with your intern(s).

Feedback:

- If intern performed below expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  ○ This week was presentation week, and although we didn’t hit the mark, I can see how valuable this experience has been. I hope you learn from this...these are not mistakes you want to make on your first job. Continue to listen, and continue to work hard.

- If intern performed at or above expectations, here are some suggested feedback prompts:
  ○ This experience has been a reflection of a great set of skills and tools that you have. Tell me what allowed you to remain successful. I encourage you to keep up with those best practices you have already identified, and always remember to learn from your mistakes.
Additional Resources

- REFRAME Methodology
- Soft Skill Building Blocks
- Feedback Formula
- Cooperative Learning/Group Dynamics
REFRAME Methodology

**REFRAME** is an acronym that MHA Labs’ Leslie Beller, and Paige Boetefeur with YouthForce NOLA designed that helps communicate a lesson or activity plan that includes steps critical to Skill building. When combined with the Soft Skill building blocks, we believe that interns will have a great opportunity to grow in their Skill development.

- **Reveal Targeted Skills**
  - Whether Technical, Academic, or Soft...skills needed to succeed must be identified.

- **Establish Evidence**
  - Determine the criteria and the exemplars upon which success will be measured

- **Focused Activity Design**
  - Ensure that the activities, target skills, and established evidence all align in an efficient manner.

- **Reinforce Expectations**
  - Have clear conversations and tools that make it known what actions need to be taken, when and how they should be taken, and how they will be measured.

- **Assess Using Feedback**
  - It is critical that assessment is ongoing, applicable to real world experiences, and consists of an open feedback loop.

- **Magnify Recognition**
  - Find opportunities to celebrate the victories (no matter how small) and seek to replicate the ingredients that led to success.

- **Explore Meaning Making**
  - Find opportunities to reinforce the connection between the skills learned in this experience to their applicability to the world beyond this experience.
EXPLORE THE MHA LABS BUILDING BLOCKS

The MHA Labs 21st Century Skill Building Blocks were specifically designed to be inclusive of a broad range of core skills but still practical for everyday use in the classroom. There are 35 foundational skills organized into 6 building blocks or categories. You will find in your practice that each building block of skills supports success in the others. We encourage you to only focus on the skills that are most critical to success in your curriculum. This focused list is called your Skills Mastery Profile or “Power Profile”. Before we get to the “Power Profile” section, let’s first take a moment to familiarize yourself with these skills.

**PERSONAL MINDSET**

- Needs minimal supervision to complete tasks.
- Attempts to complete tasks independently before asking for help.
- Follows rules/directions as required by the task/situation.
- Maintains focus on tasks despite internal (e.g., emotional) and/or external distractions.
- Avoids actions that have produced undesirable consequences or results in the past.
- Strives to overcome barriers/set-backs, seeking assistance when needed.
- Adapts approach in response to new conditions or others’ actions.

**PLANNING FOR SUCCESS**

- Sets and prioritizes goals that reflect a self-awareness of one’s capabilities, interests, emotions, and/or needs.
- Breaks goals into actionable steps.
- Accurately estimates level of effort and establishes realistic timelines.
- Manages time to complete tasks on schedule.
- Applies existing/newly acquired knowledge, skills, and/or strategies that one determines to be useful for achieving goals.
- Monitors progress and own performance, adjusting approach as necessary.
- Demonstrates a belief that one’s own actions are associated with goal attainment.

**SOCIAL AWARENESS**

- Recognizes the consequences of one’s actions.
- Balances own needs with the needs of others.
- Takes into consideration others’ situations/feelings.
- Develops and implements strategies for navigating in different contexts (i.e., manages different patterns of behavior, rules, and norms).
COMMUNICATION
» Organizes information that serves the purpose of the message, context, and audience.
» Uses and adjusts communication strategies as needed based on the purpose of the message, context, and audience.
» Signals listening according to the rules/norms of the context and audience.
» Seeks input to gauge others’ understanding of the message.
» Asks questions to deepen and/or clarify one’s understanding when listening to others.

COLLABORATION
» Completes tasks as they have been assigned or agreed upon by the group.
» Helps team members complete tasks, as needed.
» Encourages the ideas, opinions, and contributions of others, leveraging individual strengths.
» Provides feedback in a manner that is sensitive to others’ situation/feelings.
» Clarifies areas of disagreement/conflict that need to be addressed to achieve a common goal.
» Seeks to obtain resolution of disagreements/conflicts to achieve a common goal.

PROBLEM SOLVING
» Defines problems by considering all potential parts and related causes.
» Gathers and organizes relevant information about a problem from multiple sources.
» Generates potential solutions to a problem, seeking and leveraging diverse perspectives.
» Identifies alternative ideas/processes that are more effective than the ones previously used/suggested.
» Evaluates the advantages and disadvantages associated with each potential solution identified for a problem.
» Selects and implements best solution based on evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of each potential solution.

How were the Building Blocks developed? MHA Labs believes that teachers, youth developers, colleges and employers need a unified skills framework to empower youth success. To achieve this goal, MHA Labs first built a 4000-item competency database from existing education and employment research. Then MHA Labs engaged over 100 subject matter experts, teachers, counselors, youth developers, assessment specialists, youth and parents to isolate 6 core skill domains and 35 core skills. Before finalizing the framework, a cultural anthropologist and linguist analyzed and debated each skill proposed for the framework to ensure that MHA Labs skills were actually skills, not cultural norms masquerading as skills. Read more at http://mhalabs.org/skill-building-blocks/
Skill-Building Feedback Method

At / During / With...

My expectation was / I had hoped...

I noticed you / I thought you...

I felt / That was / What do you..?

Next time, let’s try...

CONTEXT

EXPECTATION

EVIDENCE

FEEDBACK

SUGGESTION
The Art and Science of Feedback

Providing timely feedback is vital to skills development - Yet too few people do it. Why? Fear to give it and fear to receive it. People are extremely reluctant to give feedback for fear of being negative. People are extremely defensive receiving feedback for fear of failure. MHA Labs makes a critical distinction between performance judgment and judgmental feedback. A person may meet/exceed an expectation (positive) or not (negative), but the feedback you give in both circumstances should be non-judgmental and developmental.

In response, MHA Labs developed a simple method to promote skill-building feedback and minimize the tendency to use judgmental language. Skill-building feedback incorporates 5 core components—context, expectation, evidence, feedback and suggestion. Incorporating this method into your own personal communication style can transform your skill-building practice.

Page two provided a clear example of strengths-based feedback. Now explore more complex growth feedback.

Situation: Michelle is alienating everyone on her service learning team by refusing to do what the team leader Jamie needs her to do.

Instead of replying... “Michelle, there is no need to yell. Just do what Jamie tells you to do and finish the project on time.”

Now try the Skill-Building Feedback method... “Michelle, on your service learning team (context), I was hoping that you would begin to use some of the collaboration skills we have been working on (expectation). I noticed every time someone on the team asks you to share in the tasks you yell “no, you can’t tell me what to do” (evidence). Now you respond enthusiastically when I have assigned you tasks so I know you can take direction. Why do you think it is harder from your classmates? (feedback conversation ensues...) Oh, I didn’t realize you were worried that they will make fun of you. How about tomorrow you agree to do the tasks and I will facilitate a team debrief where everyone on the team gets recognized for their contribution. (suggestion)”

MHA Labs Skill-Building Feedback Method is fortified by the “Seven Keys to Effective Feedback”

Wiggins, Grant. “Seven Keys to Effective Feedback,” Educational Leadership ASCD, September 2012; Volume 70, Number 1

1. References back to a goal or expectation and shows progress towards meeting that goal
2. Provides tangible examples of results and makes the experience transparent
3. Provides actionable next steps to close the gap in where they are now to where they need to be
4. Is broken down to user-friendly language that the receiver can readily understand
5. Is delivered during or soon after when the experience is fresh
6. Given on a regular basis to allow for practice and adjustment
7. Remains consistent in what evidence or level of performance determines success
Cooperative Learning/Group Dynamics

Cooperative learning and group dynamics are nothing new to the world of education and/or project based learning. Below are some suggestions for how to make the best use of groups during the consultancy.

1. **Define Roles:** Clearly defined roles will help alleviate any confusion when it comes to task completion. Since you will have no prior knowledge of the interns, you may find the best value in a random assignment of roles at first. You can then gauge the intern performance and refine the roles as the project(s) go on.

2. **Promote teamwork and communication:** Although inherent in “groups” is the understanding that interns will be working together, do not be afraid to overcommunicate the value of teamwork and positive communication. Regardless of the outcome of the project(s), you have an opportunity to build skills in the area of teamwork and accountability that rarely come along for our young people.

3. **Rotate Positions:** If your project repeats itself weekly, and the interns have an opportunity to practice various roles within a group, we encourage you to allow interns to try the different positions within the team.

4. **Provide an Outline for Group Norms/Expectations:** Share with your interns what your organization’s group work and norms look like. Artifacts like meeting agendas can speak to your organization’s values, and give a structure for the way interns conduct their group work away from your supervision.

5. **Be Flexible and Seek Teachable Moments:** Sometimes the most valuable lessons learned are those that you never plan for. Cooperative learning often leads to amazing opportunities for teachable moments. Embrace the challenges and give honest and consistent feedback.

**Group Planning/Tracker**
## Sample Group Planning/Tracker: Duties Rotate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Member</th>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Week 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly Role</td>
<td>Weekly Role</td>
<td>Weekly Role</td>
<td>Weekly Role</td>
<td>Weekly Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member 1</td>
<td>Leader &amp; Content Producer</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Harmonizer</td>
<td>Editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member 2</td>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>Leader &amp; Content Producer</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Harmonizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member 3</td>
<td>Harmonizer</td>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>Leader &amp; Content Producer</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member 4</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Harmonizer</td>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>Leader &amp; Content Producer</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member 5</td>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Harmonizer</td>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>Leader &amp; Content Producer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Google Sheets Version](#)
Group Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Communicates plan, objectives, and expectations. Responsible for producing content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizer</td>
<td>Sets calendar events, Zoom calls, meeting agendas, and communicates with the team often.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>Responsible for ensuring that technology needs are met, that resources are available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmonizer</td>
<td>Stays on top of group to make sure that everyone understands their role and responsibility. Makes sure productivity stays high by planning fun things and/or sending encouraging messages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>Ensures that deliverables meet the standard as explained at the beginning of the project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** In addition to filling the duties of these specific roles, all members are responsible for content production. When one role’s task or duties are finished, and there is still work to be done, team members will assist their teammates.