

**1) Describe a situation from your Field Placement. Describe the client system and situation factually and objectively.**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The student is interning at a not-for-profit organization that provides, a wide range of services such as, Technical assistance, Business solutions, Program Management, and System restoration to agencies in the Rochester area, (Sullivan, 2020). During the fall semester of 2020, the student intern must abide by all competencies laid out in, The Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE), Educational Policy, and accreditation standards for baccalaureate and master's social work programs (2015). As well as, the organization's remote work policies in response to the current pandemic, (Sullivan, 2020).

Working with the agency's client system remotely offers a different set of experiences to the student than normal in-person-interfacing would. However, the student is expected to use Competency 1 of the CSWE standards and demonstrate ethical and professional behavior (2015). While remote locations may present less in-person relationship forming and rapport building; the student is given ample opportunity to meet Competency 2's definition by Engaging in Diversity and Difference of Practice (2015). At any given week at the organization; the student is expected, to attend and participate in, various group projects and workshops with surrounding agencies. These groups are often established with certain tasks or actions needing to be fulfilled inside the system of workers, "An action system is formed because of the work to be done and because the tasks to be carried out require more than one person" (Yanca & Johnson, 2009).

The meeting conspired, and being addressed in this entry, was formed for, brainstorming ideas and projections, consultants would like to make to (for) clients during the next fiscal year. It was

coordinated and operated by the agencies, Information Technology (I.T.) department. During the meeting, an opportunity for presenting ideas was given. Lead consultants and the organization's data team provided various examples of what they would like to be able to predict for their clients. Approximately three minutes was given for answer submissions. Afterward, the I.T. department read the submissions aloud, and then they gave time for staff to give input on each submission. Various members of the administration gave submissions that corresponded with each other; regarding next year's fiscal budget. Lead consultants state, "If they could project anything for their clients; it would be their budget projections for the upcoming year. As, well as, where the funds are being disbursed on an organizational level. (L. C., personal communication, November 1st, 2020). Conversation transcriptions surrounding specifics and logistics of the organization's budget will not be discussed in this entry; due to the confidential nature of the material. Although, the student was able to make personal notations of the language used in these conversations.

After conversations regarding the company's budget were discussed the I.T. department separated attendees into breakout rooms. For the reader who isn't accustomed to virtual remote work on the platform Zoom. A break room is a separate online meeting location where individuals can collaborate in small groups consisting of typically 2-5 members. During this breakout session, the intern was able to discuss and brainstorm with a few colleagues that were relatively new coincidentally. During the brief five-minute breakout session, the group discussed a few ideas that they could present to the meeting at large. Afterward, the I.T. department held a discussion; presenting ideas each group came up with. Each assigned speaker, of the groups, reported their ideas and thoughts. This collective group of thoughts and ideas were gathered, briefly discussed, and then made note of for future meetings and data. Upon, completing the

brainstorming discussion the meeting came to end and everyone departed the online meeting room.

- 2) **How do you interpret (assess) these behaviors, facts, and observations? In your discussion, use theories and concepts (with citations) from Methods I, II & II, Research, Human Diversity, HBSE, Social and Economic Justice, and/or Policy to explain the behaviors and the situation you have observed. These behaviors can be related to organizations and communities, as well as individuals, families, or groups.**

The meeting described was an active engagement in policy practice, Competency 5 in the CSWE standards. The gathering and active collaboration of professionals allowed the intern to exhibit their understanding of, Competency 3: Advance Human Rights and Social, Economic, and Environmental Justice (2015). This was done through the intern's understanding of global interconnections of oppression and human rights, and theories that support it (2015).

Behaviors of the intern and staff involved can be broken down into a variety of theories and (or) perspectives, “At their core, theories can be used to provide explanations of any number or variety of phenomena” (Yanca & Johnson, 2009). The intern had some lack of participation that may have resulted from one of the student’s identities creating a low sense of self-worth as a result of chronic and acute oppression and discrimination, (Yanca & Johnson, 2009). Being new to the organization, and representing the university, it was clear the intern was being influenced by both internal and external forces, “It is clear that people are influenced by their environment while also influencing their environment” (Johnson & Yanca, 2010).

The meeting primarily discussed budgeting for the following year, however, the organization can only assist the community it serves if the funds are properly disbursed and monitored closely. Only when gatherings and brainstorming sessions like this occur can professionals collaborate to effectively end oppression in its bureaucratic structure, “Looking at differences and similarities provides the basis for collaborative efforts to challenge oppression” (Sue et al., 2016). The intern’s behaviors demonstrated they comprehended the magnitude of their actions. That by observing and researching staff with ample experience and training was the best way to uphold the reputation of the social work at large, “When you engage in a social work research, you stand on the reputation the profession has built for over a century” (DeCarlo, 2018).

- 3) **Identify and analyze the interventions, knowledge, values, skills, and/or competencies used in this situation: How did you handle it, or how it was handled by another worker or supervisor? Apply theories and concepts from your social work knowledge of interventions (skills), using citations. What alternative interventions could have been utilized?**

The intern demonstrated Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and communities, by understanding the complex dynamics of social interactions, (2015). Utilizing silence during the meeting allowed the intern to focus on how high-level associates interact amongst each other, “The worker listens to what group members have to say and how they respond to questions and responses” (Yanca & Johnson, 2009). The intern used theories and concepts learned throughout their career to acting how they saw the best fit, “It is important to incorporate knowledge gained from research and practice into working with clients” (Johnson & Yanca, 2010). The intern was also able to

demonstrate Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities (2015). They were able to do this by applying their knowledge of human behavior and the social environment to the group at hand. Remaining silent, allowed the intern, to remain objective, and act as an assessor rather than a participant.

The intern could have used a more proactive approach to the meeting. They could have chosen to prepare for the brainstorming session more in-depth. This would have allowed the intern to fully demonstrate Competency 4: Engage in Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice, by engaging more in the conversation of possible qualitative and quantitative methods of transformation (2015). While also, helping them understand the topics that were going to be covered, language used inside the topics. All of which, may have been helpful for the intern to articulate their views, opinions, and expressions.

- 4) **This section should address the affective (feeling) level. Describe your reactions to the above situation. These may be mixed. Discuss how these responses may have emerged from various sources such as your family experiences, worldview, values, religion, gender, etc.**

The event described was chosen specifically because of my personal feelings towards the situation. I chose to utilize silence as described prior; although, part of me felt that was a disservice to myself and my own learning experience. Being a creature of great curiosity means that normally I am full of questions and remarks. However, with this agency being filled with high-level executives, I felt intimidated to speak outside terms of the scope I am confident in. Being a student with disabilities and ascending from the lower class, living mostly in poverty I felt inadequate as a representation. “The U.S. government's poverty

definition assumes that there is a standard of living below which Americans can be considered deprived” (DiNitto, 2016).

Aside from my economic status, I felt my ideologies behind my identities of race and gender also played a significant role in my behavior during the meeting. Being a white, Caucasian, heterosexual male, I feel obligated to check my sense of entitlement “at the door”. Often, this means I actively present the opportunity for others to speak before me. Allowing others to speak first not only helps check my intentions but allows people in the room to understand they are equal and important members of the discussion.

**5) What have you learned from this situation? Link this experience to the Core Learning Competencies and the appropriate indicators.**

This experience proved as a very informative situation. The intern began their first steps in learning how to demonstrate core Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities (2015). The formal gathering of professionals discussing ideas to provide their client systems allowed the intern to experience a macro level form of intervention and social justice, “A social justice perspective is core to social work and is reflected in the 2008 Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW).” (Sue et al., 2016). The meeting also was the first example of Evaluating Practice with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities, core Competency 9 the student has experienced in this client system (2015). The intern was able to gain insight on how to utilize their time before the next brainstorming session. The meeting was a useful tool and example of the types of information the student will be analyzing and presenting to clients in the future, “Therefore, understanding the different levels of analysis and being aware of which level you happen to be employing is crucial” (Yanca & Johnson, 2009).



## References:

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