**2013 SOS Submission: NY Metro Chapter**

**On-Site Practitioner Series**

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| **Submission Date:** August 2, 2013 **Chapter Name:** NY Metro **Chapter ID:** CH1026 **Chapter Location:** New York, NY **Chapter Membership Size:**  395 | **Contact for this Submission: Patrick Dail** **Email Address:** [**lpatrickdail@gmail.com**](mailto:lpatrickdail@gmail.com) **Phone Number: 347.880.1530** **Chapter Title: Immediate Past President** **Chapter Website URL:** [www.astdny.org](http://www.astdny.org) |

**Description of Effort:**

*On-Site Practitioner Series connects student SIG members with Learning Leaders.*

**Need Addressed:**

*The New York University Student Special Interest Group (NYU SIG) leadership team determined that one of the most important services it could provide its members was to create opportunities for more junior "aspiring" members of the profession to network with and learn from seasoned L&D practitioners. In a typical On-site Practitioner Series event, the members meet at the featured employer’s site, receive a briefing by the senior L&D manager in charge (CLO, Global Director for L&D, etc.), hear remarks from mid-level and front-line unit personnel, and tour their training space. Topics generally covered during these events include how the L&D divisions approach needs assessments, how training initiatives originate, how the L&D divisions are structured, the division’s reliance on internal and external resources, and where the units report (HR, Operations, Sales, etc.). Past On-Site events have been hosted at Google, Harry Winston, Pfizer, Dale Carnegie, and Hess Corporation.*

**Does this effort align with your chapter mission?**

*Yes, our mission calls for the chapter leadership to “…serve the membership through cutting-edge programs and events, and to continually innovate the strategic value they deliver...”*

**Does this effort align with ASTD's mission?**

*Yes, by exposing members to the structure, strategy and operations of high-performing L&D departments, so as to inspire "aspiring" professionals to enhance what they do in their daily work and career aspirations.*

**Target Audience:**

*Student Chapter Members who are studying in L&D Graduate or Doctoral programs, and regular chapter members interested in benchmarking high-performing L&D units.*

**Costs/Resource Use:**

*This series requires no chapter budget commitment; the mtgs are hosted free of charge by the presenters, refreshment costs are picked up by the featured firm. Staffing for each event typically involves 3-4 volunteers coordinating the entire process as well as the event itself, and a volunteer assigned to serve as the blogger.*

**How did you implement?**

*The SIG leadership brainstormed and asked aspiring L&D professionals what would be the most helpful and valuable to their career goals at this point. A strong response was the ability to learn more about how other organizations are implementing L&D practices, especially as they vary in across organizations and industries. This inspired us to ask executives that we had connections with, to see if they would simply invite us in for a casual conversation. We reduce complexity by not asking for powerpoint slides, as this is meant to be a Q&A format, not a formal presentation. This also reduces prep time for speakers, which is always valued. Presenters start with a 5-10 min overview of their organizations, then opens up for any Q&A from audience. We also limit attendee size so as to not overwhelm the host organization. Group sizes range from 20-40 people depending on host request. The size limit has also made these events 'in demand' amongst the membership, as popular events (such as Google!) have reached max registration within 24 hours!*

**What were the Outcomes?**

*Based on member feedback, the On-Site series has been overwhelmingly successful.*

* *The Q&A format differs from typical presentation style events because it is much more informal and targeted, and this is welcomed by attendees.*
* *The “On-Site” factor is another positive factor so members can get a genuine feel of an organization's style and culture based on physical surroundings.*
* *We know of non-members joining the chapter after these events.*
* *We also have been able to increase our student membership over the last several years.*
* *The NYU SIG has also been able to develop an interesting and innovative brand for itself.*

**Lessons Learned:**

1. *Tap into the personal networks of chapter leadership team members to identify executives who you can ask to host a small group for a casual chat.*
2. *Minimize prep and workload for host organization; prepare a short list of questions for the host to think about prior so they can frame their presentation, and make all the logistical arrangements as simple as possible.*
3. *Feature different size organizations, as well as different industries, so variation in L&D practices can be learned.*

**Please list the specific ASTD chapter resources that helped guide you in the process of completing this best practice.**

* *The ASTD Student Development Guide was helpful as we began to target student members.*

***\*\*\*Please email completed forms to*** [***SOS@astd.org***](mailto:SOS@astd.org) ***along with any supporting documents.\*\*\****