

## **Observation Assessment #1**

**Type of Observation:** ISM Business Symposium

**Location:** Emerson High School

**Date:** October 7, 2021

**Time:** 7:45 AM - 11:35 AM

**Assessment:**

On October 7th, I went to Emerson High School for our ISM Business Symposium. As soon as I walked into the parking lot, I saw a handful of groups of students dressed in similar professional attire as me, and I realized that this was going to be a huge learning experience for me to interact with different people with similar interests as me. I came with the intention of networking and making connections with new people, and I had a good feeling that I would be able to accomplish this. The Business Symposium was operated in different stations each with different guest speakers from different areas. We started in the auditorium with a very memorable guest speaker. He explained that we should never negotiate our visions, and that the clarity of our goals is more important than calculation. This speech personally reached out to me because I have been struggling to set up my personal goals for a while now. I always pressure myself to look for “good” goals and try to calculate the quality of them. However in real life, what is important is how comprehensible and vivid my goals are rather than what other people will think about them.

I felt like the overall theme for most of the stations was “networking.” The topic of networking came up several times in all of the presentations, and each guest speaker made sure to emphasize the importance of networking in one way or another. The break times in between

the stations was also a great opportunity to make connections. I was able to exchange contacts with multiple students who are also studying topics related to music, and we had some good conversations on how we will be setting up interviews to help us gain ideas for our original work. I also learned a great deal about what employers look for when they are interviewing candidates. Authenticity and demonstrating uniqueness were big ideas. It is important to show who you truly are instead of making up another persona to fit in if you really want to fit in with the company in the long run. If anything, adapting to your new environment is crucial. You should understand that circumstances constantly change, such as new technology, and pay attention to the current events and stay up to date in order to catch up with the latest news.

Additionally, many speakers made sure to mention that communication is key in work environments. These let us take initiative and build relationships, so we can get out of our comfort zones to become a better version of ourselves. This way we can also develop critical thinking skills, be more curious, and be more open-minded. Understanding other people's positions from different viewpoints to collaborate and negotiate directly relates to professionalism. When I started to think that all this sounds a little stressful, the mental health station made sure to de-stress my mind. I learned that it is important to prioritize your mental health to make more positive connections, and that we all need a break from unrealistic cycles of goals. This helps us build resilience and have autonomy.

The Business Symposium was an amazing experience that would not have been possible if it was not for the ISM program. I am extremely grateful that I got to make so many valuable connections while learning about professionalism and leadership at the same time from diverse

professionals taking time out of their days to talk to us. It was definitely a moment of realization where I got to reflect on myself and help myself fill in the gaps of my needs.