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Writing Sample

This writing sample is a selection from an essay I wrote for my Business class “Managing People & Organizations Global Economy.” I interviewed the Chief Executive Officer at Aivilo Web Solutions for an assignment that was assigned to the class. This writing sample discuss about how the CEO manages her employers at a workplace.

Interview with a Manager at Aivilo Web Solutions

This interview was conducted on October 20, 2016. It introduces Nicole Bergstrom, who is the president and the founder of a small business firm called Aivilo Web Solutions. Ms. Bergstrom utilizes her time by following the Four Functions of Management explaining how she plans, organize, leads and control her company on a daily basis. Within the planning process, she looks into the background, the skills, and the interest of clients by maintaining what is best for the market and the needs of her client(s) company. When organizing her firm, Ms. Bergstrom encourages her employees to task themselves with deadlines as what she calls a 30% commitment. She doesn't tolerate complaining or laziness. Ms. Bergstrom leads her team of employees by providing strong communication skills and interpersonal skills.

Ms. Bergstrom is very knowledgeable on what steps to take on projects and by mentoring her employees on their assignments. When controlling her company, she meets with her employees individually or set up group meetings to see the progress of each employer's work. At Aivilo, Nicole Bergstrom is the top-level manager of her firm. From there, the levels of management that are associated with her firm are the middle-level managers: Project Manager, User Experience (UX) Developer and User Interface (UI) Developer; and SharePoint Developer follow by the frontline managers: Business Analyst and Quality Assurance (QA) Tester. Lastly, the team leaders: Web Developers, Graphic Designers, and Web Designers. The skills that each employee possess are interpersonal and good communication skills because when working with clients these clients obtain a patent within their organization. The projects within Aivilo involves using an agile methodology which involves a team of people to complete the tasks. The Business Analyst works with the Product Owner to elicit business requirements for the project. The UX developer takes the requirements and turns them into user journeys and maps out how an end

user will use the system or product to be developed. The UI developer then creates the front end. The web developer codes the product to make it work. The QA tester tests the product to ensure it works per the requirements. The Project Manager manages all employees and processes to ensure the product is completed on time within budget and per the scope as stated by Nicole Bergstrom (N. Bergstrom, personal communication, October 20, 2016). Ms. Bergstrom mentioned: “When working with my Project Manager, they must have good managing skills” (N. Bergstrom, personal communication, October 20, 2016). Each employer has technical skills, but it varies. Ms. Bergstrom looks more towards a junior level employee or senior level employee. When asked if she ever hired interns her response was: “Not too much, but it is possible, I would make sure that it’s not a formal internship, but an allowance internship and a paid internship” (N. Bergstrom, personal communication, October 20, 2016). When interacting with other departments, Ms. Bergstrom uses the phrase “wear many hats”, meaning someone may be a developer but also have to do some Project Manager work. She sometimes functions as a Project Manager, a UX designer or a digital accessibility expert. She sometimes does billing and contract/proposal writing. Aivilo Web Solutions is a team based environment especially when working with a supervised team. Ms. Bergstrom continued: “We work in a team environment where each member of the team is empowered to have input and voice opinions. Agile is a methodology and approach on how work gets done”. Now there are times when Ms. Bergstrom works individually, for example, she is currently working with Hilton Worldwide, she specified:

I work for Hilton Hotels as a digital accessibility expert. I help this organization develop their websites in a way that ensure people with a disability can use them (e.g. Find a hotel, book a room, and check in). Imagine being blind and trying to use a website to find information. Well, I help companies design websites that can

be used by folks with a visual disability as one example. (N. Bergstrom, personal communication, October 20, 2016).

When discussing her personal satisfaction with her job, she said that she enjoys strategy work and problem-solving. She likes big thinking and she very open to teaching and mentoring others. Her dissatisfaction with her job is politics where others will use poor performance or poor quality with their work. She dislikes sloppiness and she gets very frustrated when her client(s) ask for her help and then complains. If she has to let an employee go from her company it's because they complained too much, made a 30% commitment and didn't follow through, or she has to clean up his/her mistakes because of their poor performance. When supervising on a project it depends on the project itself. She had two additional employees that she supervised at Aivilo and last year she had supervised nine people there were three developers, three customer service, two testers and one Business Analyst. There was a discussion on the various levels of salary ranges and she concluded by saying:

A PM is going to earn more than a strict a UI developer. Specialized skills are going to receive a higher pay as well. A SharePoint developer will earn more than a web developer because SharePoint requires a special skill set. UX or user experience is a trend right now so companies will pay a bit more for someone who has these skill sets. In the area of web design and development, the pay scale is much lower because the industry is saturated with workers. This means there are plenty of people out there proving this service so businesses have a choice on who they hire and therefore more leverage on rates. (N. Bergstrom, personal communication, October 20, 2016).

It's important to understand that when working for Nicole Bergstrom, there have to be commitments while also following strict deadlines. In order to work at a company like Aivilo Web Solutions, an employee must know how to use time-management as well as work in a team environment.