

Field Experience as a Corporate Admin Therapist

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#V369

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Placement

As of May 2017, I was hired as a behavioral therapist for the Center for Autism and Related Disorders (CARD). I am now also the corporate admin therapist (CAT) and am still working in the Wilsonville Oregon office. This additional role required extra HIPPA training and about 10 hours of video training. I am also considered part of the administration team.

Review of Your Activities

After working for CARD for about six months I felt it was time to take on an additional role in the company. The company provides expert roles so that as a therapist you can essentially work up the ladder and gain experience. The role I chose in particular was that of the CAT. I really enjoy administrative work and therapy so felt it was a good fit. In this role, I am the assistant to the Operations Manager (OM) of the office. Our OM and I really clicked well beforehand so the opportunity to be her assistant seemed right.

My training involved learning extensive HIPPA rules and regulations since I would be dealing with files and answering the phones. I also have the privilege and trust of scheduling both therapists and clients. It was really interesting to see the other side of the operation instead of just direct therapy. It gave me a better perspective on how to run a clinical office and all the behind the scenes work. Another responsibility of mine was keeping the office clean and decorating the boards monthly and planning activities for the themed weeks. The boards and activities I had to do and plan were very enjoyable. I was able to use my creative side as well. Lastly, people looked to me as part of the administrative team and that was

something I had to get used to due to no longer being just a therapist but having a role of authority.

Your reaction to your experiences

This position has really taught me perseverance. Not only in the time commitment but the added responsibilities gained. My weekly logged hours for the job often totaled between 30 hours of admin work, therapy, and trainings. This was very hard to juggle along with school. But, I would not change any of it because I persevered and did not quit. I am still standing and feel very accomplished at all I have done. This role has also taught me that I am very good with adults and may want to be a form of an administrator one day or work with multiple groups of people. The last thing I wanted to mention was I put myself into a position outside of my comfort zone and have excelled in it. Hands on experience seems to be how I learn best and can't wait to see where it takes my professional career.

How well your original field experience goals were met

I would say overall, I was able to meet all of them. I learned so much in this position from on the job training and the guidance given. My mentors have been wonderful and have lead me to where I am. I now feel confident in being part of the administrative team. Although mistakes can be made I know they can be fixed and have the support to help and guide me.

How the facts and concepts you learned in your prior course work relates to your experiences

Having a background in counseling has helped in this placement overall. Although this semester my field experience was focused on the administrative side, I still was a therapist

and honed my skills from class. Another way both counseling and adv. Counseling helped was through self-care. Due to having a high stress job I needed to figure out a balance between work, school, and life. The skills I built in both classes really helped me overall.

How has faith influenced your field experience

My boss is actually a Christian and due to that we were able to talk about faith openly. It was really refreshing to go to work and be able to discuss are faith and talk about how we are doing a huge part through our job. Another cool thing was as I got to know my coworkers more the majority of them were of Christian faith. But, one struggle was a coworker is an atheist who did not want to hear about faith at all. We developed a friendship this past semester and I hope outside of work I can be able to witness to her. Overall, I have never been in a more loving and supporting community than my office. Although our jobs are very stressful we still lift one another up and encourage each other.

An evaluation of your plans to continue in psychology or related fields

After graduation, I plan on staying with the company and transferring to a California office. I will be moving to California after graduation. My hope is to work for the corporate office in devolvement and or the offices while still doing direct therapy on the side. After working for a year, I plan to pursue a higher-level degree. A more recent development is I have my BCAT now and am about to take the test for the RBT. This is really cool because I will have national level certificates once graduated. Also, the two career choices I have to decide between is becoming an MFT or a BCBA. Both jobs are within my company and I would love to stay with them.

How your career planning has been influenced by your experience

By being able to see all the inner workings of the office my perspective has changed. I see how draining it can be but also how rewarding it is. My plans have changed as I do not think I will be pursuing a PsyD as I had hoped but instead a master's level degree where I can work with Autistic children and their families. I really have found a passion through this work and am excited to see where my path leads.