

Help with Training/Internship Plans

TRAINING PLAN GUIDELINES

Purpose

International Trainees are issued a J-1 (Exchange Visitor) visas to enter the U.S. specifically to enhance their skills in their current occupation through participation in a structured training program. This program should be designed:

- To improve the participant's knowledge of American techniques, methodologies, or expertise within the individual's field of endeavor.
- To enable the exchange visitor trainee to understand American culture and society better.
- To enhance American knowledge of foreign cultures and skills by providing the opportunity for an open interchange of ideas between the exchange visitor trainees and their American counterparts.
- "Gaining experience" is not an acceptable purpose for the Training Plan. Government regulations state, "Use of the Exchange Visitor Program for ordinary employment or work purposes is strictly prohibited. The regulations are designed to distinguish between receiving training, **which is permitted**, and gaining experience, **which is not permitted.**"
- The program must provide new skills and knowledge, and cannot repeat previous training the individual has already had.
- The training/internship plan must clearly show that the program is designed for the participant to receive practical training in his/her career field, which is then put to use in their home country.

Program Categories

The International YMCA has been authorized to provide visa sponsorship in the following occupational categories:

- **Education, Social Sciences, Counseling and Social Services**
- **Management, Business, Commerce and Finance**
- **Health Enhancement Occupations**
- **Arts & Culture**

Coming Soon

Hospitality/Tourism

Information Media and Communications

Public Policy/Law and Administration

The training/internship program must fall within **one** of the above categories. For example, a program in *Youth Services* could be considered in the category of education, social sciences, counseling, social services. A training with a YMCA fitness program could be considered in the category of health enhancement.

- a. A training program in hotel administration can be considered in the category of management, business, commerce and finance *only if there are rotations in business functions (marketing, human resources, operations, finance, etc.) and if the trainee/intern has a broad background in business that is being applied in a hospitality setting.*
- b. **Business Management cannot** be limited to housekeeping, front desk, catering, or back-of-the-house/front-of-the house.

Qualifications of the trainee/intern

The program must **directly relate** to the applicant's previous work and/or educational background. An applicant for a Youth Services training should have the required education and/or experience in that field, or in a related field. An accountant would not qualify for a training program in Youth Services. A Youth Worker would not qualify for a training program in business management. The Host Company's field or industry, and the supervisor's work experience and education should also be appropriate and related to the field of training selected. *Please consider the content of the program and the background of the applicant when choosing the category you are applying for.*

Training Plan Components

1. State overall program purpose/objective (see below).
2. Describe the role of the trainee/intern in the organization. What is the trainee/intern's title? What will their primary responsibilities be?

3. Organize the program into specific phases. Usually a phase is 1-4 months, depending on the length of the entire program. Phases can be divided by department rotation, by project, or by chronology. Use a separate page for each phase. **For each phase:**
4. State specific goals and objectives
5. List the Training syllabus or chronology. If there will be courses provided or materials to be read, list the courses. If there will be certain topics covered in a particular order, list that here.
6. Detail the knowledge, skills, techniques, to be imparted. The section should begin with *"By the end of this phase, the trainee/intern will be able to..."*
7. Identify the departments or functional areas (rotations) if applicable
8. Specify tasks to be performed in this phase.
9. Detail training activities (shadowing, formal training, projects, etc.). Examples:
 - Classroom Training
 - Maintaining a Learning Journal
 - Seminars/Workshops
 - Shadowing Expert
 - Rotation through several Departments
 - Interviewing Expert
 - On-the-Job Training
 - Guided Research Project
 - Conferences
 - YMCA e-Cornell online courses www.ecornell.com/ymca
 - YMCA Program Schools
 - CEO for a Day
 - 360 degree feedback
 - Personal development workshops (personal finance, leadership styles, professionalism, goal setting, problem-solving, etc.)
 - Cultural activities
 - Field trips
 - Home-stays
 - In-house workshops—engage other staff
10. Justification for on-the-job training. Why is on-the-job-training needed? How will the program balance the need of the participant for practical training, with the need of the Host Company for certain responsibilities to be fulfilled?
11. Describe method of supervision and performance evaluation.

Other Training Plan Requirements

- Progression of training. The training plan phases should be cumulative and follow a progression. One phase should lead to the next. Each phase should build upon the skills and knowledge gained in the previous phase. Show how each phase relates to the others. The program should not be a job with various, unrelated tasks, but should provide a structured, coherent learning experience.
- All tasks assigned to participants must be necessary for the completion of program assignments. Trainees/interns should not be used for miscellaneous, random tasks. They should be given tasks that relate to their program.
- Changes to the training plan are permitted with the permission of the YMCA. It is understood that upon meeting the participant and becoming familiar with each other, the pace of the program or the content may change slightly so that the program remains challenging and meaningful. Changes to the training/internship plan require the submission of a written request and a draft of the new proposed training plan. Changes should not be implemented until YMCA provides approval in writing.

A Training/Internship Plan must NOT:

- Contain therapy, clinical or medical care, nursing, dentistry, child care, or elder care
- Be used for ordinary employment
- Be used to prepare for American jobs
- Contain unskilled labor
- Contain more than 20% clerical work
- Be used to replace American full- or part-time employees

- Duplicate prior work experience or training received elsewhere

Unskilled Occupations: What trainees/interns cannot do.

Attendants	Cleaners/ Housekeepers	Receptionists
Bartenders	Clerks	Orderlies
Bookkeepers	Cooks	Stockroom workers
Caretakers	Typists	Telephone operators
Cashiers	Groundskeepers	Ushers
Cleaners	Guards	
Chauffeurs/Taxi Drivers	Janitors	

Objectives

There must be a way for both the participant and the supervisor to know that the objectives are being achieved. For example, an objective for a trainee coming to be trained to run a business in their home country might be, "By the end of this training the trainee will have learned to recruit, interview, and hire day staff." The training plan should have a number of objectives, but still be achievable in the time frame of the internship. Essentially, the objectives should identify what the trainee will specifically learn over the course of the training program.

Activities

The activities describe how the learning objectives will be accomplished. Keep in mind that a training plan is not a job description. A training plan must describe the skills, knowledge and competence that will be shared with the trainee. In developing the training plan, and throughout the application, DO NOT use words and phrases such as "job", "job description", "work" or "gaining experience". These words may be cause to reject an application as more emphasis is put on the work aspect rather than on what is to be learned; hence they are not acceptable. Instead, use words and phrases such as "training plan", "internship" and "receiving practical training". These are acceptable and exhibit proof that the purpose and intent of the regulations governing this program are understood. Other activities, which can be considered appropriate to the training experience, may include classroom training, seminars and rotation through several departments. If on-the-job-training" is utilized as a training activity, it must be justified as a means to achieve the stated learning objectives. Again, "gaining experience" is not acceptable as justification. "Demonstrate competencies" is acceptable.

The activities must be sufficient to fill the entire length of the training plan. A week long staff training seminar followed by 12 months of practical experience may indicate that the trainee has been hired to fill a job position rather than to receive training; however, practical experience combined with other training activities such as those listed above is acceptable.

Supervision and Evaluation

On-going supervision and evaluation is a requirement of the program. The frequency and form may depend on the length of the training. The YMCA provides forms for mid-stay and end-of-stay evaluations. An evaluation meeting between the Host Company Supervisor and the trainee/intern should focus on the progress the participant is making toward achieving the specified objectives and planning for how to achieve unmet objectives. The performance of the trainee/intern is also discussed. The evaluation meeting should be documented in writing, and be signed by both the participant and the immediate supervisor with copies sent to YMCA. It is a government requirement that the trainee's file include these signed evaluations.

YMCA Criteria

Using the aforementioned guidelines, YMCA considers these questions when reviewing every application. Of course, additional questions may arise during review.

- Is the program appropriate for the candidate at this point in his / her education or career?
- Is the applicant's background directly related to the field of training/internship?
- Is there adequate supervision of the participant?
- What specific new skills will the participant gain?
- Is the financial support suitable and sufficient to cover the cost of living in the region?
- How will the participant be exposed to U.S. culture?
- Will the participant have opportunities for community service?
- How will the participant share his / her culture with Host Company?
- Is the Host Company using the participant as staff or seasonal labor?

- Is the participant currently employed or enrolled as a full time student?
- Can the participant demonstrate his / her intention to exit the U.S. after training?
- Have all questions in the application and training plan been fully answered?
- Are the classroom trainings, and conferences specific to date and qualifications gained?
- Has the participant previously participated in the trainee/internship program? If so, Why is this additional program necessary?

