SLO IV. Professionalism

Students will engage in professional behavior appropriate to the discipline in professional contexts.

My understanding of the concept of engaging professionally in a professional setting has grown throughout my time in Child Development, both through personal experiences and from taking Child Development courses. For example, at my current job as a teacher assistant, I know I have to switch my attitude and language from casual language to professional language. When I talk to parents I need to adjust the tone of my voice to a calm and stern voice and use phrases that are appropriate to use. When I talk to children, my voices can change from making a silly voice, to a serious voice. Of course, these voices depend on what part of the day I am teaching. For example, if I am talking to them about something they did that is considered “not okay,” and I’m teaching them right from wrong, I would have a serious voice. If I am reading a book to them, I could use a silly voice to get their attention and make story time more entertaining. Another example is, when I talk to other staff members and I have an issue with curriculum or simply don’t understand something, I need to ask question so I can have a better understanding. I’ve learned that being mad or quiet doesn’t solve a problem. I’ve learned that I need to approach the staff members as an individual and use appropriate language to communicate with them about things that are going on, or that I don’t understand. I have also learned that I need to adapt to the environment I am in. For example, when I worked as a cashier at a truck stop, needed to be loud and very outgoing and friendly to costumers. I needed to be very perky and always had to be nice to the costumer. Working at the truck stop and working in a preschool setting are two very different environments. In a preschool environment, I have more control over the behavior the children have, I need to control the tone of my voice, language and supervise children of a ratio 1 to 8 or 1 to 12. At the truck stop, I needed to be polite, loud, handle money and be responsible for myself. Both these jobs have taught me how to have patience and deal with issues in a calm matter. By taking courses at California State University, Chico, I have learned more ways of how to engage in professional setting.

My understanding of behaving professionally while in a work environment has grown because of the courses I have taken in Child Development at California State University, Chico. I have taken several courses on why it is important to address situations in an appropriate matter. These courses have given me a good understanding of what I can do in a stressful situation or a difficult situation and what ways I can handle them. Having the knowledge and being able to incorporate them throughout my internships I’ve done, as well as, my jobs, I have grown to develop the professional skills that I have today.

The one thing I am always working on is communication skills. I am very luck to know a second language, but sometimes I get stuck when I need to translate information from English to Spanish. I am very fluent in Spanish, but some of the words that I need to translate, I don’t use them on a daily basis, so it’s hard for me to think of a word on the spot and tell the person. Another thing I would like to work on is being more confident about my work and ideas. I always doubt myself when I have ideas and question whether I should speak up about what I have on my mind. When I have given ideas about certain things, the people I have worked with have given me positive feedback and will use my idea for a project. I am a shy person when it comes to sharing my work with others. I get intimidated by the judgments of others on my work. The last thing I would like to improve on is adapting to different environments faster. It can be hard for me to adjust to new environments, especially if I am used to a certain routine. Every place I go into, whether it’s in a classroom, internship, or a preschool setting, the environments are different and I want to improve on changing my professional behavior quicker, no matter where I am at.

Being a lifelong learner, I will continue to learn from my own experiences, and be open to new and exciting ideas that come my way. Being open about new ideas would really allow me to try new things and let me become more outgoing in a variety of situations. This will help me experience other people’s ideas and if it’s successful, then I can use it in other places or jobs that I might have in my future.

The best thing that I have learned in this area is how everything I have learned from the courses I’ve taken and personal experiences work together. I feel like I have grown in so many ways from this, and have helped me become a better employee and student. I have learned that I have my own ways of dealing with situations and that there is never a correct way for solving problems.

The first document I have is a letter of recommendation from one of my previous managers. This letter of recommendation shows that I have the ability to control stressful situations and that I am a good team player. It also shows that I have the ability to communicate and act professionally no matter what the situation might be.

The next document I have is another letter of recommendation. This letter of recommendation is a bit different because the manager who wrote it and I developed a close relationship. She got the chance to see how I behaved, both at work and around her children. She describes that I’m always in a good mood and I have a great time when I am around others.