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Provide High Value at Low Cost: The GSS Americas Eagle Program

HDS GSS Americas now has in place a program to bring in entry-level Technical Consultants to deliver professional services to the Americas Channel that up to now have been unprofitable to deliver at senior consultant cost levels. The Eagle program members become productive through internal HDS training like the GSS Americas Bootcamp, mentoring, and on-the-job experience.

While serving this niche in our business, the Eagle program members build the core set of skills and knowledge we want for consultants at the higher rate levels, and they do this in a consistent, structured manner governed by a discrete consultant development plan. Once an Eagle program member achieves all milestones in his or her personal development plan - all the while delivering billable services - he or she is expected to apply for the next grade level position in the GSS Americas Delivery organization.

Once the Eagle program member is offered, and accepts, a higher grade position, we fill his or her seat with another entry-level candidate that starts the process over. Filling this vacated Eagle program seat is the missing piece of the puzzle we are solving by working with Bossier Parish Community College (BPCC). We are working with them to insert an Advanced Elective Course into their Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Server Administration degree program.

HDS and BPCC: Filling Eagle Seats with Pre-Trained Candidates

Filling the inaugural six seats in the Eagle Program start-up have been accomplished the traditional way – working with recruiters (and paying their fees) and interviewing candidates (and trying to gauge proper fit through conversations based on resumes).

But with BPCC’s desire to work with us, we can do better. Imagine a self-sustaining recruitment cycle where candidates are learning foundational skills in a technical AAS program where motivated students self-select to choose an Advanced Elective in Storage Administration. And the elective is based on Hitachi technology taught by our Education Partners.

From there, we can select the best of the students to intern with us. Using our internship program in conjunction with BPCC’s, we can bring a candidate onboard for five weeks at no cost to us and managed by BPCC’s internship program. During those five weeks we assign entry-level tasks to the interns under the watchful eye of their employed HDS GSS counterparts.

HDS and the Cyber Innovation Center: Where Eagles Soar

The success of the BPCC internship program depends upon physical proximity to the Eagle team. The good news is that this is already solved. The GSS Americas Eagle Team works out of the same physical space that HDS has leased from the Cyber Innovation Center (CIC) in Bossier City, Louisiana. And BPCC is right next door.

What’s In It for HDS and BPCC?

The benefit to HDS in working with BPCC for pre-training interns is that we can establish a persistent cycle of candidates that we know have accomplished a course of study in servers, networks...and storage administration concepts based on Hitachi technology. We can select the best to intern with us in advance of filling a seat vacated by a successful member of the Eagle program.

Advanced Course Elective at BPCC: Storage Concepts and Administration
The benefit to BPCC is having a well-known, well-respected technology company, local to the area, actively involved in their AAS program in Server Administration. This is a significant means to help BPCC generate local interest in their AAS degree program.

Here’s a Bonus: Help from the Louisiana Economic Development Agency
In addition to BPCC, the Louisiana Economic Development (LED) Agency wants to work with HDS and BPCC to make this arrangement successful. LED runs a program called FastStart whose mission is to help companies locating operations within Louisiana get up and running quickly with a trained and able workforce.

While the LED FastStart program is traditionally geared toward companies that will bring on 10s and 100s of workers at a time, the people at FastStart want to work with HDS because of the highly skilled technology positions that we are providing for Louisiana residents. They understand the nature of our hiring is a trickle compared to a small manufacturing start-up, but LED still wants to work with us because of the quality jobs we are bringing to the area.

In our case, LED FastStart is working with us to develop a landing page that would be hosted at BPCC to guide candidates interested in the Eagle program through a self-assessment and next step. The self-assessment would be based on candidate behavioral analysis that LED FastStart is working with us to develop as well as the requirements of the job itself.

An interested candidate could then take one of two directions after assessing; one direction is right to the HDS jobs board and the other to the AAS program at BPCC, depending upon the candidate’s assessment of their readiness to apply.

The benefit to HDS is that we have a funnel hosted at BPCC where interested Eagle program candidates can pre-assess on our behalf. The benefit to BPCC is a means to transfer interest in preparing for a career at Hitachi into their AAS program.

Let’s Get Started
The remainder of this document is a recommended set of actions to take to put this arrangement between HDS and BPCC in place and get it up and running. The good news is that a plan of action is less about complicated tasks to accomplish than it is agreeing decisions between HDS and BPCC for how we accomplish the following elements of the program:

1. Advanced Elective Course Syllabus
2. HDS Academy Content to Support the Syllabus
   a. HDS Academy Courses from which to draw content
   b. Reworking HDS Academy Content into one of BPCC’s course schedule formats
   c. HDS Academy Content license requirements for BPCC
3. HDS Education Partner to work with us for BPCC Advanced Elective Course readiness
   a. Cost from Partner to do this
   b. Shared costs between HDS and BPCC
4. HDS Education Partner to deliver the BPCC Advanced Elective Course

Advanced Course Elective at BPCC: Storage Concepts and Administration
a. Cost from Partner to do this
b. BPCC agreement to pay for delivery of course

5. Hitachi hardware and software required for labs
   a. Can we use existing Academy gear?
   b. Can BPCC assist with hosting and gear administration?
      i. For BPCC Advanced Elective Course
      ii. For HDS Academy in general
   c. Cost considerations for HDS and BPCC
      i. What do we need to agree?

Recommendations for the above list based on discussions with BPCC and within HDS are made below.
The call to action is to agree, or adjust and agree, these items within HDS and between HDS and BPCC for putting this arrangement in operation.

Advanced Elective Course Syllabus
GSS Americas and BPCC Administration have agreed a preliminary syllabus for the Advanced Elective. This is attached as a separate document for review and finalization within HDS and between HDS and BPCC.

HDS Academy Content to Support the Syllabus
1. HDS Academy courses to draw from:
   a. CCE2057 – Storage Concepts
   b. TCI1830 – Hitachi AMS 2000 Family Architecture and Operations
   c. Include SAN management topic from GSS Americas Bootcamp

2. Rework the above content to fit delivery within a 12 week semester format.
   a. This presents the best opportunity for working students to take the class
   b. Need to add quizzes and tests to measure learning and pass/fail of class
   c. Hands-on practice to be emphasized through labs defined for 12 week course

3. HDS Academy will require BPCC to license the course.
   a. HDS is not looking to make a profit on this license. Any fees would be the minimum to ensure materiality of the license agreement.

HDS Education Partner for Course Development
1. HDS's Education Partner to develop the 12 week course.
   a. Rework Academy content into 12 week course to fit Syllabus
   b. Deliver course lectures virtually
   c. Students will be required to adhere to BPCC virtual classroom readiness for attendance

2. Partner to present costs for rework of material to fit BPCC 12 week course
   a. Agree cost sharing for development within HDS and between HDS and BPCC

Advanced Course Elective at BPCC: Storage Concepts and Administration
HDS Education Partner for Course Delivery

1. HDS Education Partner to deliver 12 week course.
   a. Deliver course lectures virtually
   b. Students will be required to adhere to BPCC virtual classroom readiness for attendance

2. Partner to present costs for delivery of BPCC 12 week course

3. BPCC agreement to pay costs for delivery of 12 week course

Hitachi Hardware and Software for Course Lab

1. Course will be taught using HDS Academy hardware and software lab environment already in place at an HDS location.
   a. Students will access lab equipment from a BPCC classroom location remotely to perform lab exercises.
   b. BPCC will provide local classroom administration assistance to interact with HDS lab support personnel as required.

Next Steps

1. Agree above startup decisions between HDS and BPCC. (BPCC)
2. Solicit proposal for course development and delivery from HDS Education partner (HDS)
3. Contractual agreements for course development and delivery. (HDS Education Partner)
4. Execute contractual agreements for course development and deliver. (HDS and BPCC)
5. License agreement for use of course material. (HDS)
6. Execute license agreement for use of course materials. (HDS and BPCC)
7. Decide a semester target. (BPCC)
8. Do it. (HDS and BPCC)